

PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

DEBATES

First Assembly

First Session

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY	
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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OFFICIAL REPORT

VOLUME IV

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Alphabetical List of Members of the House of Representatives

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<b>A</b>	
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Mr David Adelu	Ibadan East
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Mr Agwu N. Agwu	Ohaozara East
Mr Debo Akande	Ibadan North
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Mr O. Akinboro	Oke-Ona/Owu/Gbagura
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Mr Funso Akinyosoye	Ondo
Mr Michael J. Akpabio	Uyo II
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Alhaji Suleiman Aliyu	Magama
Mr Yakubu, B. Aliyu	Bauchi
Mr Muhammadu Aliu Tudun Wada	Waje
Mr L. Adekunle Alli	Lagos South



## Member

## Constituency

## E—continued

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Mr Edet Asuquo Ekpo	..	..	..	..	..	..	Uyo III
Mr V. U. Ekpo	..	..	..	..	..	..	Ikot Abasi I
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Dr E. C. Emekekwe	..	..	..	..	..	..	Onitsha South
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Mr Clement Erundu	..	..	..	..	..	..	Obioma Ngwa
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Chief Thomas Ekpo Etuk	..	..	..	..	..	..	Eket III
Chief Asuquo E. Eyo	..	..	..	..	..	..	Calabar
Mrs J. C. Eze	..	..	..	..	..	..	Uzo-Uwani
Mr E. Ume Ezeoke	..	..	..	..	..	..	Nnewi

## F

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Mr Barnabas Falu	..	..	..	..	..	..	Guyuk
Muhammed Ahmed Tukur Fagam	..	..	..	..	..	..	Gwaram
Mr Olaiya Fagbamigbe	..	..	..	..	..	..	Akure
Mr Faji Fajobi	..	..	..	..	..	..	Ekiti South
Mr G. A. Falayi	..	..	..	..	..	..	Ekiti Central
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Mr Johnson O. Fatola	..	..	..	..	..	..	Akinyele North
Mr Dele Fayemi	..	..	..	..	..	..	Badagry
Mr Bello Dauda Furo	..	..	..	..	..	..	Fufore

## G

Mr Ibrahim Hayin Gada	..	..	..	..	..	..	Bakori
Alhaji Usman Gada	..	..	..	..	..	..	Gada
Mr Barde Gadaka	..	..	..	..	..	..	Fika South
Mr Hussein A. Gajango	..	..	..	..	..	..	Malam Madori
Mr M. A. Gajere	..	..	..	..	..	..	Kachia
Mr Hassan Gambo	..	..	..	..	..	..	Mayo-Balwa
Alhaji Sarki Gambo	..	..	..	..	..	..	Takai/Kachako
Mr Musa Gammo	..	..	..	..	..	..	Kabo
Mr Ambrose Gapsuk	..	..	..	..	..	..	Shendam East
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Mr Uba Iliya Garki	..	..	..	..	..	..	Garki
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Alhaji Yusufu Nadabo Gaya	..	..	..	..	..	..	Gaya North
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Mr Kemte Giadom	..	..	..	..	..	..	Bori II
Mr Garba Gizori	..	..	..	..	..	..	Tambawal
Mr Hamza Gombe	..	..	..	..	..	..	Gombe
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Mr M. Isyaku Gumawa	..	..	..	..	..	..	Gabasawa
Mr M. Aliyu Gummi	..	..	..	..	..	..	Gummi
Mr Christopher K. Gutus	..	..	..	..	..	..	Pankshin
Alhaji I. Gwadabawa	..	..	..	..	..	..	Gwadabawa
Mr Bello C. Gwaram	..	..	..	..	..	..	Alkaleri

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<b>H</b>					
Mr Muhammed Danjani Hadejia .. .. .	..	..	..	..	Birniwa
Alhaji Shedu Hamzat .. .. .	..	..	..	..	Sokoto Ia
Mr A. Sadiq Harith .. .. .	..	..	..	..	Kiru
Alhaji Jidda Haruna .. .. .	..	..	..	..	Monguno
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Alhaji A. Yakubu Husaini .. .. .	..	..	..	..	Lafia

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Mr I. C. Ibrahim .. .. .	..	..	..	..	Jama'a South
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Mr Mohammed Zanna Waziri Juggal .. .. .	..	..	..	..	Dambo'a
Alhaji Shuaibu Julde .. .. .	..	..	..	..	Edu

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Mr Umar Lawan .. .. .	Geidam South
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Mr Dahiru Hamman Liman .. .. .	Bali
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Mr Mustapha Muhammed .. .. .	Ringim Gado
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Mr Garba Musa .. .. .	Jibiya
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Mr Stephen Ade Odetoyinbo .. .. .	Osogbo North
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Mr 'Depo Olaniyan .. .. .	Irepodun
Mr Olubisi Olarewaju .. .. .	Oranmiyan North
Mr Olu Olofinlade .. .. .	Ero South
Mr S. O. Olowu .. .. .	Ikalo
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Mr Lawal Omar .. .. .	Kaga
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Chief Bon Omoruwa .. .. .	Warri
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Mr Oluwole Oyatobo .. .. .	Oyo South
Mr G. N. Ozugha .. .. .	Anambra South
<b>P</b>	
Alhaji Yinusa Paiko .. .. .	Minna South
Mr Abdu Paki .. .. .	Ikara-Kubau
Mr Nuhu Poloma .. .. .	Tangale-Waja North
Mr D. Princewill .. .. .	Degema I

<i>Member</i>				<i>Constituency</i>
			<b>R</b>	
Mr Aliyu Mohammed Rabah .. .. .	..	..	..	Gandi/Rabah
Alhaji B. O. Raji .. .. .	..	..	..	Ibadan Central
Alhaji Isa Rilwanu .. .. .	..	..	..	Isa
Mr Akintunde Rotimi .. .. .	..	..	..	Ekiti North
Alhaji Shehu Ruma .. .. .	..	..	..	Batsari
Alhaji Shehu Y. Runka .. .. .	..	..	..	Safana
			<b>S</b>	
Mr Rabiu Sabiu .. .. .	..	..	..	Funtua
Mr G. B. Sadiku .. .. .	..	..	..	Epe
Mr Umaru Sadiq .. .. .	..	..	..	Kumbotso
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Mr Usman Sanni .. .. .	..	..	..	Dabai-Fakai
Mr David Saraso .. .. .	..	..	..	Ganye
Dr James Taribo Sekibo .. .. .	..	..	..	Bonny II
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Mr Mohammed G. Shamaki .. .. .	..	..	..	Katagum
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Alhaji Muhammadu Shera .. .. .	..	..	..	Birnin-Kebbi
Mr Rasheed A. Shitta-Bey .. .. .	..	..	..	Lagos North-Central
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Alhaji Ibrahim Shuaibu .. .. .	..	..	..	Arewa-Dandi
Mr Mohammed D. Shuaibu .. .. .	..	..	..	Kanam
Alhaji Umaru A. Shuni .. .. .	..	..	..	Dange-Shuni
Alhaji Sumaila Bako Sitti .. .. .	..	..	..	Suma'ila
Dr E. J. Sowho .. .. .	..	..	..	Ethiophe North
Mr Ibrahim Sudan .. .. .	..	..	..	Aghida Wurno
Mr A. A. Suleiman .. .. .	..	..	..	Bade
Mr Amos Sunday .. .. .	..	..	..	Song
Mr E. K. Swem .. .. .	..	..	..	Kwande West
			<b>T</b>	
Alhaji Rabiu Tabako .. .. .	..	..	..	Gwarzo
Alhaji Idrissa M. Tikau .. .. .	..	..	..	Fika North
Mr Garba M. Tambari .. .. .	..	..	..	Maradun
Alhaji Labaran Tanko .. .. .	..	..	..	South East
Mr S.M. Tarka .. .. .	..	..	..	Gboko West
Mr Isa Yakubu Toro .. .. .	..	..	..	Toro
Alhaji Abubakar Tuggar .. .. .	..	..	..	Gamawa
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Mr J. K. Ugo .. .. .	..	..	..	Gwer East
Mr J. Ugota .. .. .	..	..	..	Ishielu West
Mr F. C. Ugwu .. .. .	..	..	..	Nsukka
Mr M. O. Ugwu .. .. .	..	..	..	Udi
Mr A. Ukpanah .. .. .	..	..	..	Ukanafun II
Mr David Akpan Ukpong .. .. .	..	..	..	Itu
Dr M. B. Ukpong .. .. .	..	..	..	Abak
Alhaji Mohammed Kabir Umar .. .. .	..	..	..	Kaduna South
Alhaji Abdulahi Umaru .. .. .	..	..	..	Kogi
Mr A. Akpan Umoron .. .. .	..	..	..	Ikot Ekpene II
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Alhaji Ahmed Tanko Ushama .. .. .	..	..	..	Rafi
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Alhaji Tanko Usman .. .. .	..	..	..	Kazaure
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Mr G. N. Uwechue .. .. .	..	..	..	Aniocha
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Mr J.U. Uyeh .. .. .	..	..	..	Vandeikya East
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Mr Ahm. T. Wamakko .. .. .	..	..	..	Cumbi-Wamakko
Mr S. U. Wanganga .. .. .	..	..	..	Aba



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Mr Badamasi U. Yaman	..	..	..	..	..	.. Faskari
Alhaji Mohammed A. Yelwa	..	..	..	..	..	.. Yauri
Mr Abubakar Yunusa	..	..	..	..	..	.. Ghawai Kauru
Mr Kolo Lawan Yusuf	..	..	..	..	..	.. Geidam North
Alhaji Ahmed Tijani Yusufu	..	..	..	..	..	.. Ingawa
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Mr Ibrahim Zailani	..	..	..	..	..	.. Zaria Central
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Mr Eze, O. A. Nwala  
Mr F. N. C. Nwandison  
Mr T. C. Ochiama  
Alhaji Sule Lamido  
Alhaji Ibrahim Nagodiya  
Alhaji Musa H. Salihu  
Mr Hamza, M. Nganjiwa  
Alhaji Sanda Konduga

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Mr M. P. Kor  
Alhaji M. R. Isaq  
Chief D. J. Eshiet  
Mr Manzo Daura  
Alhaji Dabo Bujawa  
Mr Sani Dandare  
Alhaji Bello C. Gwaram  
Mr Aliyu M. Lugga  
Mr B. O. Olabode  
Chief S. Akinwale  
Mr B. E. Kayode

Prince T. O. Olusi  
Chief S. A. Oduntan  
Mr Z. Momodu  
Mr M. A. Oje  
Pastor Magiri  
Mrs J. C. Eze  
Mr C. Nwokoro  
Mr Moh. Shu'aib Kaugama  
Alhaji Sale Abba  
Alhaji Sani Maihula  
Shehu Yakubu Runka  
Audu Mbico

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Mr Bello Dauda Furo  
Mr A. D. O. Abutu  
Mr Aliyu Mohammed Rabah  
Mr Sule Ibrahim  
Mr I. Mac-Eteli  
Mr Okon A. Eddy  
Mr Ahmed Tanko Ushama  
Mr Mohammed K. Labaran  
Mr J. O. Opakanmi  
Mr L. B. Kataiyeyanjue  
Mr B. J. Abegunde

Mr C. F. Abeki  
Mr B. O. Bankole  
Mr S. A. Odetoyinbo  
Mr Jacob Ugota  
Mr M. S. Aliyu  
Mr A. N. Agwu  
Mr K. Nwosu  
Alhaji Sule Lamide  
Alhaji Rabi'u Tabako  
Mr Husseini Gajango  
Mr Bulama Ali  
Mr Tijani Lawan

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Mr Umaru Abdullahi  
Mr Umaru Garu  
Mr B. O. Agi  
Mr Sani Ahmadu  
Mr A. Bala Abdullahi  
Mr Bob-Manuel  
Mr O. Ikpeme  
Mr Husaini Yakubu  
Mr S. A. Adesina  
Mr O. Obiyemi  
Mr O. Fagbamigbe

Mr Peter Obaoye  
Mr P. E. Ogida  
Mr O. Ijaola  
Mr Eddy Nwake  
Mr A. Idakula  
Mr J. O. Iwuagwu  
Mr E. O. Chukwu  
Alhaji Moh. Mustapha  
Alhaji Sarki Adamu  
Mr Bako Sitti  
Mr Mohammed Zanna Jugal  
Alhaji Jidda Haruna

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Dr O. O. Oreh  
Alhaji Salisu Adamu  
Dahiru L. Hamman  
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Abdullahi Isa  
Mr J. M. Zuokomor  
Ibrahim Sudan  
David Agi  
Mr G. A. Adewumi  
Mr Royland Owie  
Mr F. A. O. Osekita

Mr Dominic Vonti  
Mr Dele Fayemi  
Mr M. O. Oni  
Mr P. O. Eleke  
Mr T. N. Ochiama  
Mr M. C. Okoye  
Mr G. N. Uwechue  
Mr Sule Lamido  
Mr Isa Aliyu  
Mr Idi M. Mustapha  
Mr Ibrahim Ali  
Alhaji Dala Bungudu



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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Monday, 14th January, 1980

The House met at 10.10 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, I am delighted to welcome you back to Lagos and I believe that you had a Merry Christmas. I am sure that during the vacation we all had good opportunities to tour our various Constituencies and hold useful consultations. There is no doubt that you are very well equipped with useful suggestions and advice which this House must require in order to perform its legislative functions efficiently and satisfactorily to the lasting credit of all of us.

Committee Work

Before the House went away on Christmas Recess the Chairmen of various Committees were appointed by me and they are humbly requested to assume their various offices immediately. The Clerk of the House shall make available all matters referred to each Committee and the Chairman is expected to arrange a meeting or meetings of the Committee to tackle such matters. The Committee shall, in due course, make necessary recommendations to this House or propose a Bill on such matters. Subject to our Standing Orders the Chairman shall answer all questions relating to any matter under consideration by his Committee.

I am grateful to the Party Leaders for their co-operation last year and I hope that they will continue in the same spirit this year. The Party Leaders will meet today at 2 p.m. to consider three vital issues.

The hon. Member for Minna North (*Alhaji Idris Ibrahim*) has an explanation to make.

Personal Experience at the U. S. Congress

**Alhaji Idris Ibrahim** (Minna North): Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, Happy New Year.

I stand in front of you to make a point of explanation on the method that we are going to adopt in 1980 for the good progress and conduct of the Debates on the Floor of this House. For the benefit of Members who may not have known five of us travelled to the United States to watch the proceedings at the U. S. Congress. We went there both at the time when the House was about to go on recess, and at the time when the proceedings of the year were very hectic because there were Bills that had to be passed before the House went on recess.

Now, you may say that this point of going to the United States has been deliberated upon and people have got their misgivings, but there is nothing that stops any individual here from going there at his own expense so as to brush up on things he may not be aware of. The most important thing for Members to note is that they should understand that they are operating under a very difficult condition.

We are operating in a difficult condition in the sense that we have not got the facilities to enable us do our parliamentary work satisfactorily. I say this because there are 449 Members here and 95 Senators. Ideally, to be able to perform our functions satisfactorily, we should have an office space. Every Member of the American Congress is entitled to a three-room office accommodation. The buildings are divided into three. One is called the Cannon Building, another is called the Longworth Building and the third Building is the Rayburn Building. The most senior Members of the Democratic and Republican Party Members are housed in the Rayburn Building. The middle cadre of the party Members are housed in the Cannon Building and the new Members of the House of Representatives are housed in the Longworth Building.

Now, in the Rayburn Building, they have three-room office accommodation, the Cannon Building contains three-room office accommodation, but in the Longworth Building, they have two-room office accommodation and one annexe which still means that each Member still has three-room office accommodation.

The important thing that we have been fighting for is this question of remuneration. We have taken the figures that have been provided by the American Congress and that is, the latest figures as at 1979. They have what they call the Official Expenses Allowance. Members may like to take note. Each Member is authorised an allowance for the conduct of the official and the representational duties of the—

**Mr Speaker :** Alhaji Ibrahim, if you will hold on a minute to allow Members to get themselves ready. Yes, go on.

**Alhaji Idris Ibrahim :** Those who are not able to get me, will see it in the *Hansard*. You have the official expenses allowance. This was formerly 32,911 dollars but it has now been increased to 40,000 dollars. On top of this, they get what they call an allowance for travelling up and down which is 64 × 18 cents and times the longest distance between the District of Columbia and the farthest point in the Member's district plus ten *per cent*. Now if you relate this to Nigeria, the Ministry of Works have what they call a standard mileage between your home base and Lagos. But because there may be Members who are resident in Lagos and people may say they should not be entitled to any transport allowance, such Members in America are allowed a minimum of 2,250 dollars but this has now been increased to 3,000 dollars. Members are allowed an allowance for making telephone calls which is 15,000 telephone calls *per annum* and the rate that is charged is the highest rate for the longest distance call. In Nigeria you will equate it as from Lagos to Maiduguri. You will be paid a minimum of 6,000 dollars for making these calls (15,000 of them).

Every Member is entitled to an office in his Constituency which is to cover a floor area of two thousand five hundred square feet. That two thousand five hundred floor area is to be rented in accordance with the rent in that particular area of his district. You have office and stationery supplies. Immediately a new Member comes into the House, a form is sent to him to take three specimens of his signature. This signature of yours is going to be

[ALHAJI IBRAHIM]

used in what they call the Franking privilege. Franking privilege is nothing more than the fact that a Member of the House of Representatives is entitled to correspond with his Local Government Area, his State Government and the Federal Government by simply signing his name in front of the envelope and that is regarded as the postage stamp. Such a letter is going to be to the privilege of the Member for all correspondence he enters into with his local government, his State Government and any Federal Ministry to seek for information which is of importance for his contributions to the proceedings or Motions which he may bring to the Floor of the House.

As a Member, you will have stationery facility, that is, letter heading.

Every Member has to go and choose the type of letter heading he wants for his own personal use. He has also to choose envelopes that are going to suit the letter heading he has chosen. These envelopes are coded because they should not fall into wrong hands but only into the hands of Members.

You are entitled also to an electrical and mechanical office equipment allowance of \$6,500 for the purchase of equipment. But if you are going to buy an equipment that is going to cost more than \$5,500 you will have to inform the Clerk of the House, that the equipment you are going to buy is going to cost more than \$5,500, whereas you are entitled to only \$5,500. When you want to buy an equipment which costs more than \$5,500 it means the \$5,500 is not going to be sufficient to buy the equipment you want. Therefore you will have to go to the Clerk of National Assembly to give him the cost of the equipment on the understanding that when you leave, the National Assembly will pay for the equipment and retain it. This is not part of the things that you will take away when you leave finally.

We also have the House Keeping and Office Maintenance allowance. Of course, it is generally the responsibility of the National Assembly to maintain your office. If there is any electrical or plumbing fault, it is the responsibility of the National Assembly to maintain these things for you. At the ninety-fifth Congress in America, by House Resolution No. 866 it was resolved that the Proceedings of the National Assembly should be televised for Members. Therefore every Member has a television set in his office showing the proceedings that are going on in the House of Representatives or in the Senate. Thus you sit in your office and you only come into the Chamber when you have something to contribute on the Floor of the House. You watch the Debate from your office because you may be having a meeting in your office and at same time you do not want to lose track of what is going on.

You have the Congressional Office Staff. These Congressional Office Staff are to help you in recruiting people to work in your office. Every Member of the American Congress is entitled to eighteen members of staff. The eighteen members of staff are employed by the Congressional Office Staff who assist you in recruitment. There is a standard minimum qualification for those people who are to be recruited and of course, there is no maximum qualification. Later therefore, you will understand what I mean

by saying there is no maximum qualification because the salary of a member of staff can be as much as your own personal salary, that is, you who are recruiting him.

The most important thing that Members would like to know is that the basic annual salary of a Member in the House of Representatives or the Senate is \$60,662.50. They have what they call Group Life Insurance, and this is the equivalent of a member's annual salary of \$60,662.50, should he die during the Proceedings or during his tenure of office. For this Life Insurance, a Member pays a monthly premium in accordance with what the Insurance Company will charge and it is deducted from his monthly salary. They have what they call Civil Service Retirement Benefit system to which Members of National Assembly can belong and that is another deduction of eight *per cent* from a Member's salary.

Of course, there is the problem of State Income Tax. Where should a Member pay his Tax? Is it in Lagos or is it in a Member's Constituency? It has been offered that the best place for a Member to pay his tax is his Constituency. (*Applause*) Because a Member is entitled to employ eighteen members of staff, he is also entitled to a staff allowance employment benefit of \$308,328. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order !

**Alhaji Idris Ibahim :** I repeat, \$308,328 is for employment of eighteen members of staff per Member and they are entitled to spend one-twelfth of this \$308,328 per month only. A member is not allowed to spend anything in excess of this amount. Any amount in excess at the end of the Financial Year is returned to the Treasury. He cannot carry it over to the next Financial Year. The maximum amount of salary that he can pay one member of staff is \$47,500, and the minimum salary he will pay his staff is \$1,200 per year. He is entitled, or allowed to employ university students and students from institutions of high learning who are seeking vacation employment. A member is allowed to employ them for a period of two months only, and the salary they are entitled to is a maximum of \$1,390 for the two months they are going to work with him or \$695 per month. Now you can employ a maximum of two students in only one year, but you can only employ them one at a time. This is called a sort of in-service training and it is also for students who are politically minded who want to see what the Member is doing in his office. Members are allowed to share members of staff. If you see one intelligent member of staff employed by one Member and you want to utilise his services, the two of you can negotiate and you share that member. This will give you an allowance to employ an additional person so that at any time you have eighteen members of staff. I hope Members understand what I mean, that is, you share members of staff with other members so as to enable you to recruit more but the maximum is always eighteen.

For your office in your Constituency, you are entitled to office equipment and furniture. You are given the sum of twenty seven thousand dollars to furnish your office in your Constituency. So far, this is generally what Members are entitled to and of course the medical services and so on, are provided for within the Assembly. This, I think, will help Members a long way to understand that whoever says that the Presidential system is not expensive

is joking. We have to decide whether we want the Presidential System or not.

The next item that would be of importance to Members is the procedure. What I have also forgotten to mention is that every Member has an electronic equipment which is a radio that cost about five hundred dollars. He will keep that radio and it will enable him to reach which ever part of Lagos he wants. If the Whip of your party wants your attention in the House, a broadcast is made and you will hear it over your radio and you run back to the House. That radio is very important because you may be there in the Ministry seeking information but if your vote is required urgently in the House there is no way to contact you. So, the radio system is very important.

You also have in your office a Whip called group alert system. That is when there is going to be voting, the clock in your office which is of an alarm system, will go off. When the alarm goes off, it shows that your attention is being required on the Floor of the House, either because there is going to be voting or your Whip wants to see you. Now, the Whip will come and stand in front of the door and when he sees his Members coming, he tells them the way he wants them to vote. If he signifies by lifting one of his fingers up, it means yes. If he signifies by lifting one of his fingers down, it means you should vote no and then you come and do what you want to do.

**An hon. Member :** I have a question.

**Mr Speaker :** There will be no question.

**Alhaji Idris :** Now, the general procedure in regard to Motions every Motion that is sponsored by Members does not come straight to the Floor of the House for debate. The Motions are written and submitted to the Clerk and the Clerk will take the Motions to the Speaker. The Speaker will decide which Committee the Motion is going to. So, every Motion must go to the Committee because there is no actual activity on the Floor of the House until there is debate. The activities are concentrated in the Committees. Therefore, every Motion is sent to the Committee which is going to make a proper investigation in connection with the Motion and whoever has anything to contribute will go to the Committee and say whatever he wants to say.

Now, in the Committee Room, the Press is allowed into the Committee and members of the public are allowed into the Committee. The Committee has the power to invite any individual to come and testify before the Committee on matters that are of significance or of importance to them. Every information that cannot be exposed in the Committee level is the question that borders on security. Every other information you require and every other individual you want to summon to the Committee must attend and must bring full information not hiding anything and this is what we call an open government. The Press is allowed and members of the public are allowed there so as to know what is actually going on. So, I believe that this is of utmost importance because it is better that we do our home-work at the Committee level and come here prepared to contribute effectively than to come here daily moving Motions that we cannot effectively defend. I think we have to look into that aspect.

Now, the only other aspect that is of importance is the question of who should be on the Floor of the House during the proceedings of the debate. Every Committee is supposed to have a number of staff such as the Clerical Staff and the people who take minutes of the Committee meetings and so on. Normally when there is a Motion or a Bill from a particular Committee, it is only those Members of staff who are working under the Clerk of the House of Representatives who are allowed on the Floor of the House so as to furnish the Chairman of that Committee with the relevant information when he is making an explanation to Members on the Floor of the House.

There is something we must do here. We have what is called the *Ethics Manual* for Members of the National Assembly which is this book here. This book guides Members and tells them the way they must behave, the way they should dress, what they should do and what they should not do because they should not disgrace the National Assembly. Your activities must always be seen to be above board. That is you are the law makers and therefore you must prove that you are the law makers. This Ethics Committee is very powerful because they have the right to discipline the Members and discipline means a lot. There is no half measure because you are protected by what is called a prerogative that during the session of the National Assembly a Member cannot be arrested or arraigned before a court or issued with summons. Every summons or warrant of arrest must be handled through the Speaker who accordingly will advise the Member that is concerned. I am saying this because I believe that there is a proceeding awaiting a Member of the House of Representatives by members of Customs and Excise as I read in the papers. (*Interruptions*) I think the House Committee or the Ethics Committee must sit down and draw up how we intend to behave ourselves within here and how we can discipline other Members.

Now, before I forget, people have been talking about sitting arrangements in the House. In the American Congress, sitting is done on party basis. The Democratic Party being the Majority Party sits on the right and the Minority Party being the Republican Party sits on the left. The sitting arrangement is done on seniority basis, that is, Members of the American Congress that have been in Congress for about thirty or forty years sit nearest to the Chair and new Members sit as far back as possible. (*Interruptions*)

**The Speaker :** Order ! Order !

**Alhaji Idris :** We are all new Members here but I believe the different Political Parties know the contributions that have been made by individual Members and this brings me to the office of the Speaker. The Speaker comes from the most Senior Member of his Political Party and the Speaker's seat is very political. It is very political because first, he must be the most senior Member of his party and he represents his party, and he has a right just like any other Member to vacate his seat and come and stand here while somebody occupies his seat and addresses the House on

[ALHAJI IBRAHIM]

matters that touch himself or his party. So, there is no question that the Speaker cannot participate or speak on the Floor of the House. So, this is a point of explanation.

**Mr Speaker :** That is a good one.

**Alhaji Idris Ibrahim (Minna North) :** Now, even in Committees, Committee Members are seated of course, according to parties. The Majority Party on the right hand and the Minority Party on the left and again the sitting in the Committees is by seniority. That is, the most senior members of the party sit in the front nearer to the chair and the junior ones go far behind. Now, there is an instance where the most senior Member of the House may decide to pick on the most junior Member of the House to build him up so as to take over from him. That is, you might see a very young fellow who is very promising and you decide as an elderly Member of the House because you believe in his ability and you like somebody to inherit your post. So you spend your money to build that same Member like you so that he attains that position you have attained. There is nothing wrong in it and I think in Nigeria we need it because people never want to leave their positions. So, we are sit-tight officers !

In general, Gentlemen, this is virtually what we saw and we are very pleased that we were admitted to watch the sittings of the Senate and the sittings of the House of Representatives and we attended the sitting of two Committees. One that gave us the utmost interest was the Defence Committee because the Chief of Army Staff was there under interrogation and it was very interesting. Really this is in a nutshell what we have gone to see and I would advise that any of us who can afford the money should go and see things for himself. But I would also advise that the National Assembly should do its utmost to see that we send Members to watch the proceedings so that we may improve on the Debate in the House. Thank you.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you. Hon. Members for the avoidance of doubt, I would like to inform the press boys in the Gallery that what we have heard this morning was the personal experience of the Deputy Speaker and it does not amount to a recommendation to this House. Therefore it is not subject to any Debate and it is not subject to any question ; So it was his personal observation when he was in the United States. (Applause)

Yes Hon. Member for Isoko (Mr Tom Egbuwoku).

**Mr T. Egbuwoku (Isoko) :** Mr Speaker, while I appreciate that this report will be in the *Hansard*, I think it is just proper that we should express our gratitude to the Deputy Speaker in this House for the useful information. He went on his own and he came back. He was conscientious enough and we thank him, his team and the Leader of the House. I think it is a good job.

Secondly, when these things go into *Hansard* they may not be as detailed as we would want. I think for the education of Members, can we request the Deputy Speaker to give us a good hand-out which we can read on our own. This will also be appreciated. Thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker :** That is entirely left to the Deputy Speaker.

**Mr P. K. Atuwu (Sagbama) :** Mr Speaker, before we go to the Order Paper, I want to make some observations.

**Mr Speaker :** No ! No ! we do not make observation.

**Mr Atuwu :** Then I want to make a personal Explanation. We have come to a new year and luckily this is also the beginning of the decade. It is essential that this House and the Senate, that is, the National Assembly, should perform in a way befitting Nigeria. We have just had a run down of what happens in the American Congress. If we want to perform as well as they do, then we should also take on the responsibilities that are before us. I want to speak simply on two issues—the issue of procedure and secondly, the issue of the revival of the ocre of disunity in the form of the three languages.

Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, we always come here in the morning to find the Order Paper, and on that Order Paper, we have a list of items to go through on that day. When the Deputy Speaker said he was trying to explain the procedure, I thought there was something which was coming out which would tell us how we were going to run the Debate of this House this year and for the next few further years.

**Mr Speaker :** I do not know exactly what you are up to. We have no time. We are just starting today and we have to—

**Mr Atuwu :** Yes, let me go straight to the point.

**Mr Speaker :** You will say this during the Motion for Adjournment. I cannot understand what you are saying.

**Mr Atuwu :** Before we go on to the Order Paper, I want to raise this point because it is a point of interest to the House on which the House should take a definite decision. This point is that the Business Committee should give us a programme for at least a week ahead. This was actually discussed and decision was taken accordingly.

**Mr Speaker :** Please leave this matter. It can come up during the Motion for Adjournment. We have a Business Committee, they know what to do.

#### NOTICES OF MOTIONS

##### Plight of Nigerian Students in Overseas Institutions

**Mr Appolos N. Njoku (Isiala Ngwa) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move the Motion standing in my name—

That this Honourable House notes

the present efforts of the Federal Government to alleviate the financial problems of Nigerians in Overseas institutions and hereby directs the Committee on Education to ascertain from the Ministry of Education the extent of the problems with a view to ensuring that the Ministry not only takes prompt action but also finds a lasting solution to these problems.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, anybody seconding the Motion?

**Mr Cornelius Okpa Agbor (Obubra I) :** Mr Speaker, Hon. Members, I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr A. N. Njoku :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members of the House, I take this opportunity to associate myself with the Speaker and others in welcoming you back to this National Assembly in the year 1980. This particular Motion is of a great significance.

In the first place, it is the first Motion coming up in the year, incidentally, it is the first Motion of the decade. It is also a Motion which is seeking to alleviate the problems of Nigerian citizens who, by no fault of theirs, are away from home. More than that, it is a Motion which is trying to save the ugly name which Nigeria has attracted abroad. Now one would like to know what are the facts of the matter, and I would briefly state the facts as follows :

Soon after the President of Nigeria had taken office, a letter was sent from the University of West Virginia in the United States complaining bitterly about the failure of Nigeria to meet what the letter described as little private international obligations.

Mr Speaker, Sir, in November last year I was privileged to be in the American Embassy when a copy of this letter was brought to the Education Officer there. I read it. The letter seemed quite polite but it was a very strong one to come to the President so soon after he had taken office. I enquired into what was happening, and I discovered that various governments of the Federation including the Federal Government, for too long, had failed to meet their financial obligations in protecting the students' interest overseas. I went further to find out, Mr Speaker, that most of these State Governments do not even know the number of students they have abroad. The result was that everybody was suffering in the United States of America.

Back home, here Sir, there have been a lot of complaints in news-papers, and one of them which touched me most was the one written by a Youth Corper, by name Adeji Emeje. It was written in the *Daily Times* of December 8, 1979. Mr Speaker, Sir, with your permission let me quote a passage from that letter. It reads thus :

*The Nigerian Student abroad is constantly faced with acute financial problems resulting from delays in obtaining funds from his sponsors in Nigeria. It is disheartening to note that in most cases the sponsor is one of the twenty governments in Nigeria, and in particular the almighty Federal Government.*

As if this was not enough Mr Speaker, the Thatcher's Administration in London recently increased the school fees paid by Nigerian Students, thereby

creating another area of anxiety. Further Sir, just a few days ago, in the *Daily Tide* of the Rivers State, there was a bitter complaint of students being stranded without even leaving Nigeria, and I started to wonder what the fate of these students was going to be if they had started to be stranded in Nigeria when they had not gone out. Taking all these things into account, Mr Speaker, one is prone to find out what effect or impact this situation has on Nigerian Students overseas.

One would realise that Nigerian students overseas suffer not only mental stress but a lot of physical frustration, a lot of psychological defeat, and infact a tendency towards inferiority complex amongst other students. In order to survive, most Nigerian students overseas have taken to various menial jobs. Over forty years ago I learnt that Nigerian Students washed plates in America to survive. It should be a shame if today, Nigerian Students are still expected to wash plates and to do all sorts of menial jobs in order to survive. All these things, taken together, Mr Speaker, have dented the image of Nigeria in the eyes of the world. One would like to know who are responsible for these failures.

While preparing this Motion, just before we went on break, I took pains myself to visit the Federal Ministry of Education and I had a chat with the then State Minister for Education. I also visited the Central Bank of Nigeria and the Ministry of External Affairs. I even went further to the Ministry of Finance to find out who owes what responsibility towards these students. I did realise that the crux of the matter on the whole is that the Federal Scholarship Board, through its agents, appear not to be performing their duties well. In the States the situation is worse. Everybody appears to take the whole situation as everybody's business which is no man's business. Funds are not made available to these students, and nobody appears to care about it. All these things constitute such heavy problems to our students in overseas institutions.

In an attempt to find out these things, Mr Speaker, in the Ministry of Education, the Minister agreed with me that there was something wrong with the structure and the implementation of the scholarship scheme. It did appear that a lot of money was going into the hands of fictitious Nigeria Students whereas the actual students were suffering unnoticed and isolated. Some people did not seem to be well concerned about what was happening to our student overseas. More than that, there were a few Nigerian Students who enjoyed about two or three scholarships whereas others have nothing at all to enjoy. Taken together, one feels that something is wrong somewhere.

I also went to the Ministry of External Affairs, and to my disenchantment, I discovered that the Ministry of External Affairs, has no financial responsibility over Nigerian Students. They only come in when these students are frustrated. They run to the Embassy to vent their angry feelings on the staff of the Ministry of External Affairs. One would

[MR NJOKU]  
have thought that there should be co-ordination between the State Governments, the Federal Government and the Ministry of External Affairs. One would have thought also that a good record should have been kept in these offices in order to be able to trail the whereabouts of these Nigerian Students. Unfortunately, no such thing is happening.

In fact, in one instance a State Government did not even know the number of students it had abroad. She was enquiring from the Ministry of External Affairs to furnish her with such information. In other States, you find that succeeding governments will just dispose of the cases of students overseas. One Administrator will come in and he would say that he does know absolutely nothing about the students and the scholarship was not awarded by him, and he had no record of them. So, you will find that the students far away bear the brunt of our policies at home. Most unfortunately, the Ministry of External Affairs, which has no funds to help the students in trouble, bear the brunt of the students' anger. These are irregularities which should be looked into.

The Federal Ministry of Finance too claim that they have no real responsibility except to get instruction from the Ministry of Education, which often they get and implement.

At the Central Bank I discovered, according to its functionaries that they remit whatever money they get when all documents are in order. There is one snag at the moment, that snag is that most parents and sponsors who sent their children overseas several years ago are now finding it difficult to pay their fees because of the three years' tax receipt system. Most parents cannot actually produce this tax receipt because this thing started after their children had travelled out. Some of them too are too illiterate to face the trouble of travelling twenty to thirty miles away to the nearest Bank. When they do, they are frustrated by the behaviour of the Bank officials and they go back dejected with the result that knowing not what to do next, they slump down and their children continue to suffer overseas.

Mr Speaker, Sir, taking all these things together, one finds that there is need to review both the system, of awarding scholarship and its implementation and that is where the Committee on Education comes in.

I have a few suggestions to make, Mr Speaker. One of them is that the whole system of scholarship award in this country should be reviewed. It should be mandatory on the State Governments to forward the list of whatever they are awarding to anybody to the Federal Ministry of Education, and in turn to the Ministry of External Affairs so that there could be reliable records. I would go further to suggest, Mr Speaker, that funds for the payment of these things should be made available to the Ministry of External Affairs so that they could be blamed whenever they fail to do their duty. It would be unfair for a person to get a blame for a duty in which he has nothing to do. I maintain that the Ministry of External Affairs has been blamed for doing what it ought not to do and has no way of doing it.

Mr Speaker : Thank you. Please round up.

Mr A. N. Njoku : Mr Speaker, Sir, when there is trouble in overseas institutions about Nigerian Students, it becomes difficult to trace the students because of the irregularities in records. It could be necessary for the States or Federal Government awarding these scholarships to forward to the various Missions abroad the names of such students, their Local Government Areas, their native homes, and their parental names. In case of anything happening, they would be able to trace them.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would also like to suggest that there should be a special fund to be provided in the various Missions abroad to enable the Embassy Officials to handle genuine cases when such situation do arise.

I have briefly tried to enumerate the problems of the scholarship system. I have made my case. I have submitted evidence to prove that the image of Nigeria abroad is dented and that various governments, including the Federal Government, have failed in their moral obligation to remit necessary funds to the students abroad. Here, Sir, it is my submission that the Committee on Education should look deeply into these areas of difficulties and find out exactly what is wrong. If any person or department is found guilty, such a person or department should be blamed.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the decision is yours. I have made my case. Thank you very much.

Mr Patrick E. Ogida (Oredo) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not need to be discursive about this Motion because my Co-Mover has dilated on it extensively and intensively.

It appears that the President of Nigeria anticipated us somehow. I say so because of his recent move about our students overseas. He had directed that the Secretary to the Federal Government Scholarship Board should visit USA with a view to investigating the fate of our suffering students overseas. He had also set up a Committee to look into disbursement of fees for scholarship. My own contribution would border on providing lasting solutions on some of the problems.

As my Co-Mover said, successive Governments had come up and tried to disown this irregularity in respect of scholarship awards. I know of a certain Administrator in the past who said that some of these students overseas suffered because of misdirection of the funds for the scholarship award. He also said that when some of them got the money they would organise new marriages, acquire girl-friends, organise businesses, buy houses and so on. All these, certainly, are not enough reasons for the sufferings of our students overseas.

My own suggestion towards providing a lasting solution is that the disbursement of money should be made in such a way that whatever we have for students overseas should be paid directly to the different institutions. In addition to that, Mr Speaker, I would say that many of the students are already stranded. The question of scholarship award being

reviewed would not solve the problem. I am suggesting that an indigent scheme be added to the review of scholarship award. Thank you very much.

**Mr Roland Owie** (Orhionmwon) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion with the following contributions.

Various successive Governments have complained about this issue of students' sufferings overseas. I think what is basically wrong is in the various Ministries of Education in Nigeria. I wish to recommend that all those who have reached substantive position of Deputy Chief Inspector of Education in the Federal Ministry of Education should be re-deployed or removed permanently from their jobs. What is happening is this. These people feel that because many of them suffered through the rank and file, therefore, these students overseas should suffer the way they too suffered. When you approach them to help you solve your problems, they only complain and tell you that : *Well, you see, when we were at your age we were doing this and that.* I feel that these young boys can no longer suffer just because these old people suffered. What is more, when you get to them in their offices they hang their spectacles on their temples and they will not take up a single file throughout the whole day. It is not only in the Federal Ministry of Education. Go to all State Ministries of Education where they call themselves Deputy Chief Instructors or Deputy Chief Education Officers. Quite frankly, you will find that they do nothing throughout the whole day. They believe in people suffering and they are enjoying it.

Let me take up a case of one Flight student in Oklahoma who was given a Federal Government Scholarship in October 1977 to study Piloting. His name is Mathew Onaghise. Instead of spending three years to finish his first Flight Course, fortunately the young man spent one and a half years. He then applied to the Federal Ministry of Education that he should be allowed to go for the second course. One old Deputy Chief Inspector of Education in that Ministry wrote back to him that he had to return home when, as a matter of fact, he still had one and half years of the scholarship yet unexpended. So, as I said, you find that because these old men suffered so well in their youthful days, they want these poor young men, to suffer as well. I think that the only lasting solution is that these old men should be removed and the young ones in that Ministry should be brought up to take their places.

It is not the problem of reviewing the Scholarship Board at all. What happens is that when scholarships have been awarded, the names are forwarded to the Ministry who should compile them and forward them to the Ministry of Finance. But because these old men are wicked and callous, they want the young ones to suffer by going through the hardship they went through. They would not forward names to the Ministry of Finance ; they would not be bothered at all.

Gentlemen, my appeal is that all officers who are Deputy Inspectors of Education and above in various Ministries of Education in Nigeria should be removed. (*Applause*)

**Prince J. S. Sangha** (Bori I) : Mr Speaker, Sir, the question we are now looking at is a very sympathetic one, especially for those of us who went through this ordeal.

The issue is a tripartite sort of issue. It has to do with our Embassies abroad and the policy makers in this country. In fact, in most cases, some States do send money, but when this money gets to the Embassies abroad, part of it is being misappropriated. I am saying this with definite cases in mind. I know of a time when the Rivers State Government remitted money which could have covered the whole Rivers State's students in the U.S. in 1978, and after the first six months, the Rivers State Government was in red until the then Commissioner for Education, Professor Tam David-West, had to travel to the U.S. and he discovered that the State still had enough money to cover all the students studying in U.S. I think what we really need is an investigation into some of the activities of our officers in our Embassies abroad. This is important not only in terms of the consular but the office work. This because sometimes they block your communication they would not even allow you to get to the man at the top. All the types of practices we find here do happen in our Embassies abroad. I am saying this because I was once a River States' student in the U.S. and I am familiar with what goes on in some of our Embassies. Now, who suffers? The students, of course. In fact, in my specific case, I had to raise a bank loan to be able to pay for my registration when, in fact, the money for my scholarship had been paid. As a palliative measure I would like the system adopted by the then East-Central State Government to be adopted by all the Governments. This is a situation in which both your maintenance allowance and your tuition fee are paid *en bloc* to you and if you know why you are in a particular institution, you will not misappropriate this money. I do not think it is correct to say that students go abroad to marry or to do all sorts of things. It is not. It is giving a bad name to a dog in order to hang it.

The second thing is the question of washing plates. I do not rule this out because in some of the economies where these students are studying there are Professors and Doctors who would want additional income and they do this. I think it is not a derogatory thing to wash plates. We only look at it as derogatory here because we live in a society where our value system is a different one from some civilised economies.

My urgent suggestion is that most of our Embassies abroad should be overhauled and more young men should be posted there. Unless we probe some of these Embassies, the problem would continue to remain with us. I know there are many meaningful actions being taken by many State Governments to alleviate the plight of these students. Sometimes they get stuck even with the Central Bank. They cannot run away from blame because there is a deliberate attempt at the Central Bank to delay this money. I would also ask that for all students who had been abroad before the production of



three years' tax regulation, they should be treated with some degree of consideration especially where it involves the illiterate farmers. I know they pay their tax, they do not run away from tax.

My contribution Sir, is that many of our Embassy staff abroad should be probed and the Central Bank should be given definite instruction to raise an emergency fund and send it abroad to redeem our good image because already many students are now stranded. Many of them have a few months left to finish up but they cannot register. Formerly students were allowed to register with a type of government introductory note but now it has been discovered that in many cases, we do not live up to our obligation. So students have to pay raw cash before they are allowed to register. We are not only punishing those students; we are also reducing the manpower need of the country because if these students are given the opportunity to complete their courses, they would return home and make useful contributions to the development of this country.

I do not see any reason for allowing these students, both private and sponsored students to be stranded. I think something has to be done to alleviate their problems.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr L. O. Okoi (Obubra II)** : Mr Speaker, I rise to support this Motion. Indeed it is a very timely Motion and in doing so I would like to stress or emphasise the following points.

I personally feel that there is virtually no co-ordination between the various bodies that are responsible for the educational welfare or interest of our students both in this country and abroad. Therefore my own suggestion is that if the welfare of these students who are enjoying government scholarships both in this country and abroad is to be properly protected, then there is need for co-ordination right from the local government level up to the Federal Government level. I discover that scholarships are awarded at the Local Government level, at the State level and at the Federal level.

Now an hon. Member has made a point that it has been discovered that one student at times enjoys more than one scholarship at a time, and this is so. The reason for this, Mr Speaker, is that we do not have a sort of co-ordinated returns from the Local Government level up to the Federal Government level. If that is done, it will be discovered that if a student has been awarded a scholarship at say, State level, and that scholarship is enough or sufficient to cater for his own educational needs wherever he may be studying, then there is no need whatsoever for the same student to enjoy another scholarship to cover the same course. So, I think that if there is this effective co-ordination from the Local Government level to the Federal Government level, this type of duplication of scholarship will not be there. I strongly recommend that there should be effective co-ordination from the State up to the Federal level.

I also discover that there is no reason why, in fact, a student who has been awarded a scholarship and sent abroad should be forgotten by the State that was responsible for his scholarship. This

leads me to virtually confirming a point made by one of the speakers that there are quite a number of people in the various Ministries, be they at the State or Federal level, who are not interested in the duties for which they have been employed. It is either they are not interested or they are not competent. So, I call for a general review of the set-up both at the State and the Federal levels as to whoever are responsible for catering for the interest of our students in this country and abroad.

Mr Speaker, I also recommend that there should be quarterly returns of all the students who are sponsored by both the State and the Federal Governments to the Federal Ministry of Education which would make it possible for the man who is in charge in Lagos to know at any given time how many students he has to pay in the United States, which States in Nigeria they come from, and the courses the students are undergoing.

Now, the question of the Central Bank delaying the forwarding of this money should be looked into very seriously. No matter the reason they have, they should not make our students who are studying abroad to suffer. On the basis of this, Mr Speaker, I feel there should be, firstly, quarterly returns and secondly, effective co-ordination right from the State up to the Federal level.

**Alhaji M. B. Mustapha (Bida North)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, in defence of the Ministry of Education and the scholarship awards, there is maximum efficiency regarding the maintenance of our students overseas.

The problem facing them, which most of the hon. Members do not know (and if they care to listen I will tell them as an educationist who was at one time associated with the Scholarship Board) lies with our Embassies overseas. This is due mainly to two reasons—inefficiency and corruption in our Embassies. There is inefficiency on the part of the senior officers who care less about their responsibility as well as corruption up to the supervisory level overseas. Private students who have been given employment by our Embassies abroad and who have been thrown away on the streets, looking for money to meet their desire, are the people who are manipulating our accounts in our Embassies. No State Government can confirm that it receives correct statement of account from any Nigerian Embassy abroad. Similarly no State Government at any time would ask for and get the correct balance of its account from our Embassy. If the Embassy writes today to say it is forty thousand naira, tomorrow the State will receive another letter stating that the amount has been reduced to ten thousand naira. Mr Speaker, this is very serious. Unless our Embassies re-adjust their staff positions and senior officers are ready to face their jobs, I am afraid, our students will continue to suffer. The idea of employing at cheap rate private students turned away from their various universities, or Nigerians who roam the streets and refuse to return home, contribute a lot to the manipulation of our scholarship accounts abroad.

[ALHAJI MUSTAPHA]

Mr Speaker, hon. Members, you may be surprised to know that sometimes, this money is put in the private accounts where they earn interest daily. I know of a case, Mr Speaker, when a student carried his own money along with that of five others to a certain country. This money was paid into the Embassy and this boy was so careful enough as to write to the other students in their various universities that he had come back from Nigeria with their money but could you believe that the other students did not get this money until after two or three months? Is it the fault of the Ministry of Education in Nigeria? The Central Bank always gives maximum co-operation, to be fair to the Central Bank, in anything involving scholarship and students' affairs. But the problem lies with our overseas Embassies. It is a question of inefficiency and corruption.

**Several Hon. Members : Fire ! Fire !**

**Alhaji Mustapha :** So, Mr Speaker, something has to be done about our Embassies generally. It is very pitiful. We are all fathers and we are representing millions of Nigerians. It is very pitiful to see how our students are suffering through no fault of theirs but that of our Embassies overseas. I do not believe that for our students going abroad, the State Governments should be paying their fees directly to the institutions. If a Nigerian Government can send one thousand and one students to various universities abroad, for God's sake, what reasons have our Embassies to give if they cannot simply disburse the money to those students? What are they doing there?

So, Mr Speaker, this is the cause of our students' suffering. At home, the State Governments, the Scholarship Boards and the Central Bank are doing their best but the problem lies with recruitment overseas. In an attempt to get cheap labour, Embassies employ students who were thrown out of schools because of money and then you want them to handle money again. You see, there the problem comes. This is very serious. This is what is happening; it has nothing to do with the Scholarship Boards. They do send the money abroad.

Mr Speaker, hon. Members, no official or representative of the Scholarship Boards can easily get to the senior men in our overseas Embassies. Why? There was a case, Mr Speaker, where the students were complaining that they did not receive their money but the account of my State Government, was reading very high. So, the government decided that the Secretary of the Scholarship Board would have to travel all the way to that country with additional money to go and check but no accountant of our State Government could read through the accounts of our Embassies. This is a shame.

**Mr Speaker :** Round up.

**Alhaji Mustapha :** This is where the problems lie. The fault lies with our External Affairs. They have to re-adjust themselves. They have to be questioned.

With that, hon. Members, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** The hon. Member for Bende (*Mr Ogwe Kalu Ogwe*).

**Mr Ogwe Kalu Ogwe (Bende) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am grateful for your giving me this bonanza.

**Mr Speaker :** I understand you are a chief now. (*Laughter*)

**Mr Ogwe K. Ogwe :** It is an honour to address the hon. Members at the beginning of the year. This subject of the suffering students overseas which implies education is a subject one can really talk about but there is an omnibus clause in this Motion. It includes perennial students, perennial candidates for examinations and it includes very intelligent students. Also it involves, in fact, the whole economic system so to say.

There are some students who actually want to remain students for ever and because of this they contribute to their own financial sufferings and to the nation's sufferings. They always want to be students and they want money always. I would like to advise our Federal Government that in looking into this question they will have to sort out those who are efficient students, who actually want to benefit this country, and those who are very lazy and who do not want to pass their examinations but want to remain in foreign countries moving from one country to another and from one institution to another. These actually jeopardize the economy of this nation and we cannot encourage such students.

Again, there is the question of sending money overseas. As somebody has said here, and, in fact a foreign friend told me this, there is delay in the Central Bank to the extent that the money remitted is not received in time. This has got so much that even in business circles, whenever they hear that money is coming from Nigeria, they develop cold feet. This thing relates to our students and it really hampers their educational progress. I would advise that the Central Bank does its job well knowing fully well that the way it operates affects the economy of this nation and will either improve or destroy the image of this nation. The Central Bank should take note.

Now, I come to the statements made about our Embassies. Yes, if we look into it, most of the people employed want to serve in foreign states. They want to serve everywhere, they would like to move in a zig-zag fashion in order to get what they want at all costs and this brings about inefficiency in every system. If the right man is appointed, whatever may be his political inclination, whatever may be his State or tribe, whatever may be his town, some of the societal ills of this country would be reduced to the barest minimum. I would advise that we adopt federal character. If you like, as an hon. Member has suggested, not federal character as such, but federal character in the sense that the right man goes to the right place. Honesty should be the watch-word of this country so that in probing the Embassies, as somebody has suggested, we will equally probe the students themselves so that we do not continue sending money every time and somebody remains there because he is a student.

MR OGWE

After all, we have several universities here and, in fact, the best students are recruited first and then the dullards find their way everywhere in the other countries. We should reduce to the barest minimum the number of people going abroad in the name of reading without reading in the real sense of the word, and those who have finished reading we should probe them. If they have finished, we should send them back here; we should not be wasting money on them to live in luxury overseas. This is my humble contribution.

**Mr Speaker :** The hon. Member for Ikwerre/Etche I (Chief Stephen Ikpoku Alete) may speak.

**An hon. Member :** He is also a Chief.

**Chief Stephen Ikpoku Alete (Ikwerre/Etche I) :** Do not worry about it. My Chief is a traditional one. Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to make my humble contribution to this Motion. I consider this Motion very important because it is dealing with the future of our children who, we hope, will take over from us when we shall have done our time. The Motion on the Floor deals with the plight of all Nigerian students, who are in overseas institutions of higher learning at all levels. So it covers everything.

Now, I notice that the hon. Members who have spoken on this have concentrated on one aspect of the Motion. They were dealing with the Nigerian students who are on scholarship but they have not said anything, as I would want to say now, on Nigerian students who are not on scholarship. Much has been said about Nigerian Students who are on scholarship; so I do not want to spend much time on that.

I want to concentrate on Nigerian Students who are in overseas in various institutions at all levels of study, students who are sponsored by their parents or guardians to assist the Nigerian Government to produce more manpower. I would like to point out here that their own suffering is not mainly that there is no fund or they lack fund but that their own suffering is a peculiar one. It is a suffering which is brought about by what I may call a dog in the manger.

The last regime in this country decided that Nigerian students sent by their sponsors, parents or guardians overseas to assist this country produce more manpower, should not be allowed foreign exchange to maintain them. They had put this ban as from August last year and this ban is still on. I feel that this Motion which covers both scholarship as well as private students should now call upon the President to rescind that decision that foreign exchange should not be made available to parents or guardians to help them train Nigerian students who are overseas. That is what I want to say on this Motion.

I want to prove the injustice in this decision. The last regime having made that decision still continued to award scholarships to Nigerian Students to go overseas. If Government can still send their students after that decision and allow them foreign exchange, why is it then that private parents and guardians cannot also send their children overseas where they can acquire knowledge for the benefit of Nigeria and Nigerians. So, I feel that while we are dealing

with scholarship students, we should also extend this benefit to the private students who are also citizens of this country and are also doing the same thing that the scholarship students are doing—acquiring knowledge to come back home and then benefit Nigeria and Nigerians.

I would like to support this Motion and to add to it by saying that this Motion should call upon the President to rescind the decision that private students who are overseas at all levels of education should not be allowed foreign exchange to maintain them. This decision should be rescinded immediately. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Ambrose Gapsuk (Shendam East) :** I would like to seize this opportunity to say a happy New Year to all hon. Members and to thank Mr Speaker for giving me this golden opportunity on the first day to contribute to this issue. I would like to mention two or three points in connection with the speeches on this very issue.

The first thing is about what the last speaker had said in relation to private students who were not allowed the facilities of foreign exchange to go abroad. While I do not like to defend the last Administration blindly on this issue, I would like to point out the reason, to the best of my knowledge, as I had been closely associated with the Plateau State Scholarship Board. I know very well the reasons why sometimes we find private students who struggle to go abroad and the Government says no, they cannot have foreign exchange.

I am aware of one very rich gentleman in my State who wanted to send a child of about 11 years old to go and do his primary education abroad. We realised that this was a way of rather draining our economy unnecessarily, because sending a primary school child abroad is a mere display of pomp and pageantry. If you send such a small child abroad, apart from the fact that you are depriving him of imbibing the Nigerian strata of culture, you are also using him to send out Nigerian wealth abroad unnecessarily. This calls to mind the issue of very poor students who are known clearly not to have passed the WASC. I know of some people who could not pass their WASC and went into the Armed Forces and after dropping out; simply because they wanted to cover up their faces before the Nigerian society, they wanted to go abroad. They think that there is some magic because they want to come back and say they had been to London, America, India, or France. This group of people are mere instruments for the draining of Nigerian economy and this was why the past Administration or the past regime placed an embargo as much as possible on many of those people who wanted to go abroad and come back and say *we have been to*.

I know of a very notorious school in London Fleet Street School of Journalism. Most of our poor brains seek admissions into this very cheap playground. It is not even an academic institution. It is a place where people just while away their time, enjoy themselves and come back and adulterate the Press of this country. I had the opportunity of being nominated to visit this very Institution. This is

[MR. GAPSUK]

mere Colonial Institution for the draining of the Nigerian economy. Definitely, no responsible Government, Mr speaker and hon. Members, would know of the existence of such an irresponsible Institution and allow its own citizens to go there to while away time and come back to adulterate such an honourable profession like journalism. This being the issue, I would also like to point out one other area while we talk about students suffering abroad.

Students go abroad either under parental scholarship or Government scholarship. They finish their first degrees and rather than keeping to the scholarship agreement terms, they refuse to come back as somebody had said earlier. They do not only refuse to come back home but they also change Institutions. When the State Government has sent money, the money goes to our Embassy and the student's whereabouts cannot be traced because he has left London and is now in Chicago. If these people suffer on account of their movements without notifying either our Embassy or his home Government, that is their own responsibility. But, on the whole, I would like to say that the Nigerian Government (State and Federal) should have a standing regulation that if you get the qualification, you should come home and contribute. Some people, when they have got their degrees, they specialise in being London Metropolitan gentlemen or American guys. These people definitely cannot continue to live on our purses.

I agree that our Embassies are so lazy to implement the directives in sending the money to those people who are actually reading. They are so arrogant. This hinges on the fact that the Ambassador cannot even be seen by the Nigerian students who travel from Dundee, from Manchester or from Scotland, to come and just find out whether their allowances have come. They are told that they cannot see him. I wish to pay tribute to one of the most prominent Nigerian representatives in the High Commission in London in the person of Mrs Herman in those days. This woman was so humanitarian, such a very good representative and actually when she was in the Nigerian High Commission, everybody who was opportune to meet her, would agree that she was so accessible, very helpful, very motherly and she was very, very gentle. This is the kind of people we should send out to our Embassies to be in charge of scholarships.

I beg to support this Motion with this observation that our Ministries of Education in the various States and at the Federal level must see that no students who are legitimately sent abroad suffer any inconvenience.

**Mr M. J. Akpabio (Uyo II)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to speak in support of the Motion ably moved by the hon. Member for Isiala Ngwa (*Mr Njoku*).

Mr Speaker, Sir, many Members have spoken on this Motion about the plight of Nigerian students abroad. The question is, apart from the various Scholarship Boards, Local Governments, States and Federal and the various foreign Missions, who else

is responsible for the plight of Nigerian students abroad? To my mind, Sir, I would say that the plight of Nigerian students abroad is caused by the Nigerian students themselves. Quite apart from the so-called students who are sponsored by various governments, there are a great many of our students who had left the borders of this country to pursue certain disciplines that are available in Nigerian Universities abroad. They just decided on their own to leave Nigerian borders for abroad after failing to satisfy the admission requirements in our various institutions in this country. Most of these students, Mr Speaker, Sir, do not even have the elementary courtesy of reporting their arrival to our various Embassies over there. The result is that these Embassies are not in a position to trace or locate the whereabouts of these students who have decided to leave Nigeria on their own.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is time that the Government of this country came up with a directive that a prospective student who is not able to gain admission into Nigerian Universities and whose educational qualification does not and cannot entitle him for admission into any of the Universities in this country should not even leave these borders. I cannot understand why a person, just because he has been fortunate enough to have addresses of various backyard Universities in the United States, London Suburbs, and Western Germany would decide to leave this country and when he runs into certain financial difficulties, he would sit down there and write, condemning the Federal Government or State Governments for not coming to his aid.

Another point, Sir, is that of the calibre of people in our various Foreign Missions. Most of them are never interested in the welfare of Nigerians, not only Nigerian students but Nigerians, whether they are on business or otherwise. Some time ago we read in the papers Sir, that a Nigerian was shot dead by an American. Personally, I had waited to read of any comments emanating from the U.S. Embassy. Up till this moment it does not seem the Embassy here is interested. The position, Sir, is that these people like an hon. Member has said, only stay there for their own selfish interests. They are all corrupt. They just stay there to make money. They refuse to render account to various States, to the Federal Government and to the Local Governments that had so milked the people of their localities to get money to sponsor their students abroad. No account whatsoever is rendered to these various bodies on behalf of students studying abroad.

Mr Speaker, Sir, this is a very important issue that the Federal Government should be called upon to direct all Foreign Missions abroad to submit regular quarterly returns to various Scholarship Boards in the country to reflect the payments made to various institutions on behalf of students covered by scholarships.

Again Sir, with due respect, those of our students abroad who have been on government scholarship should also be directed as a matter of fact, to come back and reciprocate the kindness of the Federal Government and the people of this country who have contributed to their maintenance overseas. Most of them stay overseas after their courses, buy

[MR AKPABIO]  
houses, go into business and then complain that Level 08 is too small for them to come and start with. They want to come back here and start from Level 15 or Level 16. I wonder what those who had studied in this country, those who had remained here to offer themselves for this country, will be earning. They should be called upon to come back and work for this country.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these very few comments, I thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to contribute to the Motion.

**Alhaji Sarki Adamu (Dawakin-Kudu)** : Mr Speaker, Members of the House, I rise here to reluctantly support this Motion. Reluctance in the sense that the blame should be rested not only on the Government but the private students themselves.

Mr Speaker, I should like to classify the categories of students we have abroad. First, we have the Government students, those who are sponsored by their respective governments and the Federal Government. Secondly, we have students sponsored by their parents. Thirdly, we have students sponsored by themselves. Coming back to the students sponsored by the government, Mr Speaker, I should like to rest the blame solely on the government because most of the students or majority of the students sponsored have not got the required qualification to secure admission overseas, but through relatives or through some influence here they fortunately try to squeeze themselves and get admission. When they go overseas, they have no career officer in the Embassy who will advise them on the appropriate courses they should take. Most of them start their courses blindly and after some few years, they find they cannot cope.

At last they get frustrated with their studies and instead they start to work. In most cases the Government refuses to continue to be responsible for their education when they are working and they find themselves stranded. Secondly, those sponsored by their parents find it difficult in the long run to continue paying their school fees and their maintenance allowance because of lack of foreign exchange. So, Mr Speaker, Sir, for this, the blame should be on the parents. Thirdly, those private students who go overseas on their own are almost eighty per cent of the total number of students we have overseas. In the first place, they have not got the necessary academic qualifications to secure admission overseas. What they do here is either to work as stewards and the females go to all those hotels like Mainland Hotel, Federal Palace, *et cetera*, where they work for the money with which to go abroad. When they have collected a substantial sum of money to go abroad, they would write to their relatives Overseas, who would help them to get the necessary visas. They would then travel blindly without knowing what to do. Before they get admission to any college it takes about a year or two and within this interval, they get frustrated and start working. Eventually they get stranded.

Mr Speaker, Sir, generally I think I am reluctantly supporting this Motion because most of the blame rests fully on the students and not on the Government. The Government should be sure that

everybody who is going outside the country must have the necessary academic qualification to enable him get admission to any University or College. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker** : Let us hear the hon. Member for Ekiti West (*Prof. Opayemi Ola*) because this is his field.

**Prof. Opayemi Ola (Ekiti West)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Ladies and Gentlemen, I rise to say Happy New Year both to the Speaker and to all hon. Colleagues. Like the previous speakers I rise to support this Motion both in its intention and its goodwill.

In making my own contribution I will not waste time by dilating on what has been said before but a simple analysis has been established that the students of Nigeria are suffering overseas. I do not think that there is any doubt about the reports in newspapers and the Ministries. The problems have been analysed as being caused by various bodies and Institutions, namely, the Ministry of Education, the Central Bank and the Embassies and some people say the students themselves. In the main, as a person I would like to believe that the problems are caused by the Government and not by the students. If there is anything on the part of the students it is only very slight. The main problems are caused by our Government particularly inefficiency and apathy in the Ministry of Education, inefficiency and apathy in the Central Bank, and inefficiency and apathy in our foreign Embassies. But my main thrust in this contribution is not actually the problems because that has been well taken care of. I think in debating here we not only should be attacking problems but we also should be talking about solutions. I think an hon. Member mentioned one kind of solution namely, that people in the foreign Embassies should be probed and I will support this. An hon. Colleague from the UPN, Bendel State, said that some people in the Ministry of Education should be redeployed and if possible dismissed. I will support this provided they are found guilty.

My own degree of suggestion in solving these problems is a little bit more constructive. I have organizational suggestion. When you look at this problem it is a way of saying that remitting of fund is either wrong or winding, that is, the process and channels are too long. We can therefore shorten the process of remitting funds by eliminating the intermediaries between the Scholarship Boards and the various Universities. In other words, is it actually necessary to send this through the Embassies? This is causing delay. Is it not possible for the Scholarship Boards to remit funds directly from the country here to the Universities? You merely go through the Central Bank. What I am saying is that we can render and remit funds through the Scholarship Boards and the Central Bank direct to the Universities without necessarily going through the Embassies. If this is done a lot of the problems will be eliminated and I think not only that, the hon. Members should take care and take note of this suggestion but that the Ministries of Education and the President himself should take note. Then in order to alleviate the

[PROFESSOR OLA] problems further, may I also suggest that there should be a special division in the Central Bank which will be the Scholarship Division, that would be responsible for quick remittance of funds to students. There should be co-ordination between this Division and the Ministry of Education.

If there is any official in the Central Bank that is causing delay and is not doing his job, this kind of people should be invited before the Committee of the National Assembly on Education and they should be answerable to us. They should give reasons why there should be delay when the Government is ready to provide the funds and the students are ready to study. Why then the delay by the Central Bank? These are my suggestions but I also like to say that apart from these organisational suggestions of eliminating these problems, I like to associate myself with one of the speakers by saying that it is not only the Government sponsored students that should be entitled to Scholarship. All Nigerians studying overseas should be entitled to scholarship. There is no reason why there should be a privileged and favoured class who are entitled to scholarship when there are others who are equally qualified Nigerians, who are suffering by being stewards, scavengers and scrubbers of floor in London and New York. Every Nigerian is a Nigerian and if they are entitled to scholarship, every other person should be entitled to scholarship. Apart from this—

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of Order. What is your point of order?

**Mr Yusuf Amoka (Okene) :** My point of order is Order 26 (2). We are talking of scholarship and he is introducing another item. We are talking of those students suffering overseas and he should not introduce his Party Ideology here.

**Prof. Ola :** Thank you for the point of order.

I am only saying that every Nigerian is entitled to scholarship and you will see with me that many of these students are being sponsored and are studying in the fields of science, technology, management and so on. This means that they are very essential not only for the interest of manpower, but also in the interest of the rapid transformation of this country. For this simple reason, every Nigerian who has the brain must enjoy scholarship.

Finally, I would like to suggest, Mr Speaker, that the problem is not only in terms of organisational shortening of the process between the Ministry of Education and the various universities and the students who are enjoying the scholarship, but also goes to the basic problem of the fundamental overhauling of our educational system. Some people have suggested that people are going overseas unnecessarily, but as an educator, I do not believe this as many hon. Members believe. You should ask yourself why should Nigerian students go overseas when there are universities in Nsukka, Port Harcourt, Zaria, Benin, Lagos, and Ibadan? The thing is that between the supply and the demand, there is dis-equilibrium. The Nigerian universities cannot cope with the educational thirst for knowledge of our students. There are many students who cannot gain admission not only because of the inefficiency of JAMB but also because of allocation

of quota and so on and so forth. These students who have no opportunity for education in Nigeria have a fundamental and Constitutional right to go overseas, to go to Germany or Alaska, in fact anywhere to get education not only to improve themselves but also to improve Nigeria and to improve Black Africa.

Lastly, Sir, I would like to say that this question of scholarship is not only on the harrowing plight and problems of students overseas. Fundamentally it is also an aspect of our deficient educational institution in this country, that is educational Philosophy. It is only at the point and at the time when we re-organise things and orient things by making the Nigerian students abroad and at home very efficient and very comfortable. It is only at this point when we can have that system of education that will benefit our students, citizens and our country. Thank you.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, I think it is all right. May the Leader of the House move that the Question be put.

**Mr Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members of the House, may I now ask that the Question be put.

*Question, That the question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to*

*Resolved :* That this Honourable House notes the present efforts of the Federal Government to alleviate the financial problems of Nigerian in Overseas institutions and hereby directs the Committee on Education to ascertain from the Ministry of Education, the extent of the problems with a view to ensuring that the Ministry not only takes prompt action but also finds a lasting solution to these problems.

**Mr Speaker :** The second Motion stands in the name of Mr Yahaya Aremu. Is he not here?

#### Control of Drugs

**Mr Aremu Yahaya (Ilorin East) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members of the House, I rise to move the Motion that stands in my name :

That this Honourable House views with great concern the growing incidence in this country of drug abuse, peddling of dangerous drugs by unlicensed people and the exorbitant prices charged by drug dealers and hereby directs the Committee on Health to look into this matter without delay.

I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion?

**Mr Charles A. Adoga (Ogoja) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to second the Motion

**Mr Speaker :** Mr Aremu, go on with the Motion.

**Mr Aremu :** As one of the Members that went to the United States, I would like to resent that this Motion be not debated at all and be sent straight to the Committee on Health. I hope that Mr Speaker will agree with me in this respect.

**Mr Speaker :** I hold the same view and I think that that is the view of the House that this Motion should go straight to the Committee for thorough and adequate investigation.

[MR SPEAKER]

Hon. Members, is it the wish of the Members that this Motion go to the Committee on Health?

**Several hon. Members :** Yes.

**The Speaker :** So, this Motion is referred to the Committee on Health.

Clerk, please take note and ensure that all matters that we have referred to Committees are sent to these Committees for immediate action.

**Mr Tom Egbuwoku (Isoko) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, my point of explanation is this. I do not dispute that this Motion should be referred to the Committee on Health.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Egbuwoku :** But Mr Speaker, Sir, what I am saying is that we should not start using his experience in the United States here. (*Interruptions*)

**The Speaker :** Please, leave the matter. We have finished with that matter.

Yes, Motion for adjournment. Will the Leader of the House move ?

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr Yunusa Kaltungo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that this House stands adjourned until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

**The Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Tom Egbuwoku :** I stand to second the Motion. (*Interruptions*)

**The Speaker :** Order ! Order ! I have the names of those who want to speak on the Motion for adjournment. They were submitted to the Clerk. The first person is the hon. Member for Mbaitoli (*Mr E. D. N. Uwandu*). He is not here.

The next person is hon. Member for Degema II (*Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel*).

#### African Cup of Nations

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II) :** I beg to speak about the African Cup of Nations.

The Nigerian Sports Commission is to hold the African Cup of Nations in Nigeria from 8th March, to the 22nd March, 1980 and up till today, (we have about 60 days to go), we have not known anything about the preparations made by the Nigerian Authorities to hold this competition. All hon. Members know that Nigeria has been relegated to the background in sports. It will be very shameful for Nigeria as the leading country in Africa to miss the African Cup of Nations. We shall be hosting seven other countries that are very well-equipped. They are very well equipped to face Nigeria to make sure that the Cup is not won by Nigeria.

For the past seven years of this competition every country that hosted the competition succeeded in winning the Cup. Ghana did it in Ghana and Ethiopia did it in Ethiopia. Other countries achieved the same feat. Nigeria, as I have said, is hosting the competition this year, and so far there have been no preparations. Since about two years ago we knew the competition would be held here, yet there has been no preparation for it at all. It will be very painful to know that Nigeria which is organising this competition this year fails to win the Cup. We are appealing to the Minister now through the Speaker to find out what can be done to ensure Nigeria comes out top in the competition.

I would appeal to the hon. Members to feel very concerned about this matter. Success in sports is one of the greatest achievements a country can be proud of and it shall be very shameful for Nigeria which leads the whole of Africa to be relegated to the background in sports every time. We went to the Olympics and failed to win any medals. We participated in many competitions where we failed to win any medals and our Estimate for sports is about ten to fifteen million naira a year but this money is being spent unnecessarily without achieving any results. So, the Minister should make sure that Nigeria wins this African Cup of Nations because other countries that have hosted the competition also won it in the past years. For Nigeria to host it this year and lose it to another country will be very disgraceful.

With this remark, I think the hon. Members should contribute effectively to make sure that we win the Cup for our country. Thank you.

**Mr P. K. Atuwo (Sagbama) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, Hon. Members I would have wanted to make a particularly important point on current affairs but I can see the House is very thin.

**Mr Speaker :** No, make your point.

#### Three main Nigerian Languages on Television

**Mr Atuwo :** Mr Speaker, the point I want to make is about the revival of the three main languages on the Television especially the seven o'clock net-work news.

Mr Speaker, I was out of the country during the last three weeks of recess. I returned yesterday to find that an important Executive action has taken place. It is very serious because this is one aspect of the insertion into the Constitution by the last military regime and it is an insertion that the makers of the Constitution did not provide for. It has behind it a long history, a history of a growing nation and what we want to build especially in the decade of the eighties is a nation of Nigerians. If we want to build a nation of Nigerians we do not want to come back, Mr Speaker, to the period of the fifties and sixties or the first half of the sixties in which we had not a Nigerian nation, but a nation

[Mr ATUWO]

where there were three nationalities—three nations each really holding firm to its sphere of influence.

I have a story to tell. Once upon a time, Mr Speaker, there were three Nigerians, the North, and the South made up of the West and the East. Each held firm to its sphere of influence, that is the regions, and there was no agreement to increase the number of regions. We knew what this brought about. It culminated in the holocaust of 1967 and we divided this country into twelve States and now there are 19 States. I am very concerned and I think hon. Members and the whole Nigerian population will join me in this concern that we are going back.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, there is a point of order. Please sit down when a point of order is being taken.

**Mr E. N. D. Uwandu (Mbaitoli) :** I refer to Rule 8 (1) of the Standing Orders.

**Mr Speaker :** What Order ? (*Interruptions*). Carry on please.

**Mr Atuwu :** I was referring merely to the revival of the three major languages.

**Mr Speaker :** Round up.

**Mr Atuwu :** I think I will call this revival a retrogress step because we are sliding back progressively into an era again of enforcing the three nationalities and that, I suppose, is not in the best interest of this country. It is inimical to the unity, stability and peace of this country and I therefore call on the Executive President to immediately see to it that this Executive order is rescinded.

Mr Speaker, Sir, a Motion is coming before this House to enforce the beginning of a nation. We should now be in a position to call ourselves Nigerians and also if we want to adopt an indigenous language, we should adopt one Nigerian language.

I was in the United States during the recess and I talked to a lot of Congressmen both at State level and at the Federal level. A lot of them look up to this country as the hope for the Black man—as a hope of Africa. Therefore they want us to evolve a nation that will bring about the emancipation of the Blackman in the decade of the eighties, or from the beginning of this decade. In order to build a nation of Nigeria, we must be very careful about our actions. We should make sure that we do not slide back and take steps which history will prove us wrong. By

enforcing three arms or three main nationalities in this country, we are not really promoting the unity and progress of this country. Therefore I am appealing, and I think the National Assembly will join me in appealing to the Executive President to see that this order which is now taking its ugly turn again backwards, is rescinded so that we can go back into the era of adopting a lingua franca. If we want to adopt it and speak only one language, we should be courageous enough to really adopt it and not beat about the bush and come back again to enforce three nationalities in this country.

**Mr Speaker :** Time up. There is another Paper, by Alhaji Tugga, but make your explanation first hon. Member for Okehi Adavbi (*Mr Damisa Jimoh*).

**Mr Damisa Jimoh (Ohehi Adavbi) :** Mr Speaker Sir, hon. Members, the last speaker has made a very important and fundamental issue and I am suggesting that that matter should come up in a proper Motion because we can no more allow these three languages to create problems for us in this country. This country is not a country of three languages. We have had enough of them. We want what he has said to be brought in a proper Motion and debated in this House. We have killed ourselves because of these three main languages. So many things have happened to this country because of what we hear in the NTA. They call it *Wazobia*. We should have a proper Motion. We have not had a lingua franca. We do not. This country does not belong to only three tribes, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Uwandu (Mbaitoli) :** Earlier on I raised the point of Order which states that this House shall not be less than one-fifth of the Members of the House but somebody said that during a Motion for Adjournment it does not apply. I have looked through the whole Order and there is no where it is said so.

**Mr Speaker :** Mr Uwandu, we have heard that.

Alhaji Kaltungo, you can now move that the Question be put.

**Mr Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members I now ask the Question to be put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That this House stands adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 12.25 p.m.*



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Tuesday, 15th January, 1980

The House met at 10.05 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Votes and Proceedings

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, I have seen the Votes and Proceedings of 14th January, 1980 and they are in order.

Military take-over in 1966

Members will recall that exactly 14 years ago there was a dramatic change in the Government of this country from civilian to Military Administration. During the process of that change some notable Nigerians lost their lives. May I ask hon. Members to rise and observe one minute silence in honour and remembrance of our respected first Prime Minister, late Alhaji Tafawa Balewa and others who lost their lives in the process of the Military intervention of January 15, 1966.

(One minute silence observed)

Committee Meetings

Members also would have noticed from the Order Paper that a number of Committee Meetings are scheduled to take place today. Members of the Committees concerned should make it a point of duty to attend the meetings at the time indicated in the Order Paper.

Members of the Joint Committee on remuneration should also note that a meeting of that Committee is scheduled to take place tomorrow, 16th January, 1980, in the Senate Building.

Presence of a Distinguished Visitor

Hon. Members, I have the pleasure to announce the presence in our midst this morning of one of the Presidential Advisers, Dr K. O. Mbadiwe.

**Several hon. Members :** K. O. Man of Timber and Calibre. Man of Juggernaut. (Applause)

**Mr Speaker :** As hon. Members have rightly said, he is a man of Timber and Calibre. He eventually graduated to a Juggernaut.

Dr Mbadiwe, we are really very grateful to have you here, and the Members of the House of Representatives will co-operate in all ways possible to assist you in your new task and to help in building a solid Nigerian Nation.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation

Adjourned Debate on Question,  
12th December, 1979

*Motion made and Question again proposed :* That this Honourable House set up a high-powered Commission of Inquiry to investigate the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation in view of the loss (or misappropriation) of ₦2.8 billion revealed by the Annual Audit Report issued by Messrs Coopers and Lybrand, Chartered Accountants, on the Company aforesaid.

**Mr Speaker :** Today's Order Paper, that is, Tuesday 15th January, 1980, contains a Motion on the Nigerian National Corporation. This Debate is an adjourned Debate from 12th December, 1979. The Motion is in the name of the hon. Member for Degema I (Mr Princewill Dagodo).

**Mr D. Princewill (Degema I) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, before I move this Motion I have observed an error on the Order Paper of 12th December, 1979. There was a co-sponsor of this Motion, and I would like his name to be there.

**Mr Speaker :** Mr Princewill, that is not a material defect. You can go on to argue your Motion. Your co-sponsor will make contribution in due course.

**Mr D. Princewill (Degema I) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to move the Motion Standing in my name on the Order Paper—

That this Honourable House set up a high-powered Commission of Inquiry to investigate the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation in view of the loss (or misappropriation) of ₦2.8 billion revealed by the Annual Audit Report issued by Messrs Coopers and Lybrand, Chartered Accountants, on the Company aforesaid.

I beg to Move, Sir.

**Mr Speaker :** Is there anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr A. B. Okon (Ikot Ekpene I) :** I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr D. Princewill :** Mr Speaker, Sir, we are today talking about a Corporation which is the mainstay of our economy, and I would like hon. Members to view it as such. First of all, I would like to give a brief history about the formation of this Corporation. It was precisely in April 1977, that a Military Decree incorporated either by merger or by absorption a Company called the Nigerian National Oil Company (NNOC). The Petroleum Division of the Ministry of Mines and Power and the Ministry itself were either by merger or absorption made Nigerian National Oil Company.

We are talking Sir, about a Company which has a turn-over of eight billion to ten billion naira, and the amount which is said to be misappropriated or lost is in the range, Mr Speaker, of between twenty-eight and thirty-five per cent of our total national income for a year.

[MR PRINCEWILL]

My enquiry has revealed, Sir, that in this Company there are no adequate personnel especially in the field of accounting and internal audit. I understand too, Sir, that people are being scared away for one reason or the other because they do not come from a particular part of this great country and too, Sir, because they do not belong, or because they were not ex-students of a particular institution. I understand, Sir, that this institution is Igbobi College. If you are not an ex-product of Igbobi College, or you are not from a particular State or States, you are not given responsible position. As a result of this, Sir, well qualified people left their jobs in this Corporation. I am told, Sir, that one Mallam M. Y. Wanka, from Bauchi State, a qualified Chartered Accountant, was the only one in the Audit Department. He was frustrated, and he had to leave, and today, he is in the Nigerian National Supply Company as a Representative/Agent in their London Office. Even as at today, Sir, there are only four qualified Chartered Accountants in that Company.

Mr Speaker, Sir, members of the profession of which I am one are very difficult to get—I mean the Chartered Accountants. A Corporation of the magnitude of the NNPC should have gone to the Nigerian labour market and tried its best to get these people. Instead of that, Sir, there are only four Accountants, two in the audit department and two in the main accounts department. For a Corporation of this magnitude, this is grossly inadequate. The four Chartered Accountants are not even sufficient in one department not to talk of the whole Corporation. A Corporation of this standard should get at least twenty Chartered Accountants. I am also told that the service condition is very bad in this Corporation, and the service condition has made good people to run away from this Corporation.

Now, Sir, the audit report as given by an internationally recognised and reputable firm of Chartered Accountants, disclosed that they were unable to confirm or find any justifiable reason for the misappropriation of ₦2.8 billion. This is very serious. In this country, we are told that the Press is the watchdog of the nation. During the Army regime it was very difficult, if not impossible, to investigate this matter. Now it is falling on our shoulders to do this onerous task. I would like to commend the Punch Group of newspapers who were able to tell us what was actually happening in this Corporation, but they were unable to investigate further what had happened to ₦2.8 billion. Either as a result of inefficiency or misappropriation, this amount is unaccounted for.

Mr Speaker, Sir, furthermore, the firm of auditors reported that in this Corporation, there are no internal control. For the benefit of hon. Members, I would like to define what is meant by internal control. Internal control does not only mean internal control and internal check but the whole system of control, financial or otherwise, established by management in order to carry out the business of the Corporation or Company in an orderly manner, to safeguard and secure, as far as possible, the accuracy and reliability of its record. Mr Speaker, Sir, you will agree that where there is no internal control,

then the business is in a haphazard manner, and for a business of this magnitude which is the mainstay of our economy to be in a haphazard manner, I think the country would be drifting to its edifice.

Mr Speaker, Sir, there are other important things other than the loss of the 2.8 billion Naira. There is also the relationship of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation with the other oil prospecting companies like Shell BP, and lately, AB, Gulf, Agip, and the rest of them. My enquiry reveals that the system of co-operation between the NNPC and these oil companies is that of a joint venture.

Sir, the Indigenisation Decree states that all Nigerian Corporations or Companies should be taken over by indigenes or companies where appropriate, and that we should have a controlling share or controlling interest. This is not so in NNPC which has gone into agreement with these Oil Companies in the nature of joint venture. Mr Speaker, with your permission, I would like to define joint venture. A joint venture is defined in Bell Principle, at 392 as follows :

*Joint adventure or joint trade is a partnership confined to a particular adventure, speculation, cost of trade or voyage, and in which the partners, either latent or known use no name or social name, and incur no responsibility beyond the limit of the adventure.*

A joint venture cannot be distinguished in any way from an ordinary partnership beyond the fact that the agreement is of a specially limited character. Now, Sir, we hon. Members know all the oil prospecting companies in Nigeria and the share capital of these companies is, at best, half a million, that is, five hundred thousand. The network of these companies is over five hundred million, in which case Sir, there has been a capital appreciation. Where there is a capital appreciation and NNPC is wholly in co-operation with these companies in a form of joint venture, well Sir, may I ask, will the NNPC be in a position to share in the network of the company in case these companies are winding up? The present worth of the companies as I have said is over five hundred million. Why is it then that the NNPC cannot go into full participation as stated in the Indigenisation Decree? I am recommending, Sir, that this honourable House do recommend that NNPC should go into full partnership. What they are doing presently Sir, is to engage or pay up to sixty per cent of the exploration cost of these companies while these companies keep the capital growth. This is a very bad accounting system.

Mr Speaker, Sir, we are aware that this Corporation is in a new hand now. There was low morale in the Corporation during the period I have investigated the allegation of a loss of ₦2.8 billion. This honourable House Sir, has the right under Section 82 of our Constitution. Section 82, Subsection (2) (b) says, and with the permission of the Speaker Sir, I read :

*To expose corruption, inefficiency or waste in the execution or administration of laws within its legislative competence and in the disbursement or administration of funds appropriated by it.*

Now Sir, the NNPC is shortly to go into many companies and they would be holding companies. I know Mr A. K. Hart, a new appointee of President Alhaji Shehu Shagari, is an able administrator. He cannot work with all the mess that is in the NNPC and I am suggesting Sir, or may I put to this House Sir, that the old hand in the NNPC, that is, the former Managing Director, be removed and re-assigned. As a first national officer of my party, it is my party's intention not to go into probes. We said that when we went into election. We are not probing anyone, let by-gone be by-gone. (*Interruptions*)

**Several hon. Members :** No! No! No!

**Mr Speaker :** Order! Order!

**Mr D. Princewill :** Well, I can see Sir, I am talking of probing individuals. Please, hon. members do agree with me, I am talking of probing individual is. This is our electoral manifesto.

**Several hon. Members :** No! No!

**Mr Speaker :** Mr Princewill, when there is an interruption you wait and when it subsides, then you start talking again.

**Mr Princewill :** Thank you Sir, for your advice.

Hon. Members, what I am trying to say is that Mr A. K. Hart should be given a free hand and by the grace of God the President himself is in charge of this Corporation, we are sure things are going to move well but things cannot move well if these old hands are still there. When I went to the NNPC yesterday I found out that an Engineer was in charge of the Personnel Department. I do not want to mention names, but he comes from a particular State which is favoured. An administrator from the Northern State was removed and so Mr A. K. Hart has summoned this man to come back. He had left the NNPC for six months in frustration, and Mr A. K. Hart has brought him back. Well hon. Members, I do not want to mention names as I have said.

**Several hon. Members :** Mention names. Mention names.

**Mr Speaker :** Mr Princewill, remember you are enjoying enormous privileges. Here, you can mention names if you like.

**Mr Princewill :** Mr Speaker, Sir, thank you very much. (*Interruptions*) Mr Speaker has asked me to mention names and I will do so. An Engineer by name—

**Mr Tom Egbuwoku (Isoko) :** Point of Order.

Mr Speaker the point of Order is Order 26 (2). I believe this is a very good Motion and the speaker should restrict himself to the provision of this Section. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Please Mr Egbuwoku, that is not a point of order.

**Mr Princewill :** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

The Personnel Manager who took over from Alhaji Hassim who had gone away in frustration, is Mr A. O. Akinola, an Engineer. How can an Engineer be a Personnel Manager? He messed up the whole place and Mr Hart, the Chairman of the Corporation, had to summon Alhaji Hassim after he had left the Corporation for six months to come and assume the position of Personnel Manager. Mr Speaker, Sir, a lot of things are happening in this Corporation. Well, I want to sum it up and it was ably summed up by the *Daily Times* issued of the 12th of December. With your permission Sir, I would like to quote from the *Daily Times*. *The heart of the matter* is the title.

*Mr A. K. Hart, the recently appointed Chairman of the NNPC is already making waves and rightly too. He does not have a Board of Directors yet, the old one having been dissolved and that has meant that he has had to—*

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of Order.

**Mr G. H. David (Takum) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, Order 26 (1).

*A Member shall not read his speech, but he may read short extracts from books or papers.*

**Several hon. Members :** No! No!

**Mr Speaker :** I have heard your point of order; the Member is in order.

Mr Princewill go on please.

**Mr Princewill :** Well, I have to cut short the quotation. When Mr Hart got to NNPC he found waiting for him a vast number of grievances and petitions.

**Mr O. Akinboro (Oke-Ona/Owu/Gbagura) :** Point of order. Mr Speaker, while I am enjoying the Motion, I think I should raise this point of order and get my mind put at ease at once. This Order is raised under the Provisions of Sections 53, 45 and 47 of our Constitution. Section 53 provides as follows:

*Any person who sits or votes in the Senate or the House of Representatives knowing or having reasonable grounds for knowing that he is not entitled to do so shall be guilty of an offence and shall upon conviction be liable to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 6 months or a fine not exceeding ₦1,000, or such higher term of imprisonment or a fine of a greater sum as may be prescribed for each day on which he sits or votes.*

Mr Speaker, Sir, I also looked at Section 45, page 21 of the Constitution and it reads:

*Subject to provisions of Chapter VIII and other provisions of this Constitution the House of Representatives shall consist of 450 members.*

Also Section 47 reads: *There shall be a Clerk to the National Assembly and such other staff as may be prescribed by an Act of the National Assembly, and the method of appointment of the Clerk and other staff of the National Assembly shall be as prescribed by that Act.*

[MR AKINBORO]

My point is this, Sir. I personally have a lot of respect for the person of Dr K. O. Mbadiwe, not only because he is a great Nigerian and also because he is a juggernaut—(Interruptions). As I said, I have my doubts and I want to put my doubts at rest about his presence here. (Interruptions)

**Mr Speaker :** I will rule on your point of order. We have heard your point of order. I am satisfied that the presence of the members sitting in the Box here does not infringe the provisions of the Constitution. Yes, Mr Princewill, you may continue

**Mr D. Princewill :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I shall read on.

*Some complained that employment practice in the company was arranged to favour citizens from selected parts of the country ; others say that they had deliberately been ignored in numerous promotion exercises, and still others say that junior or less qualified personnel had been promoted ahead of them. We hear that things are already looking up at NNPC, and that many employees there are already beginning to feel that a fresh breeze is blowing in their way.*

That refers to what Mr Hart is doing there now. But he cannot do what he is doing well, Mr Speaker, if someone like Mr Marinho, as Managing Director, is still there on the pay-roll of NNPC.

We are insisting that Mr Marinho should be removed immediately. Under Section 82 of the Constitution, this is desirable, and this honourable House should call on those involved to explain how they have lost ₦2.8 billion or how they have misappropriated this sum of money. Thank your, Sir.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, I will seize this opportunity to announce the presence of the Federal Minister of Internal Affairs, Alhaji Bello Maitama Yusuf. He is the man in the Box here. He has come to pay us a courtesy call.

Thank you very much, Hon. Minister. The Members are very grateful and are happy with your presence.

**Mr M. O. Ugwu (Udi) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, because of the importance of oil in this country, I have taken the opportunity to look into the staff structure and the composition of everybody employed under the NNPC.

**Mr Speaker :** Please, hold on, Mr Ugwu. You are not making an explanation now. You would be given a chance to speak ; then you can make your own contribution. Yes, Mr Omidiji.

**Mr Fola Omidiji (Egba Alake) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am surprised that my name is completely omitted in connection with the Motion on the Floor. I am a co-sponsor of the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, that had been mentioned but unfortunately you were not here then. It was then said that you would be allowed to make your own contribution.

**Dr E. J. Sowho (Ethiopia North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, this Motion, standing in the name of Mr D. Princewill, is a very important one. The amount of money involved which is ₦2.8 billion, is so large that I am sure that only a few languages in Nigeria can have that figure expressed in their own terms. In my own language it would mean money that cannot be counted. Therefore, for us to handle this Motion properly, I feel that it should be referred to the appropriate Committee for more detailed investigation before this House can really take a proper action on it.

In presenting the Motion, the Mover did introduce quite a few irrelevant points. I feel there should be no sentiments in discussing money. I think that if the amount in question were available to us in this country, we would know what to do with it. For lack of funds, many of us have been crying that there are no amenities in our various areas of the country. Definitely, with such a huge amount of money, we would be able to get enough facilities. It is such a serious matter that we need to do a proper investigation on it through the appropriate Committee so as to advise whether a probe is necessary or not. I should think that a probe would be necessary by the time we finish because this is not a new allegation, and there could be no proper justice done to it today with the few facts that have been brought to our notice.

So, I recommend that this Motion be put in charge of the appropriate Committee. Thank you.

**Mr M. O. Ugwu (Udi) :** Mr Speaker, in trying to support the Motion about the investigation into the alleged missing sum of ₦2.8 billion under the NNPC, I would like to tell the House that petroleum is one of the most important sources of energy we have in this country. The stability and the effectiveness of our foreign policy and our political promises depend on petroleum. Apart from petroleum, the only important thing in this country that takes the tax-payers' money is the construction industry. Therefore, it is a very important aspect of our economy.

In the light of this, Mr Speaker, I would want to see the exact structure of NNPC. This is because it is important to know the composition and the staff that might, in fact, be responsible for the missing money. First of all, I would like to say that the NNPC moves its money through the Central Bank and the Ministry of Finance ; and this money is usually paid either quarterly or every six months. I would like to know if the Ministry of Finance or the Central Bank had ever complained that there was no money forthcoming from the NNPC. I think this is a very important question which both departments will have to answer. I would like to add too that in terms of numbers alone, I have to use a reference which would be Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa and others in order to indicate the numbers because these are easier than trying to analyse it under 19-State Structure. I would beg your permission, Mr Speaker, to refer to my book.

In terms of numbers alone, an examination of these names indicate that persons from Ondo, Oyo, Ogun and Lagos States occupy 55 per cent of all the

[MR UGWU]

key positions including the all-important Managing Directors as well as three out of six general managers and heads of Divisions. Persons originating from Anambra State, Imo State, part of Bendel State and part of Rivers State hold only 23 per cent and persons from other States hold 22 per cent.

**Mr Debo Akande** (Ibadan North) : Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker** : There is a point of order.

**Mr Akande** : I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Members to Order 29, subsection 1. I do not normally jump up making points of order on the Floor of this House but if you look at the Motion as cast, the dimension that the debate is taking as pointed out by the hon. Member for Ethiopia (*Dr J. E. Sowho*) is getting—

**An hon. Member** : What is your point of order ?

**Mr Akande** : Relevancy. I am not making a statement.

**Mr Speaker** : Please let him make the point of order.

**Mr Akande** : I have referred the hon. Members to Order 29, subsection 1.

**An hon. Member** : Then read it.

**Mr Akande** : I thought you all have a copy of the Standing Orders.

*Debate upon any motion, bill or amendment shall be relevant to such motion—*

If you look at the Motion, the Motion is calling for investigation into the loss of 2.8 billion naira. (*Interruptions*)

Excuse me please Mr Speaker, Sir, when you start talking about the number of people employed, 50 per cent, here and 20 per cent there, that in my submission, Mr Speaker, subject to your ruling, is not relevant to this Motion. It will not help a healthy debate on the Motion. So, Mr Speaker, my point of order is made.

**An hon. Member** : Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker** : Hold on. Let us finish with one. As a matter of fact the hon. Member for Ibadan North (*Mr Debo Akande*) made a very relevant point. Please restrict yourself as much as possible to the substance of the Motion.

**Mr Ugwu** : Thank you, Mr Speaker. Referring to the Audit Department because we are now talking about the missing money, the NNPC has six Internal Auditors and all the six Internal Auditors are from the Western States. (*Interruptions*) We are talking about finance. If you come to Finance and Accounts Division—(*Interruptions*).

**Mr Speaker** : Order ! Order ! Yes, go on please. Let him complete his contribution.

**Mr Ugwu** : If you come to the Finance and Accounts Division of NNPC, there are four important positions and people from the Western States occupy three out of the four. (*Interruptions*)

We have the OPEC Representation. We have three persons representing Nigeria in all OPEC meetings. I would like to say that all the three representatives, that is the Governor, the man who attends all the meetings, and our permanent representatives are from the Western States. Again Sir,—

**Mr Gbadebo A. Adewumi** (Oshogbo South) : Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker** : There is a point of order. (*Interruptions*) Order ! Order ! please make your point of order.

**Mr Adewumi** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I am referring to Order 29 (1). I am directing Mr Speaker to the correct Interpretation of the word relevancy.

**An hon. Member** : He is not properly dressed.

**Mr Speaker** : The hon. Member for Oshogbo South (*Mr Gbadebo A. Adewumi*) if you may sit down for today, you are a senior member of the Bar and you know how we expect you to come here. If you will sit down, tomorrow you will make your point of order. (*Interruptions*) Order ! Order ! The hon. Member for Udi (*Mr Mike O. Ugwu*), just a minute. Have patience and let us take the point of order.

Yes the hon. Member for Ekiti West (*Professor Opayemi Ola*) what is your point of order ?

**Professor Opayemi Ola** (Ekiti West) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Ladies and Gentlemen, I want to raise a point of order on Order 29.

**Mr Abubakar Abutu** (Ankpa South) : Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker** : Order ! Order ! Let us finish with one point of order or there will be no end to that.

**Mr Abutu** : He is not properly dressed.

**Professor Ola** : That is not correct. You are not properly dressed yourself. This is (*pointing to his dress*) a proper Yoruba dress. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker** : All right. Order ! Order ! The hon. Member for Ekiti West (*Professor Opayemi Ola*) is properly and beautifully dressed. (*Applause*)

**Professor Ola** : I have always said that the Speaker is a good man. Thank you. (*Laughter*)

The point of order I want to raise is Order 29 (1). With all due respect, it says :

*Debate upon any motion, bill or amendment shall be relevant to such motion—*

As has been pointed out by my friend, the hon. Member for Ibadan North (*Mr Debo Akande*), the substance of the Motion is the disappearance or loss of 2.8 billion naira of Nigerian money. So the relevancy is what happened to this money ? Where is the money ? Who made it disappear ? That is what we want to hear about. Therefore, please hon.

[PROFESSOR OLA]

Members, the question of whether it is the Yorubas, the Ibos, the Hausas, the Fulanis or the Itsekiris that occupy such and such posts is irrelevant except you can make us see that it is this occupation by these Yoruba people that caused the loss of the money.

**Mr Speaker :** That is all right.

**Prof. Ola :** We are honourable and intelligent Ladies and Gentlemen and we want to—

**Mr Speaker :** Professor Ola, that is all right. You have made the point of order. Let us finish one point of order.

The Professor has made a good point of order but please restrict yourself to the substance of the Motion.

**Mr Mike Ugwu (Udi) :** I must appeal to the hon. Members on the other side. I would like to state that the missing money under the NNPC occurred because one section of the community occupy important positions in that Industry. I would like to quote the Constitution of this Country—Section 162 (c)—

*that the economic system is not operated in such a manner as to permit the concentration of wealth or the means of production and exchange in the hands of few individuals or of a group.*

Therefore, the composition of NNPC contravenes the Constitution of this country and it should be disbanded immediately.

Mr Speaker, I think I had better stop here.

**Mr Speaker :** He has finished. Thank you.

Please hold on ; let the co-Mover of the Motion say something. Yes, Mr Omidiji.

**Mr Fola Omidiji (Egba Alake) :** Mr Speaker, I should start by saying that I would like to register my disappointment with the way the debate on this Motion is being carried. The original intention of this Motion is to find out how 2.8 billion naira has been misappropriated in the NNPC. When we first put up this Motion, the idea was not to attack individuals but to find out how the 2.8 billion naira disappeared. I would not know why a meeting of the oil producing areas was held to reveal material information from the NNPC. My latest information about this is that Mr Hart who is the present Chairman of the NNPC summoned this meeting to reveal some irrelevances of the original intention of the Motion. That is why the hon. Member for Degema I (*Mr Princewill*)—

Mr Speaker, Sir, I now know why my name was originally deleted from the Motion. I can now see clearly. Mr Okala, who is the Governor at OPEC, was removed only last week by the handiwork of Mr Hart and his co-evil perpetrators so as to give a complete domination and the siphoning of Nigerian oil money into private pockets. We want to know why we have been receiving less from our crude oil. We want to know why the External Auditors' reports were not debated at the Board's meeting. We want to know why the External Auditors,

reports were tailored. We want to know again where our 2.8 billion naira has gone to. These are the things we should address our mind to rather than individuals. I would like to remind everyone that we should learn from our past mistakes. We should not continue to refer to the errors of the past, because we are about to step into a new era. Some of us will not easily forget what happened in the NRC during the time of Ikejiani and Co., and I do not think that should be repeated in the NNPC. We want to address ourselves to facts and not witch-hunting. Mr Speaker, Sir, I am disappointed at the way the debate on this issue is going.

Since this is a very sensitive matter, I would like to ask that the matter be referred to the Committee on Petroleum and Energy for proper debate on the issue. This would enable that Committee to investigate properly where the 2.8 billion naira has gone to. These are the things we should address ourselves to. With the way the debate is going it has deteriorated to sentiments.

**Mr Speaker :** Are you now amending the Motion to read that it should go to a Committee ?

**Mr Omidiji :** Oh yes the matter should now be referred to the Committee on Petroleum and Energy for proper debate.

Mr Speaker, if we actually want to know the root cause of the loss of 2.8 billion naira it is not by mentioning names or by removing staff, that you would be able to find out where the 2.8 billion naira has gone to. Unless it is established that those people removed were responsible for the misappropriation of the money, but if not so, why should they be subject to attacks when they are not here to defend themselves ? I would not know why somebody mentioned that an Engineer is a Personnel Manager of that or this. That is not the issue at stake. The issue at stake is to know where the 2.8 billion naira has gone to. This type of debate is very unhealthy for the progress and stability of this country. I would appeal to you, Mr Speaker, to allow the matter to be referred to the Committee on Petroleum and Energy if we have no sinister motive on the issue besides finding out how 2.8 billion naira disappeared.

**Mr Speaker :** The Motion is asking for a high-powered Commission of Inquiry to investigate the matter. So, instead of the Commission of Inquiry, you now want the Committee on Petroleum and Energy to deal with it.

**Mr Omidiji :** Yes, the matter should go to the Committee on Petroleum and Energy because the debate has degenerated into something else. From the debate we would not get the facts. Our main concern is to know how 2.8 billion naira disappeared.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member for Egba Alake (*Mr Omidiji*) please hold on. You are entitled to make this Amendment but I would urge you to wait a little bit and let us go round the House. Then you can make your own amendment and if you have the support, that will carry the day. That would give you time to think about it.

**Mr Omidiji** : I agree with that, but I just want to throw in more light. Before we went on Christmas recess, there was a meeting at the National Assembly flats of these oil producing areas. I think these are the things that cannot unite this country.

**Mr Speaker** : There is a point of order.

**Prince Awa Ekpo (Eket II)** : I think the hon. Member speaking now on this Motion is not speaking within the terms of the Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : Under what Order is that?

**Prince Awa Ekpo** : That is Order 26 (2). I do not see what the meeting of the oil producing States has to do with the loss of 2.8 billion naira, which is the responsibility of the staff position of the NNPC.

**Mr Speaker** : That is all right. Please restrict yourself to the substance of your Motion.

**Mr Fola Omidiji** : What of when names of people from a particular section of the country were called, why did they not raise a point of order then?

**Mr Speaker** : If you have not got much to say, then you can wait. You will make your amendments later. Yes, Mr Agbamuche.

**Mr M. A. Agbamuche (Oshimili)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, the joint Movers of this Motion have made very serious allegations. I think the way the debate is going on, we are not going to do any justice to this Motion as it is.

I would very strongly suggest that we refer this to a Select Committee under Section 58 of the Constitution or to the Committee on Petroleum and Energy. We should adjourn this debate until the report of this Committee is submitted; then we can do some justice to it. The investigations into this very allegation should have been completed and tabled under Section 83 (1). Witnesses should have been summoned so that we could have more facts. I would suggest very strongly Sir that we adjourn this debate pending the result of the inquiry. That is all Sir.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, Mr Adigwe.

**Mr F. C. Adigwe (Awka)** : I strongly support the last speaker for his suggestion. As you can see from this very Motion, it is a very sensitive one and requires careful handling.

The first thing we should do is to determine the allegation first by referring this matter to the appropriate Committee because we are yet to verify the details of the report of the Auditors. It is the duty of the Committee to verify these details before coming to this House once more to say if the allegation is correct. If it is correct, then this House can move a formal Motion for investigation about the loss of this ₦2.8 billion.

I want to use this opportunity once more to advise that a case of this nature requires mature approach. There is no sense in applying sentiments in this issue. This country belongs to everyone of us and the nation is our Constituency. If any section of

the community is occupying a reasonable portion of post in this establishment, it is a matter of circumstance. When it comes to that, we are here as the first legislators for this Presidential System. It is our duty to correct these imbalances, but to work towards confrontation with a particular group, I would not support it. We have to agree that there was a vacuum some time and that vacuum must have to be filled. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker** : Order ! Order ! Round up.

**Mr Adigwe** : So, Mr Speaker, I will sincerely appeal to you to refer this matter to the appropriate Committee. Thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, Mr Uwandu.

**Mr E. D. N. Uwandu (Mbaitoli)** : Mr Speaker Sir, I wish to refer the House to the words of the Motion. This Motion says :

*High-powered Commission of Inquiry to investigate the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation in view of the loss (or misappropriation) of ₦2.8 billion revealed by the Annual Audit Report issued by Messrs Coopers and Lybrand.*

Now, I wish to say that it appears that most of us have actually departed from the intention of the Motion. In my own suggestion, what type of enquiry shall we have? Is this allegation of the loss of ₦2.8 billion correct? If so what shall we do?

I would like to see that we set up a judicial type of Commission to investigate and report to the House. Before then I would like this House to invite the Managing Director of the NNPC and the Chairman of the NNPC so that we have a discussion with them and find out certain things. In fact, we should also ask for the report from Messrs Coopers and Lybrand. I am quite sure that the man who moved this Motion today did not come here with the report of Messrs Coopers and Lybrand. So, Mr Speaker, Sir, after we must have done that, we can inject into the Commission some Members of this House. I do not support the idea of referring this matter to the Committee on Petroleum and Energy. Crude oil is the mainstay of the economy of Nigeria. We cannot allow ₦2.8 billion to go to the drain. So my humble opinion is that we set up a Judicial Commission of Inquiry.

Thank you very much.

**Alhaji Sanda Konduga (Konduga)** : In contributing to this Debate, I want to say that this Motion has been moved purely to know about the disappearance of ₦2.8 billion. Some hon. Members have got up to contribute in disguise, bringing up another Motion into this Motion and the Speaker has allowed them to do so. If that is the case, Mr Speaker also allow me to bring in my own Motion into this Motion as he has done with some Members.

Some people have come here and they try to check imbalances in employment in the organisations in the Federal Republic of Nigeria. We should first start

[ALHAJI KONDUGA]

from balancing up our admissions into our Universities and Federal-owned institutions in Nigeria. Some people are here without having the spirit of give and take for the unity and stability of this nation and they have said that Mr A is having a larger share, Mr B less share, and Mr C is having more share. In this reference Mr C is greater and this usually refers to the North which has a larger population and more of the States. We have no share in whatever structure the Federal Government has set up except, fortunately enough due to political leaning, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria comes from the North. Therefore I can categorically say here, if we have to debate Motions on this Floor, let us debate the Motions as they are, but not bring motives into the Motions and make things sensitive for us. People are in the gallery here watching us while hon. Members are doing nothing except shouting at themselves. Mr Speaker, I beg to resume my seat.

**Mr Speaker :** The hon. Member for Kano West Ward (*Dr Junaidu Mohammed*).

**Dr Junaidu Mohammed (Kano West Ward) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am sorry to tell you that I am smelling a rat. I smell a rat because I can see this Motion which is so important being dragged into unnecessary controversy. The Motion as it stands, is asking the House to institute a high-powered Commission of Inquiry to investigate the NNPC. So, in fact whether it is as a result of the disappearance of ₦2.8 billion as revealed by the annual audit report of Coopers and Lybrand, or any other reason, the fact is that the Motion is asking this House to set up a Committee to investigate the NNPC. All aspects of the NNPC are relevant and the operative word is to investigate the NNPC.

Mr Speaker, Sir, when we talk of one Nigeria and we say we should not bring our differences into the open, I think we are being hypocritical. The fact of the matter is this. We are all from one Nigeria but we come from different homes. When we leave here at the beginning of our recess we do not go to one Nigeria but we go to our respective homes.

Mr Speaker, Sir, those who spoke rather emotionally on the staffing position of the NNPC are really in order because the disappearance of ₦2.8 billion was not caused by angels in heaven. Somebody must be responsible and the one man who was responsible was the Managing Director who must have first made Coopers and Lybrand the auditors of the NNPC and as such, he must be held responsible if the charges alleged are substantiated. I would like to add, Mr Speaker, Sir, that I have had the privilege of reading a speech about it in the *Petroleum Economist* which is a paper published in Western Europe.

In fact, the firm of Chartered Accountants is an American Company, which is operating in Wall Street. The fact that we by-passed all our Accountants here (and we have thousands of them), and decided to give auditing of NNPC to an American Company is something which should be looked into and whoever was responsible for that should be called to order.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I happen to represent the one and only person from the ten Northern States who nearly rose to the Management position in the NNPC and I have had discussions with him. I knew how he was very cruelly and wickedly edged out. He was told that he being a graduate in public administration could not stay there and be a Personnel Manager, and for six months he was without job; he was hanging around in Kano. He was told that that job was meant for a professional lawyer. When he left, an engineer was put there from another section of the country. Now, I am being told that by raising this point I am not being a good Nigerian. If to be a hypocrite is to be a good one Nigerian, Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to disagree.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the fact of the matter is that the Mover of the Motion has elaborated and has given us a very, very substantial information, and we cannot go backwards; the House must institute a special high-powered enquiry. If you listen carefully, some people have said it is the business of the Committee on Petroleum and Energy; others have said it is the business of the Judicial Committee but I say it is the duty of the Accounts Committee. You see, we get no where. The fact of the matter is that the House should instruct the Committee of Selection to institute a special Committee made up of Accountants, Lawyers, Business Administrators and people who are public spirited to go into the whole aspect of the NNPC, find out first how come the NNPC has turned out to be a national disgrace; how come this amount of money which is so substantial (at one time Nigeria did not have ₦2.8 billion in her Foreign Exchange Reserve) got lost. It was not reported in the Nigerian Press. The first news item on it was in the *New York Times* and they scooped this news from the monthly journal published and later it appeared in the *Petroleum Economist*.

Any Nigerian who got the news got it from outside the country. Of course we have the *Business Times* in Nigeria and we have the journalists who are busy crying about because we want ₦17,000 as salary. You can see the double standard and hypocrisy in which we have operated in Nigeria. When you talk the truth somebody will say you are not being a good one Nigerian. I am fed up with this idea of one Nigeria. Mr Speaker, Sir, what is important in a nation is not the amount of wealth it possesses, but those who control the wealth. The national wealth of this country is controlled by some people. Of course oil is Nigeria's principal wealth or source of wealth, but who is controlling this wealth? This is relevant; This House has the full power to investigate anything or any aspect of the NNPC and I beg to move that we proceed. There is no question involving the Public Accounts Committee, Judicial Committee or Committee on Petroleum and Energy in this. It is the responsibility of this House to move forward and tell those people who are controlling the NNPC that we have had much.

**Mr Speaker :** The Leader of the House, the hon. Member for Tangale-Waja South (*Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo*) wants to make a contribution.



**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members I hate to be introducing myself all the time I get up before you because you have already known me. However, I am Yunusa Kaltungo. Hon. Members I really do not want to be sentimental in this respect and in the words of the last Speaker, the hon. Member for Kano West Ward (*Dr Junaidu Mohammed*) I am not also going to be hypocritical.

The Motion on the Floor really is a very, very important Motion concerning a very serious allegation by some hon. Members of this House. I think sentiments have been expressed quite enough on this issue. Very important points have been made on this issue and if really we are going to achieve anything on this particular Motion, I would appeal to the Members to agree on the suggestions which have been made by other Members on this Floor. I agree entirely with what the last speaker has said. One thing is clear, if really we are saying anything on this issue, this matter should go to the appropriate Committee. It is the Committee of this House which will investigate it. It will do a lot of work on this issue. It will bring the report to this House and based on the report of the Committee, Members will deliberate. So, we will have enough time to discuss this particularly important issue but if we continue to talk on this issue this way, Mr Speaker, I believe for many days, we will not finish and we will never reach anywhere. We will not get to any point at all. Referring the matter to the Committee will actually enable us to get this thing done in time.

Therefore, Members should agree with me that this matter be referred to a Committee, be it Public Accounts Committee, Petroleum Committee, Finance Committee or Special Committee. Let it go there. Let the Committee go and work and bring the report to us. This will resolve all our problems which we are now facing. I have said that I do not want to be sentimental and I do not want to express the same views that have been raised by others. I just want to be exact on this particular point. This is my appeal, Mr Speaker and hon. Members of this House. Thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker** : Thank you, Leader of the House.

Hon. Member for Egba Alake (*Mr F. Omidiji*) please move your Amendment.

**Mr F. Omidiji** : Under Section 58 of the Constitution I now move that this Motion be referred to a Special Committee for appropriate investigation.

**Mr Speaker** : Do you not want it to go to our House Committee?

**Mr Omidiji** : I say I want a special Committee to be set up under Section 58 of the Constitution. I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker** : Anybody seconding the Amendment?

**Mr Olumuyiwa Akinboro** (Oke-Ona/Owu/Gbagura) : I beg to second the Amendment, Sir.

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, the Motion is now as amended, that this Motion will be referred to a

Special Committee of this House under Section 58 of the Constitution for a thorough investigation. So, that is now the Motion before the House and I think the Leader of the House may now move for this particular Motion to be put.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members may I now move that the Question be put.

*Question, that the Question be now put, and agreed to. Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

**Resolved** : That this Honourable House set up a Special Committee under Section 58 of the Constitution to investigate the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation in view of the loss for misappropriation of ₦2.8 billion revealed by the Annual Audit Report issued by Messrs Coopers and Lybrand, Chartered Accountants, on the Company aforesaid.

**Mr Speaker** : So, the Committee of Selection that will appoint the Members of this Committee will meet in my office immediately after today's sitting so that Members of this Committee will be appointed and they will start this investigation immediately. The Members' names will be announced tomorrow morning.

The next Motion stands in the name of Mr Mutari Adamu.

#### Government Contracts

**Mr Mutari Adamu** (Dutse) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I would like to move the Motion standing in my name—

That in view of the frequent complaints by Contractors and Consultants over delays and non-payment of Contract fees in respect of all properly executed Government projects, this Honourable House urges the President of the Republic to direct his Minister of Works to investigate further the causes of these delays with a view to unearthing dubious dealings by officials whose duties are to recommend and effect payments on satisfactory completion of projects.

**Mr Speaker** : Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Aka Ogbobe** (Igbo-Etiti) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Mutari Adamu** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to sympathise with our indigenous contractors for not being paid for their finished Contracts and those that are unfinished. For example, in my State, a lot of Contractors owed by the Federal Government are not yet paid and this delay in payment causes a lot of inconveniences to Contractors. I think this is sort of discouraging our indigenes to go into contracting work. You will agree with me that this sort of problem obtains in all the other States. You will see that a lot of Contractors had not yet been paid and this makes our Contractors to suffer. Our own Indigenous Contractors have to get loans from the Banks and these loans are short-term loans and the longer they stay the more interest they are going to pay. So, in order to encourage the Contractors, the Federal Government has to do something about it, if at all they want our Contractors to be able to continue with the Contracts rather than encouraging only the foreign Companies to take on all the jobs.

[MR ADAMU]

I would like to thank the Business Committee for amending my Motion because my previous Motion was on the payment for Universal Primary Education Contracts. I really put more emphasis on the payment for the UPE projects because a lot of UPE Projects have been completed and our people have not been paid. For example, in Kano State, well over two million naira now is yet to be paid to the Contractors. We do not know from where this delay comes but if the Speaker would allow me I would read what the Federal Government says here. It reads.

*In the Third National Development Plan document, it recognised that, of the large capital and recurrent expenditure implications of the Universal Primary Education scheme, the Federal Military Government has assumed full financial responsibility for the scheme in all its various ramifications. Pending the commencement of the scheme in 1976, the Federal Military Government will carry out capital expenditure programmes in the course of 1975-76 including a large expansion programme of existing school buildings, new schools programme, as well as the creation of ancillary facilities required for the attainment and maintenance of high standards. In constitutional terms, primary education has been transferred from the residual to the concurrent Legislative List. Elsewhere in the Plan, it is also stated that 'the cornerstone of the (Educational) programme will be a strong Federal Government Leadership'.*

It appears that in the implementation of the UPE also the provision of physical and ancillary facilities should be provided for the training of teachers in each Primary School. It says that the provision of physical and ancillary facilities should accommodate school children under the Universal Primary Education Scheme. Since the Federal Government is fully committed to these Projects I see no reason why the various contractors who have been awarded the contracts and the contracts have been executed should not be paid.

I am appealing to this honourable House to support me on this Motion and I am sure that this Motion is not a controversial Motion. It really affects almost all our States. So, with these few comments, Mr Speaker, I will like to take my seat.

**The Speaker :** Yes, the Deputy Speaker.

**Alhaji Idris Ibrahim (Minna North) :** Mr Speaker, I stand to support the Motion proposed by the hon. Member for Dutse (*Mr Mutari Adamu*) in connection with Government contracts. But in supporting the Motion, there are one or two amendments I would like to make on the Motion. I must say that this Motion is of vital importance because it is true that contractors have executed work on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Works or the Federal Government and they have not been paid. At the same time, we do understand that the lack of payment to such contractors was because of the shoddy work they had done on individual projects.

Taking the UPE that the hon. Member has spoken about, there was no clear-cut guide-line that was given to the State Governments on the total number of classrooms they were going to build to accommodate the children of school age at that particular time because there was no adequate census. But you would now find out from the different States of the Federation that the census which was carried out by the Federal Ministry of Education was far, far below what is actually obtaining in all the States in the Federation. Now I believe that this Motion should not only concentrate on the lack of payment to the contractors but also to investigate further some of the most dubious contracts that were awarded by the Ministry of Works.

I would like to make a particular reference to the Lagos-Ibadan Express Way. I cite Lagos-Ibadan Express Way because as laymen, if you saw the condition under which that road was constructed, it was obvious to everybody that you could not construct a road over a swampy area and expect that road to last. Now we are being told that in the Ministry of Works set-up there were no soil engineers or there were no qualified engineers to investigate thoroughly the effects or the conditions of the soil between Lagos and Ibadan before that road was put up. When you consider the astronomical amount of money spent from the original contract that was awarded to the final contract value that was paid, you will know that something has gone wrong somewhere.

I, therefore, do not expect that this matter should be referred to the President or the Minister of Works. The Minister of Works cannot be the judge and the jury at the same time. I believe that the Committee on Public Works of this august House has a very important role to play here in that they should carry out a thorough investigation by inviting all the people concerned—the individual contractors affected, the engineers concerned—and bring them to the Committee for interrogation. Therefore, Mr Speaker, I would like to move the Amendment of this Motion—

That in view of the frequent complaints by contractors and consultants over delays and non-payment of contract fees in respect of all properly executed Government projects, this honourable House refers this matter to the Committee on Public Works for proper investigation and this investigation should include all the contracts particularly those of the civil engineering nature that were done haphazardly without thorough investigation.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Mohammed Lawal Na-Rogo (Karaye) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to second the Amendment. Thank you.

**Mr Speaker :** The hon. Member for Minna North (*Alhaji Idris Ibrahim*) moved an Amendment to the Motion.

You have to read the Amendment to us. You have to work it out so that your Amendment will really be comprehensible. Tell us what the Amendment is.

**Alhaji Idris Ibrahim :** The Amendment reads as follows :

That in view of the frequent complaints by contractors and consultants over delays and non-payment of contract fees in respect of all properly executed Government projects, this honourable House refers this Motion to the Committee on Public Works to investigate further the causes of the delays with a view to unearthing dubious dealings by officials whose duties were to recommend and effect payments on satisfactory completion of projects.

That is the reference to the Committee on Public Works. It is not referring to the President to ask the Minister of Works for investigation because the Minister of Works cannot investigate himself.

**Mr Speaker :** That is the amendment you have seconded.

**Mr Mohammed Lawal Na-Rogo (Karaye) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I once more rise to second the Amendment in its entirety and intentions. Thank you.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, the Amendment is :

That in view of the frequent complaints by Contractors and Consultants over delays and non-payment of Contract fees in respect of all properly executed Government Projects that this Honourable House should refer this matter to the Committee on Works to investigate further the causes of these delays with a view to unearthing dubious dealings by officials whose duties are to recommend and effect payments on satisfactory completion of projects.

*Amendment put and agreed to.*

**Mr Speaker :** The Motion is now amended. Any further argument on the Motion as amended ?

**Mr T. O. Badejo (Mushin Central I) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the amended Motion for the following reasons :

Every Dick and Harry know that in this country there is dubious contract. We have emergency contracts, Military contractors and whatever you may call them. For the past 13 years, Mr Speaker, Sir, and hon. Members of this House, we are no more doing business ; we are having deals and the Ministry of Works is very notorious for these poor activities. So Mr Speaker, Sir, I ask and I pray that if this Motion is carried, the Standing Committee, whatever the name may be, should thoroughly investigate even why the executed contract is not paid. Is it because of our inflationary deals about contract ? Is it because of kick-backs on the contracts ? Even the so-called executed contracts, what is the cost benefit to the society of such contracts ?

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would ask the Committee to have thorough terms of reference so that their investigation may not just be a hush-hush investigation because a great analyst of the Central Bank has

said that one of the causes of inflation in this country is the award of contracts by Government, contracts which are not properly executed, which are not in conformity with the real value of the money spent on them. This Motion we are deliberating on today is very important. It is not political in the sense that we are trying to be vindictive in all respects. It is an anti-inflationary Motion and in all respects it is a Motion teaching how our economy, activities and ethos, should be carried out in the future ; that whatever contract and whatever service we are rendering this nation, it should be real deal, real business and nothing else.

Mr Speaker, Sir, this is my contribution to this debate. So, I beg that this Motion should be carried out.

Thank you.

**Mr A. Afonja (Oranmiyan Central) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, in making my contribution to the Motion as amended, I would like to remind Members of this august Assembly of some of the very current comments that have been made on the nature of contracts in Nigeria as compared with contracts in other parts of the world.

About one and a half years ago there was a publication in one of the financial analysis journals from overseas that made a comparative study of the value of contracts between Nigeria and some other parts of the world. And the general conclusion from the facts and figures reproduced in the article showed that on the average, Nigeria seems ready to pay about three and a half times more than any other country pays on comparative contracts. Now we know why these things happen and it will be the duty of the Committee on Works to look into this particular aspect where our country pays much more than should be paid on comparative contracts.

I have some examples in my home State about the kind of thing that makes somebody very sad. There is at the Secretariat of Oyo State in Ibadan an overhead bridge that goes into the Secretariat. It is used only between the hours of seven in the morning and four in the afternoon. Now we have information that the Engineer-in-Charge advised against the building of the bridge but at that time it was stated that His Excellency was interested and because His Excellency was interested this very obnoxious project was prosecuted. Now there are other projects also in that State which show that a lot of money was wasted almost for nothing.

There is a case of a road contract that was awarded to a contracting firm called TWZ. Mathematicians know that if a name is TWZ, that means almost anything and this particular contractor was allegedly paid the mobilisation fees. Within a few months nothing was done on the project. The project was abandoned and the contract was again re-awarded to an indigenous contractor. There was no way of recovering the mobilisation fees which were paid to these foreign contractors working in partnership with some Nigerians. That was not the only issue involved in this particular contract. It was because of this particular contract that one of the top officials of the Ministry of Works was asked to be probed

[MR AFONJA]

because His Excellency and some of his orchestra felt that this man must have taken kick-backs from an indigenous contractor. The probe was carried out and the man was found not guilty by the probe and yet the Government attitude was to more or less down-grade this man by removing some of his responsibilities and transferring the responsibilities to a subordinate of his. Obviously, this was made to frustrate the man who had worked for so many years meritoriously for the Government of the old Western Region in Oyo State. This man eventually had to resign or retire voluntarily.

Now this kind of contract, I am sure, has a tendency of weakening or lowering the morale of a lot of people who would have conscientiously continued working for the Government of this country. Therefore, I would urge that this House empowers the Committee to look into contracts of this nature and not only that but to find ways of re-evaluating a lot of contracts that had to be awarded so that disparity will be kept within reasonable and comparative levels as is obtained in the rest of the world.

Mr Speaker, I rise to support the Motion.

**Mr S. E. Asuk (Bonny I)** : In contributing to this Motion before the House, I would say that the Motion, as amended is non-controversial, and it is the view of this House that the Motion be referred to the Committee on Public Works.

I now move that the Question be now put.

**Mr Speaker** : You are not to do that. It is the Leader of the House that should do that.

**Mr S. E. Asuk** : May I ask then that the Question be now put ?

**Mr Speaker** : The Leader of the House, Alhaji Kaltungo, please help us to move.

**Alhaji Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, may I ask that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That in view of the frequent complaints by Contractors and Consultants over delays and non-payment of Contract fees in respect of all properly executed Government projects, this Honourable House should refer this matter to the Committee on Works to investigate further the causes of these delays with a view to unearthing dubious dealings by officials whose duties are to recommend and effect payments on satisfactory completion of projects.

**Mr Speaker** : Motion No. 3 stands in the name of the Leader of the House, Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo.

#### **Burial Arrangement for Deceased**

**Member, Mr S. U. Bassey**

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, the Motion standing in my name this morning is the kind of Motion that I would not like to bring before this House. As it is, I have no alternative but to bring it.

The Motion is in connection with the funeral arrangements of one of the Members of this House who passed away some weeks ago in person of Mr S. U. Bassey. Leaders of various political parties in this House met yesterday to discuss the involvement of this House in the funeral arrangements. We were in contact with the family of late S. U. Bassey to see what arrangement they were making.

**Mr Speaker** : Alhaji Kaltungo, if you move the Motion somebody will have to second it. Then you can go on to make comments.

**Alhaji Kaltungo** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I had wanted to make it in the American style, but if you would like me to just read what is on the Order paper I would read it. After that I would get up again to say a few words.

The Motion, with a little amendment, reads thus :

That ten Members represent this Honourable House at the burial of the late Member for Eket I in the Cross River State, Mr Samuel Udo Bassey, on 19th January, 1980 at Eket, and That the House of Representatives should bear the funeral expenses of the deceased Member.

I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker** : Is there anybody to second the Motion ?

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II)** : I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : Alhaji Kaltungo, if you want to make any comment you can now make it.

**Alhaji Kaltungo** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I will now go on in the Nigerian style.

Having heard from the family of the late S. U. Bassey about the arrangement they are making in connection with the funeral ceremony, Leaders of various Political Parties in this House met and decided on what was going to be the involvement of this House in the funeral arrangements. We had a meeting, and the Speaker of the House was there. We agreed that we should send a ten-man delegation to accompany the corpse to Calabar and to proceed from Calabar to Eket for the burial of our hon. Member. Each Party is going to be represented by a two-man delegation, making a delegation of ten people. This time we do not want to do it proportionately.

**Several hon. Members** : Why ?

**Alhaji Kaltungo** : This is the time that we should share everything equally (*Interruptions*). We want every Party to pay equal respect to the deceased colleague, and this has been agreed to by all the parties. The parties concerned will submit the names of the people whom they have chosen to represent them, because we are going as a Parliamentary Delegation. It is agreed that I, as the Leader of the House, should lead the delegation to pay our last respect to the departed Colleague.

The arrangement is on hand, and the departure for the burial will be on Friday the 18th of January, 1980.

[ALHAJI KALTUNGO]

When the Parties submit the names of those who are going to represent them at the burial, necessary arrangements would be made for them immediately so that they would know when to start the journey to Calabar.

Mr Speaker, hon. Members, this is precisely the decision which we took yesterday in respect of the deceased, Hon. S. U. Bassey.

Thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker :** Does anybody want to make contributions to the Motion on the Floor? Yes, Mr Etienam?

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, in contributing to the debate on the Floor, I want to say, with due respect, that the number which we agreed upon to send to Eket is rather too small.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would, however, like to suggest that any Member of this honourable House who wants to join in the delegation at his own expense should be accommodated. I am saying this because death is an inevitable end of everybody, and Mr Bassey died as a national figure and as a Member of this National Assembly. It behoves all of us to demonstrate to the public and to others who are not privileged to be here that we all share in the grief of the untimely loss of our Hon. Member, Mr S. U. Bassey.

I do not think this is an occasion for any long speech on this issue. It is non-controversial. I would also like to say that the officials of the National Assembly should be specifically assigned to liaise with the family of the late Mr Bassey as regards the details of our responsibilities in this matter. We know the attitude of bureaucracy; they may not be as actively involved as Members of this House in this matter, but the extent of our responsibilities is a matter which the administration of the National Assembly should effectively handle.

With these few suggestions, I would like to support the Motion.

Thank you.

**Mr Debo Akande (Ibadan North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, in contributing to the Motion on the Floor, I wish to say as follows :

Unfortunately, I was not here the day the death of the late Hon. Bassey was announced. I would also like to take this opportunity today to pay my respect to him.

I met him forcefully at the inquiry instituted into Trade Union on which I served as one of the Counsel. I must put on record that he was one of the foremost Trade Unionists in this country. I got to respect his attitude, his forbearing and the way he conducted himself throughout the days of that inquiry.

I sympathise with his family and I associate myself with the sentiments already expressed on the Floor of this House. I am happy that this House is

taking up the responsibility of the funeral expenses of the late hon. Member as it should be. I pray that his soul may rest in peace.

**Mr Tom Egbuwoku (Isoko) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, in contributing to this debate, while we send some Members from here to the funeral ceremonies, to show solidarity to the family, I would like to suggest that each Member of this honourable House should contribute ₦5 to be presented to the family as a gesture of goodwill to the family. Thank you very much.

**Mr Ogwe Kalu Ogwe (Bendel) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, this is an occasion where we should really be sad because it concerns the death of one of our hon. Members.

For the first time, I saw the late hon. Member S. U. Bassey when he was brought down here to be sworn in. I had the opportunity of having a hand-shake with him, not knowing that it would be the last hand-shake. When I heard of his death it shocked me and I was very sad just like every other Member here. That was why I was anxious to see that every Member arrived here safely when I came back, because we do not want to lose Members. We agree to differ in our views, but we would not like to lose the face of anybody here.

So, I am really concerned about the loss and I share whole-heartedly the opinion expressed by the last speaker in relation to the contribution. I believe that something should be done, at least as a mark that the late Hon. Bassey was one time an hon. Member of this House, and that hon. Members alive here are fully concerned about his death. I think what we can benefit from in this House is to show concern about each and everyone of us. When we talk of remunerations or benefits, the public is always against us but when we have a loss we should feel that we are one and one indivisible entity.

I agree that we should make some contribution. I would even suggest that each Member should contribute ₦10 so that the amount so raised would be reasonable and would look honourable too. Nobody wants to die, but death is something inevitable. I would commend the late Hon. S. U. Bassey to Almighty God who would take care of his soul. As has already been suggested, if anybody wishes to go to the funeral, even at his own expense, he should be encouraged to go. Even if we close up here for a whole day to give him an honour, it would not be too much because it is the last honour being done to the late Hon. S. U. Bassey.

**Mr Speaker :** Before the Question is put, hon. Members, I would suggest that the relief that we want to give to the family of the late Hon. S. U. Bassey, by way of money, should be paid tomorrow morning. In effect, when members come in tomorrow morning, they should put any amount, not less than ₦5, on the table. We shall collect it and send it to the family.

Let somebody move that the Question be now put.

**Mr Effiong Ononokpono** (Oron I) : Mr Speaker, Sir, as a very serious mark of respect to our departed Colleague, I am suggesting very strongly that on Friday morning when the corpse is to be conveyed to Calabar from Ikeja Airport, as we normally troop down to the National Assembly in the morning, we should troop down to Ikeja Airport which is a stone's throw from where we are and wish bye-bye to the corpse of the—

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Member, we have finished with that. The Party Leaders met yesterday and they took certain decisions. Please you can refer to your Party Leader for more clarification. The matter is closed. Please move now that the Question be put.

**Alhaji Y. Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the Question be put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That ten Members represent this Honourable House at the burial of the late Member for Eket I in the Cross River State, Mr Samuel Udo Bassey, on 19th January, 1980 at Eket, and that the House of Representatives should bear the funeral expenses of the deceased Member.

#### Members' attitude during Motion for Adjournment

**Mr Speaker** : It has become a very sad practice for Members to leave the Chamber empty whenever there is a Motion for Adjournment. This does not speak well of the House particularly when we know that there are visitors in the gallery watching the Proceedings of this House. Posterity will really be doubtful of our sincerity when they go into the *Hansard* and realise that everyday there is a Motion for quorum because we argue on the question of quorum everyday. Please, now that we are here to work in 1980—we did some work in 1979, but I am satisfied that we are determined to perform more in 1980—let us spare the time because this is what we are sent here for. Let us try to wait until the end of the day's business. It is not that somebody should not go out if there is a pressing need for that but the idea of Members going out simply to go to the bar does not speak well for the dignity of the National Assembly. Please, Members, always bear with this country and wait until the end of the day's business before you rush out.

Yes, Leader of the House please move Motion for adjournment.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Alhaji Y. Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the sitting do stand adjourned until ten o'clock tomorrow morning.

**Mr Speaker** : Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Tom Egbuwoku** (Isoko) : I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes on Motion for Adjournment any comments ?

**Mr S. A. Shiyanbola** (Ede South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, in supporting the Motion for adjournment, I take this opportunity to say Happy New Year to everyone of us and to say Merry Christmas in arrears, and also to congratulate all of us for the work we have done so far.

#### Employment in Federal Establishments

Before I sit down, I want to touch a small matter that we have been kicking this morning as a football. When we were talking this morning about a Motion we were playing with razor blades on our necks but we did not know. I am very sure, Mr Speaker, Sir, that it will be sensible for us to remind ourselves before it is too late. When we keep talking about a section of this country dominating the employment of one Federal Government establishment or the other, we are playing with razor blades on our necks. The reason is this, the Federal Government of Nigeria has establishments throughout the whole of this country. If we poke nose into one specific area, it would look like playing a ball. If we are playing a ball—

**Alhaji Idris Ibrahim** (Minna North) : Point of order. Mr Speaker, Sir, it is my humble submission that the topic the hon. Member is talking about has been disposed of. He should understand that I was outside with other Members trying to cool down tempers and if he brings this matter back here I can assure him that he will be the loser. I am telling you something. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker** : Order ! Order ! Please hon. Member try as much as possible—(*Interruptions*). Hon. Members, the House must be in order.

Hon. Member when you are speaking, do not go back to a matter that had already been decided upon. It will not be proper for us to go back and repeat the matter all over again. Please make another contribution if you can.

**Mr S. A. Shiyanbola** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think that the last person who put me to order is probably misunderstanding me. What I am doing is looking for peace for all of us, not myself. The reason why I am explaining this is that when we pick one establishment and we talk about it we will have to play with the rest of the establishments and the simple explanation is this. Wherever the establishment of Federal Government is, it is natural that the people around that place will be mostly employed. For example,—(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker** : Order ! Order !

#### Declaration of Assets

**Chief S. A. Oduntan** (Ifo/Ota) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to report to the Speaker that the question of the declaration of assets which he mentioned and which is a matter of the Constitution

[CHIEF ODUNTAN]

has been complied with by some of us, if not all of us. It is only proper that we come to report on the Floor of the honourable House so that the Code of Conduct Bureau could get ready to receive them. I wish to ask Mr Speaker to let us know any time the Code of Conduct Bureau is ready so that we can submit these declarations to it. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker :** We have already done that. So you have not done yours ?

**Chief Oduntan :** I do not know to whom it should be submitted.

**Mr Speaker :** I said that you should bring it to me so that I could pass it on to the Clerk of the National Assembly who would give it to whoever is responsible.

**Chief Oduntan :** We are trying to comply with the Constitution.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, that is what you should do. I said it here that everybody should prepare his own and then bring it to me so that I could pass it on before we went on recess. If you were not here, nobody is to blame.

#### Statements of some Governors and Leaders

**Mr Damisa Jimoh (Okehi Adavbi) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, during our recess, we heard various comments from the State Governors and some leaders in this country. The statements made by some of these Governors and some of these supposed leaders do not augur well for this Nation. We in this honourable House feel that this country has witnessed so many problems and we are not willing to have a repeat of any bad event.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I know that the Constitution we are now operating is a very new one to most of us. We cannot rule out the possibility of either the State Legislatures or some of the State Governors trying one way or the other to go beyond their bounds. We should co-operate. We know that there is a separation of powers but this separation of powers is not water-tight. I am appealing to Mr Speaker, Sir, that every Nigerian be he anything in this country, should realise that there is a time for everything and this time, we want peace in this country. Anybody who has a problem in his State, be it the Governor, a State Legislator or our leaders, he should please find a peaceful solution to his problems. People are just crying wolf. We are all men, we all jointly own this country, and no one can drive the other one from this country. Threats will not help us in this country. The Constitution says that in this country, as at now, we have 19 States and it is indivisible. We are bound to go together as one country. Threats so far do not augur well for this country.

Again, when you are trying to compare the Military Administration and the Civilian Administration, you find that we are all Nigerians, be you in uniform or be you in civil dress. The

mistakes you run away from here, you are bound to meet elsewhere. So, Sir, my appeal through Mr Speaker is that our State Governors and our leaders should please whenever they have any problems as they are wise enough, they should kindly help to mould this country and not destroy it. When we have a problem, we can never tell the end. Thank you Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you. The hon. Member for Bonny II (*Dr J. Taribo Sekibo*) should speak.

#### Presidential System of Government

**Dr J. Taribo Sekibo (Bonny II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, in contributing to the Motion for Adjournment, I would like to draw the attention of the honourable House to the fact of the present system we are operating. As we all know, the system we are operating is a system of committees and most of the cases or Motions that come up are really to be treated at the level of the Committees. After proper investigations, they can make available information to this honourable House which will guide the honourable House properly.

For instance, today, I was unable to catch the Speaker's eyes. There were certain enlightenments I wanted to make as regards the Motion that we passed on the NNPC. Well, as a matter of fact, the Report by Messrs Coopers and Lybrand has not been formally forwarded to the NNPC.

**Mr T. O. Badejo (Mushin Central I) :** Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes.

**Mr Badejo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, if we go by the argument of our Deputy Speaker, the hon. Member for Minna North (*Alhaji Idris Ibrahim*), on Coopers and Lybrand, accounts or no accounts, the hon. Member is speaking on a Motion that has been thoroughly investigated, thoroughly debated and has been done with. To revisit it is a waste of time of this House and an abuse of the process of this honourable House. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker :** Please do not go back to a matter that has already been dealt with.

#### Control of Emotions

**Dr Sekibo :** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. The next point I would like to make is a passionate appeal to all the hon. Members of this honourable House. There are really certain topics which will excite the emotions of some people and so on but we have to remember that we are here for one purpose and that is the national interest. I would, therefore, appeal that when such topics come up, we should be realistic and at the same time not make people feel that the Motion intended for the good of the nation, is either directed against a group of people or one person. This will make people belonging to that group who are interested in really investigating the matter to try to take sides as if it was against them. So I would appeal that much as we should be realistic, we should always keep our emotions back. Thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you.

#### Nigerian Railway Corporation

**Alhaji M. B. Mustapha (Bida North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, in supporting the Motion for Adjournment, I would like to appeal through this honourable House to the Nigerian Railway Corporation not to wait until a Motion is passed in this honourable House before they fulfil their promises and try to see that wherever their lines cross roads, they should please provide fly-overs. Many lives are being lost daily particularly immediately after crossing the River Niger at Jebba northwards. It should not be a case of waiting for an accident to occur before the Railway Corporation comes out to say that they will be building fly-overs the next day. Please, Mr Speaker, I wish to appeal to them to be very serious and not wait until we put force on them. Thank you.

#### Participation in Debates

**Chief Stephen Alete (Ikwerre/Etche) :** Mr Speaker Sir, I have to thank you specially for allowing me to speak for the first time, after I had battled since morning to catch the Speaker's eye. I did catch his eye but his eye did not catch me. The operative word is on that.

Mr Speaker, Sir, in contributing to the debate on Motion for Adjournment, I would like to make an appeal and my appeal is this. We are all here, 449 of us, but now 448 unfortunately. We are all entitled to participate in the debate on the Floor of this House. I would say without any explanation that, that is the reason why we are here. We were all sent here as Nigerians representing the various Constituencies to come here and help build up Nigeria and install unity and stability for this country. Well, I have noticed that it appears some people are privileged to speak on the Floor of this House while others are not. I am making a particular reference to this morning on the debate on the NNPC which dealt particularly with matters of auditing and finance. I happen to be a Chartered Accountant and Auditor. I had endeavoured—

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Prince Awa Ekpo (Eket II) :** The point of order is Order 26 (4). Mr Speaker with your permission, I read—

*It shall be out of order to attempt to reconsider any specific question upon which the House has come to a conclusion during the current session except upon a substantive motion for rescission.*

The hon. Member for Ikwerre/Etche (*Chief Alete*) now speaking, is commenting on a subject matter which has already been resolved.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member for Ikwerre Etche (*Chief Alete*) please remain outside what had already been discussed.

**Chief Alete :** Mr Speaker, I am not debating on a matter that had been disposed of, I am talking about not being allowed to participate in a debate. On that basis I was saying that if Mr Speaker had allowed me, I had a contribution to make to this

House on the method by which Audit Reports are approached and debated statutorily and legally and I was not allowed to do so. So, I am making an appeal to Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker :** Chief Alete please you could still be useful to the House. Go to the Committee and tell them everything you know about Chartered Accountancy. You would be useful there.

**Chief Alete :** Mr Speaker, Sir, if you would allow me this is not the only one I would speak on. There are still many things in front of us to do. That is why I must make this appeal that Mr Speaker must realise that we are equally entitled to participate on the Debates on the Floor of this House. Therefore he must allow everybody to speak in this House, otherwise if Members are not allowed to participate, it then means such a Member would not be active. I would not like to fight Mr Speaker, I would just return to my Constituency and tell them that Mr Speaker has rejected me from participating in this House. Thank you.

#### University of Calabar

**Dr Mike Ukpogon (Abak) :** In this year nineteen hundred and eighty, I want to make a passionate appeal to all my brothers irrespective of Political Parties. We are talking about education as being the live-wire of any development whether it be technological or otherwise. We are talking about having many Universities. Sometimes when a person's name is mentioned, people try to weave in some sentiments and I am very sure that people are directly involved in what is going wrong in Nigeria.

The University of Calabar is *de facto de jure* property of the Federation of Nigeria. It was established by the former East-Central State under the co-proprietorship of the two States, that is, the South-Eastern and the East-Central States. But later on, the Federal Military Government came to help this University, but it has actually helped the University of Calabar to become a dumping ground for intellectual obsolescence. It makes it very useless. It is useless in every term. When the University was run by the East-Central and the South-Eastern States it was very meaningful because there was no imposition of the Vice-Chancellor on the University. Mr Speaker, Sir, the present Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calabar is actually destroying the University. There is no progress, no infrastructure and no academic aspiration and in fact, Nigerians are not allowed to teach in the Nigerian Universities. Aliens are more accepted than Nigerians. I would appreciate anybody from any part of Nigeria to teach in any of the Nigerian Universities rather than getting people who are intellectually out-moded, intellectually obsolescent to come and teach in the Nigerian Universities.

I am appealing to this august House to do everything humanly possible to revitalise the academic aspiration of the University of Calabar by instituting a high-powered investigation into the financial and academic management of this University so that



[DR UKOPNG]

we can get our people from Bendel State, Imo State, from Yoruba land and from Hausa land rather than getting people from Bangladesh to come and teach in the University.

Finally, Mr Speaker, I would like the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, to explain how he used ₦9 million and 2.5 million Naira for development.

Thank you.

#### Sittings of the House

**Mr Amos Idakula (Keffi)**: Mr Speaker, Sir, it appears to me that we have come with a new zeal in a New Year for a more concentrated work. Mr Speaker said last year, that the Presidential System is otherwise known as the Government by Committees. Since the sitting started two days ago, we have as at now been able to refer several Motions to various Committees. But unfortunately, Mr Speaker, I want to observe that there is not much time for Committee work as at now. I want to suggest, Mr Speaker, Sir, that the House meeting be re-adjusted so that the Committees would be able to spend more time investigating, finding out and deliberating on any issue before coming to the Floor of the House for approval. Thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker**: Hon. Member for Keffi (*Mr Idakula*) let me reply you straightaway because this is a very important point. What happens is that because the Senators meet at three o'clock everyday, we have agreed to meet in the mornings so that they would use the small space we have got for Committees in conducting their Committee Meetings in the morning while we do our own in the afternoon. The Business Committee is going to work out a Calendar for the whole year so that they would accommodate all the Committees within the day. So, you would be informed in due course.

**Mr Idakula**: Thank you, Sir.

**Mr Speaker**: We are going round. Let us hear Mr Njoku.

**Mr Appolos N. Njoku (Isiala Ngwa)**: Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to talk on two issues. One of them is the incident which took place during the Christmas period and this particular occasion was sponsored by no less a personality than the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria himself. I am referring to the party he organised for the children in Lagos State.

#### President's Christmas Party for children

While at home in my rural village, I got to know that the President hosted a party for well over 500 children mainly drawn from Lagos. This particular occasion did not make me feel happy for I thought that this occasion was a party for privileged children of privileged parents in Lagos. I came under this impression because I cannot imagine any child in Lagos who would be invited to the President's Party without coming from the hierarchy of what makes

Lagos State a social status. I would have thought that there are a lot of children in the rural areas and all these areas have been hearing about the International Year of the Child, because this party was organised under the IYC programme. Unfortunately, there are millions of children in the rural areas who did not have any opportunity of having a better time during the Christmas.

I was imagining that the President could have made some money available to the Local Government areas to hold this type of party in each of the Local Government headquarters for the children in the rural areas. It is my impression that for too long we have been cheating the children and in fact the inhabitants of the rural areas. Always and every time the good things of life of this country are given to the children in the urban areas. Many of us live with our children in the rural areas and I begin to imagine that it is high time the children in the rural areas began to enjoy the good things of this country also.

I am, therefore, suggesting that come next Christmas, Easter or whatever occasion, the President should make some money available to the State Governments and the Local Government Areas in order to host this type of party for the children in the rural areas. It is very important.

#### River Basins

My second point, Sir, is something which has to do with the River Basins. We have about thirteen River Basins which have been set up in this country. About four of these Rivers are merged. For instance, we have the Anambra/Imo River Basin. We have some other rivers merged like that. It is my suggestion, Sir, that each river should have its own special River Basin. This would make for full exploitation because each River Basin, I am sure, has enough resources, which, if fully exploited, can give us a greater benefit of what rivers are meant to serve.

Again, Sir, you will realise that if these River Basins are separated it will give many people more opportunity of producing professional ideas and knowledge about the particular areas attached to them. In the context of Nigerian society, I do know very well that if a man is disappointed by one River Basin very close to his own area, the tendency is to concentrate on the Headquarters, the development, and everything within that particular area giving little or nothing to the other areas. So it is very necessary that for the full benefit of exploitation of each River Basin, we should have different River Basin Boards and each River Basin should be exploited on its own merit. It may be necessary to emphasise this point because the type of crops and the type of resources in one River area may not extend through the length of two River Basins merged together. So, if you use the same style of exploitation, you may find that the essence of investment in one area may be a waste whereas if each Basin is properly studied and our own resources properly exploited, there may be the tendency to diversify production by these River Basins.

With this, Mr Speaker, I support this Motion for Adjournment.

**Supremacy of the House of Representatives**

**Mr Idrisu N. Medugu (Madagali)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I think on the Motion for Adjournment, there will be no point of order, because I am an advocate of points of order. Therefore, I should be allowed to speak without anyone raising a point of order

I have something to tell the hon. Members here. It seems some people do not recognise that the elected Members of this country are the true Representatives of Nigeria. The Pressmen claim to be the representatives of some section, the Civil Service claim to be the representatives of some section and the Trade Unions claim to be the representatives of some section. They should know that by the Constitution we are operating now, we are the supreme commanders of this country. (*Interruptions*) Some people are calling me Cameroonian but I have already decided that I am now part and parcel of Nigeria, no more a citizen of Cameroon. Therefore, you should not call me a Cameroonian. I am a Gongolian. (*Interruptions*) So, the best thing we should do is to work hard and to make the Constitution work.

We have about 279 Sections and subsections in this Constitution. These Sections will not solve all the problems of Nigeria. We have more than ten thousand problems but we can do our work and try to do what the Constitution says wholeheartedly without any bitterness. I am not trying to bring in the philosophy of GNPP here. We should make this country a success. But, if we should say that the Constitution is just a guide and that we are just making up our minds, that will not work. The Constitution is supreme.

I am, therefore, requesting this honourable house to make it quite clear to the Pressmen and other sections of this country that we the true Representatives of the people have got the mandate of the people of Nigeria for four years. We should not bend our heads to any section of this country. Therefore, Mr Speaker, this is my only contribution towards this Motion for Adjournment.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, can we hear from PRP ?

**Alhaji Sule Lamido (Birnin Kudu)** : May I on behalf of the people of Birnin Kudu say love, peace, unity, and prosperity to this House and through this House to the people of Nigeria.

**Presidential Appointments**

Mr Speaker, and Members of this House, I am trying to make a passionate appeal to the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. I have watched his Programme in the last 100 days, I have also watched the appointment of Ministers, Advisers, Permanent Secretaries and other Cadres so far within the last 100 days. I am not being emotional or sentimental but I am trying to clarify one idea which is indisputable.

(i) Kano State is the highest populated State in Nigeria ;

(ii) it is economically a force to be reckoned with in Nigeria ; and

(iii) it is also politically, a force to be reckoned with in Nigeria.

May I say that despite the provision of the Constitution of Nigeria, that Federal character should be taken care of, population consideration should be seen to have been effected in all appointments at the Federal level. I am a little disappointed to say that with this position of Kano State we have only three political representatives at the Centre here. That is, two Ministers and maybe one Permanent Secretary. I am appealing to the President in his future appointment of Ambassadors and what have you, to please give Kano State the right quota it deserves. I believe there are quite a number of seasoned people in Kano State, intellectuals people like Maitama Sule, Inua Wada, Dr Dairu Yahaya and so many of them in the NPN, who have actually contributed in securing him two-thirds of nineteen States. For that reason may I say that they are part and parcel of Nigeria and they deserve to be reflected in all appointments at the Federal level here.

So, Mr Speaker, Sir, may I convey a happy New Year from Birnin Kudu to Ngiria.

**Mr David Niyi Adelu (Ibadan East)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, although the time has gone I am really grateful for being asked to speak.

**Presidential inquiry into the First Military Coup**

I very strongly and very sincerely wish to appeal to the President of this country to institute an inquiry into the Military interregna in this country right from 1966. Today is the anniversary of the first Military coup in this country. Mr Speaker, Sir, I very much wish that an inquiry be instituted into the circumstances of the attempt to seize power in 1976.

Mr Speaker, Sir, if you go by events you will see—(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker** : Order! Order!

**Mr Adelu** : If we go by normal events, countries outside this country have discovered that the sort of inquiry instituted the last time an attempt was made to seize power but which failed, the inquiry was not complete. It was not thorough and it is not respected outside this country. For instance it has been claimed by people outside this country that people like Yilda and Co. are still in Nigeria and the last Military Regime knew where they were but never got them. Even then Mr Speaker, Sir, there is an article published in London which is called the *public eye*—

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Member there is a point of Order and the point of Order is that it is time.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That the House do stand adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 1.00 p.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Wednesday, 16th January, 1980

The House met at 10.20 a.m.

**PRAYERS**

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Votes and Proceedings**

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, the Votes and Proceedings of yesterday have been gone through and approved by me.

**Resignation of a Member**

May I inform the House of the resignation of the hon. Member for Ikeja (*Mr A. G. O. Ajimotokan*) following his appointment as Commissioner for Sports, Youth and Social Welfare by the Lagos State Government.

**Communication from the Speaker of the  
House of Representatives in America**

May I also inform the House that I have received a letter from the Speaker of the House of Representatives in America and the letter reads as follows :

January 14th, 1980

*The Honourable  
Edwin Ume Ezeoke,  
Speaker of the House of  
Representatives,  
National Assembly.*

*Dear Mr Speaker,*

*It is a great pleasure to extend my congratulations on your election as Speaker of the Nigerian House of Representatives. I know well the challenges and responsibilities of your position and wish you every success in meeting them.*

*America has watched with interest Nigeria's transition to elected civilian government ; this interest is deepened by the fact that you have adopted a federal system of government, similar to ours. I and my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives stand ready to share our experiences with you, if you believe that would be useful.*

*If you ever travel to Washington, I hope that we will have the opportunity to meet and compare notes.*

*Sincerely,  
Thomas P. O'Neil*

I hope the House will approve a letter of appreciation to the Speaker of the American House of Representatives.

**Return of Forms**

Also, a lot of forms calling for the Lagos and Constituency contact addresses and telephone numbers were distributed to Members before the Christmas break. Will Members please return the completed forms either directly to Room 278, Second Floor, Senate Building, or to the Clerk of the House of Representatives for necessary action.

**NOTICES OF MOTIONS**

**Opobo Boatyard Limited**

**Adjourned Debate on Question,**

**6th December, 1979**

*Motion moved and Question again proposed :* That this House urges the Federal Government to reactivate the Opobo Boatyard Limited without further delay, in view of the fact that this Boatyard was originally operating before the Civil War but has so far failed to take off unlike all other Federal and State-owned industries in that Local Government Area, and above all the 350 workers who have since been laid off are still without work and are thereby facing untold hardship.

**Mr Speaker :** The Motion stands in the name of the hon. Member for Ikot Abasi II (*Mr A. A. Inoh*). The Motion was adjourned from the 6th December, 1979. There are also amendments. I hope Members have got copies of the amendments. There are two amendments altogether, one is by Mr A. T. Lawal and Mr I. Ayodeji Olaleru. Then another amendment is by Chief B. O. N. Omoruwa. I do not know whether you have got the copies of the amendment by Chief Omoruwa.

Yes, Mr Inoh.

**Mr A. A. Inoh (Ikot Abasi II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to move this Motion—

That this House urges the Federal Government to reactivate the Opobo Boat Yard Limited without further delay, in view of the fact that this Boat Yard was originally operating before the Civil War but has so far failed to take off unlike all other Federal and State-owned industries which have since taken off after the War, in spite of the fact that it is the only Federal and State-owned industry in that Local Government Area, and above all the 350 workers who have since been laid off are still without work and are thereby facing untold hardship.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr H. M. J. Wachukwu (Ukwa) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr A. A. Inoh :** Mr Speaker, commenting on my Motion, I would like this honourable House to know that Opobo Boat Yard Limited was established a long time before the war and that during the war most of the infrastructures and the buildings were badly damaged. Before this time the Company was operating profitably and was owned by both the Federal and the State Governments. After the war work started again in this Company but the Company could no longer operate profitably because of the damaged infrastructures. In December 1972 the Federal Military Government decided to give a loan of ₦600,000 to the Company for reactivation and re-organisation. This was mainly to pay the arrears of the 350 workers but at the same time the Federal Military Government directed James and Stones of Brightingsea who was their technical partner to recruit staff or experts from overseas. James and Stones Limited, instead of recruiting staff or experts from overseas, recruited apprentices from their Building Yard and called them experts. They were six in number. So, in less than six months the six hundred thousand naira was completely exhausted and in 1973 because of this sort of action by James and Stones, the Federal Military Government decided to abrogate the Management Agreement with them. And so the so-called experts and James and Stones left for Britain leaving the Boat Yard with African staff. Before this time the Nigerians who were working there were making a very good headway. What I feel is that if the Nigerians were left to manage the Boat Yard the result would not have been what it is today.

In 1974, the Federal Government having abrogated the agreement with James and Stone, decided to look for a new technical partner. They scouted for technical partners and came out with Akers of Norway. Since they had been contacted and they agreed to be the technical partners of the Opobo Boat Yard Limited, we have not seen them up till today. At the same time in 1974 the Federal Military Government decided to expand the company and agreed to contribute the sum of ₦2.5 million and that ₦1.5 million should come from the State Government. But up till now, not even a kobo has been given to that company. The company could not operate any longer. In 1975 the Opobo Boat Yard was virtually closed and the 350 workers were reduced to 20 just to look after the infrastructures.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, what is the point of order?

**Mr Adewara Toyin Lawal (Ifelodun) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members I am pointing to Order 23 (3).

**Mr Speaker :** Hold on. Make your point of order the next time.

Hon. Member for Ikot Abasi II (*Mr Inoh*) you can go on.

**Mr Inoh :** Thank you, Mr Speaker for allowing me to go on.

I said that in 1975, the Opobo Boat Yard was virtually closed down and the number of workers was reduced to 20. Also correspondence had been going on between the State Government and the Federal Government. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Order! Order! Yes, Mr Inoh.

**Mr Inoh :** Correspondence had been going on between the State Government and the Federal Government. The State Government has been doing her best to keep the company going up till today and it has been asking the Federal Government to state her stand whether to continue or not. One of such correspondence in this—

**Mr R. O. Apalara (Ifedapo) :** Mr Speaker, Sir I point to Order 23 (3) of the Standing Orders Mr Speaker, with your permission I will read :

*Upon an amendment to leave out words and insert other words instead—*

Amendment had been proposed on this Motion, Mr Speaker, and the Question had not been put as to whether the words intended to be inserted should be inserted or otherwise before the debate continued on the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** I understand what you are saying but the Amendment has not been made yet. It has, to be moved first. Nobody has moved the Amendment. Let him finish moving his Motion and the owner of the Amendment will move his Amendment ; then we will deal with the Amendment.

**Mr Apalara :** In my humble opinion, Mr Speaker, I would have thought that the Amendment ought to be debated first before the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** It has to be moved first. We cannot debate it without a Motion. Yes, hon. Member for Ikot Abasi II (*Mr Inoh*).

**Mr Inoh :** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I said that correspondence had been going on between the State Government and the Federal Government. One of such correspondence from the State Government is this. I quote.

*You will recall that in 1976 your Ministry indicated that this State could take over the Boat Yard from the Federal Government. And in your letter No. EI/409/87/0 lto 11/5 of 14th November, 1978, the Federal Commissioner for Industries stressed that his Ministry was exploring all possibilities of rehabilitating the Boat Yard through private interests. We believe that this decision is the outcome of the studies commissioned on the Boat Building Industries in this country. In view of the foregoing and in addition to the deteriorating condition of the Boat Yard, this Ministry has established contract with the South-Eastern Boat Yard Limited, an indigenous boat building industry which has association with technical partners in Japan.*

I say this because the State Government having explored all possibilities of rehabilitating this Boat Yard itself, had seen people who would have liked to reactivate it. Since the State Government had been corresponding with the Federal Ministry of Industries, up till today there is no answer from the Federal Ministry of Industries. So, Mr Speaker, Sir, I feel that perhaps the Federal Government purposely wants to kill this industry. I would like to

[MR INOH]

say that the Presidential System is not expensive say that the essence of establishing this industry, apart from making profit, was to enable the riverine areas of that part of the country to have easy means of transport.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would also like to recall that it is mean of the Federal Government to have invested only about ₦80,000 in a project like this. There is nowhere in the Federation where the Federal Government has invested such a small amount of money in the Federal Government projects. I am now feeling that the Federal Government is not interested in this project. For the purpose of resettling these 350 workers and for the purpose of providing easy means of transport for the riverine areas of this part of the country and also for the purpose of national unity which we have been talking about, that is, by providing industries for all parts of this country, I am appealing to this honourable House to urge the Federal Government to rehabilitate this industry.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker : Amendment please.

Mr Lawal there are two Amendments. One is by yourself and the other—(Interruptions) If anyone wants to do business in this House he must be properly dressed.

Hon. Member for Warri (Chief Omuruwa) you can go on with your Amendments.

Chief B. O. N. Omuruwa (Warri) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to move the Amendment in my name which reads :

That the House of Representatives do realise the importance of Communication links through River Transportation as an important factor conducive to National Unity, rapid development in commerce and economic growth of the riverine areas.

That the Federal and State Governments appreciative of the fact that adequate facilities be provided to encourage free mobility of people, goods and services, in these areas, established Boat Yards at Opobo in Cross Rivers State, Epe in Lagos State and Warri in Bendel State known as Opobo Boat Yard Limited, Epe Boat Yard Limited and Delta Boat Yard Limited respectively.

That these Federal and State owned Industries were so utterly neglected that they were forced to be closed down, and their workers laid off ; the communities served by these Industries, and laid off workers and families were thereby made to suffer untold hardship.

That this Honourable House urges the Federal Government as a matter of urgency to reactivate the Opobo Boat Yard Limited, Epe Boat Yard Limited and Delta Boat Yard Limited as soon as 1980-81 fiscal budget is released ; if the Federal Government is solely unable to undertake the immediate revival of the aforesaid industries, it should subsidize technically and financially any State or body willing to undertake the projects.

I beg to move.

Mr Speaker : Anybody seconding the amendment ?

Mr A. Adeola (Ijero) : I beg to second the Amendment.

Chief B. O. N. Omuruwa : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, before I start I would like to appeal to Members of this House that this is a matter which affects special areas in this country. They have no means of transportation other than through the rivers and their roads being the rivers, therefore their buses and vehicles are the boats. I know that many of you who do not live in the riverine areas may not appreciate the difficulties which these people have. We want adequate arrangements to be made for them so that mobility may be possible for them.

So, while moving this Motion I would appeal to you to accommodate us and try to bear with us when we make our demands. The Delta Boat Yard was established in 1971 with a paid up capital of ₦20,000 and over the years the Boat Yard had a subvention from the Government in the sum of 2.6 million naira ; that was up till 1975. As from 1976 the Government showed no interest whatsoever in this Boat Yard.

In the riverine areas, we have a population of 400,000 people excluding the inhabitants of Warri Urban areas. These 400,000 people represent 15 per cent of the whole population of Bendel State. The area covered by the riverine area is 3,339.8 square miles which is 22 per cent of the total land area in Bendel State. These people, ever since the State Government no longer takes interest in their welfare, have no means of transportation. Before foodstuffs get there the prices are so high, that the little money they have is spent on food. So, without these boats, Gentlemen, these people cannot work, and the Bendel State Government has been saddled with this responsibility which is a Federal Government responsibility.

If you look at Section 15 of the Constitution subsections 1, 2 and 3 (a) you will find that it is the duty of the Federal Government to make mobility in this country available to all citizens. With the permission of the Speaker, may I read Section 15—Political objectives of this country. It says—

*The motto of the Federal Republic of Nigeria shall be Unity and Faith, Peace and Progress. Accordingly, national integration shall be actively encouraged, whilst discrimination on the grounds of place of origin, sex, religion, status, ethnic or linguistic association or ties shall be prohibited.*

*For the purposes of promoting national integration it shall be the duty of the State to—provide adequate facilities for and encourage free mobility of people, goods and services throughout the Federation.*

So, you will see that it is the responsibility of the Federal Government to see that there is free movement in all parts of this State and not only in the motorable areas. The riverine areas are also included in the responsibility which the Constitution has

[Chief. Omuruwa]

assigned to the Federal Government. Incidentally, these riverine areas are the important oil producing areas in Bendel State. Well it will be a very sad aspect of human endeavour.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the people there watch their nature given resources being tapped by the Federal Government, the revenue accruing there being syphoned to other parts of the country for their developments, while those on whose soil these things are got are left high and dry. I wonder whether in such a pursuit the consequence will be palatable to the unity of this country. The Federal Government has neglected this area for so long, and the time has come for the Federal Government, with the assistance of the State Government, to make things possible and allow these people to enjoy the good things of life which everybody is striving to enjoy.

It is my humble submission, Mr Speaker, that the Federal Government should make adequate fund available for the rehabilitation of the Boat Yards. What applies to the Delta Boat Yard in Warri, in Bendel State, is applicable to all the Boat Yards in this country because they suffer the same fate. They have the same problem, and they are entitled to all the good things of life. Oil being the mainstay of the economy of this country, whatever money is shared should be shared amicably among the 19 States of this country so that all the States can be equally developed.

I will also submit that, from my interview with the General Manager of the Company, in order to be able to reactivate the boatyard, a sum of nine million naira would be needed. In October this year, the State Government made available to the Boat Yard a sum of two hundred and fifty thousand naira, and the cost of a passenger Boat is two hundred an fifty naira.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member for Warri (*Chief Omuruwa*) what you are to do is simply to tell us why these Amendments should be made. Leave out the substantive Motion. It will be argued in due course. You should try to convince Members that these Amendments are necessary.

**Chief Omuruwa :** Mr Speaker, Sir, the Amendment is made because there are three Boat Yards neglected. The three Boat Yards are included in this Amendment, so that the fate of one will affect the fate of the others. That is why it is necessary to bring them in, in this Motion instead of bringing three different Motions at different times, thereby wasting the time of the House. That is why the Amendment is made.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you. I think that is all right.

**Chief Omuruwa :** In conclusion, it is my submission that the Federal Government should not shirk its responsibility.

**Mr Speaker :** No. All that you should do is to tell us why the Amendment should be made, and you sit down. Then another person will move his own Amendment, and we will vote on them one after the other.

Is there anybody who wants to make another Amendment ?

**Mr Isaac Ayodeji Olaleru (Oyun) :** Mr speaker, I beg to move—

In line two leave out the words *without further delay* and insert the words *as soon as 1980-81 fiscal budget is released* instead thereof.

I beg to move, Mr speaker.

**Mr Speaker :** Is there anybody seconding the Amendment.

**Mr J. A. Abiona (Ifelodun East) :** I rise to second the Amendment.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member for Oyun (*Mr Olaleru*) tell us why you are making the Amendment ?

**Mr Olaleru :** Mr Speaker, I am making the Amendment in view of the fact that the word *without further delay* compel a lot of urgency on the Federal Government. As far as the Boat Yard in question is concerned, without knowig the financial position of the Federal Government's finance, the words *without further delay* cannot really be used. So, as soon as 1980-81 fiscal budget is released it will, as matter of fact, give serious thought to actually putting this Boat Yard into consideration. That is why I think that the Amendment *as soon as 1980-81 fiscal budget is released* and proposed.

Thank you Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker :** Is there any other Amendment ? Hon. Member for Epe (*Mr Sadiku*) I thought you had an Amendment.

**An hon. Member :** He is not here.

**Mr Speaker :** Let us therefore face the two Amendments that have been moved.

Hon. Members you have all got copies of the Amendment by the hon. Member for Warri (*Chief Omuruwa*). We will now vote as to whether this Amendment should be made or not.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, may I move that the Question be now put.

*Amendment put and negatived.*

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member, the first Amendment by the hon. Member for Wari (*Chief Omuruwa*) is rejected. (*Interruptions*)

The second Amendment is by the hon. Member for Ifelodun (*Mr A. T. Lawal*).

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the Question on the second Amendment be put.

*Amendment put and negatived.*

**Chief Olusola Omonira (Ilase/Ese) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, may I request for a Division on the first Amendment.

**Mr Speaker :** We have already finished with that. Hon. Member what you should do next time is that when the Speaker put the Question for the first time and you are not satisfied with his decision, you should challenge it immediately.

**Chief Omonira :** We did so. Mr Speaker, your decision was challenged. I called the attention of the Speaker but he did not give me audience.

**Mr Speaker :** When Mr Speaker does it for the second time also and you are not satisfied with his decision, you can still challenge it. I did not see that you challenged it.

**Chief Omonira :** We are still saying that the verdict of the Speaker is hereby challenged.

**Mr Speaker :** No, we have finished with that.

We will now debate the substantive Motion. Is there anybody who wants to make contributions ?

Yes, Mr Sadiku ?

**Mr G. B. Sadiku (Epe) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, on a point of information, I have an Amendment here after Mr Omoruwa's Amendment. In fact, my Amendment came before Mr Omoruwa's Amendment. This was long before we ended the last sitting.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, we mentioned your name but you were not here. All right, you may make your own Amendment now.

**Mr Sadiku :** Mr Speaker, my Amendment reads thus :

Leave out from the word *proposed* to the end and insert as follows : That this House urges the Federal Government to reactivate the Opobo Boat Yard Limited, and the Epe Boat Yard Limited, without further delay, in view of the fact that these Boat Yards were originally operating before the Civil War and before the Creation of States in 1967, but have so far failed to take off unlike other Federal and States' Industries which have since taken off after this transitional period in spite of the fact that these two Boat Yards were the only Federal and State-owned industries in their respective Local Government Areas, and above all the 350 workers who have since been laid off in each of the industries are still without work and are hereby facing untold hardship, and that if for any reason whatsoever the Federal Government is solely unable to undertake immediately the revival of the said industries, it should very heavily subsidize technically, financially and otherwise any State or body willing to undertake the projects.

I beg to Move.

**Mr Speaker :** Is anybody seconding the Amendment ?

**Mr Dele Fayemi (Badagry) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to second the Amendment to the Motion.

**Mr Sadiku :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am asking for this Amendment to the original Motion because of the importance of water transportation in Nigeria.

Historically, the role of water transportation has been very immense in the evolution of any country. In fact, it would appear that transportation on water was the beginning of man's civilization. From the days of the Egyptians, the Mediterranean Sea was the point of convergence where civilization did meet. The Athenians also made use of water for the collection of data for their development. The Roman Empire became what it was just because it had a good control of the water—(Interruptions)

**Mr Speaker :** Mr Sadiku all that you need to do is to tell us why this Amendment is vital to this Motion.

**Mr Sadiku :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I have taken this trouble to open the eyes of the world, especially the eyes of Nigerians, to the fact that we have made a very vital omission in the development of our economy. Water transportation has long been neglected and this negligence has made Nigeria to suffer a lot. It is for this reason that this Motion serves as a good opportunity to direct our minds to what we have been lacking for quite a long time.

I am not narrowing down my observation to Epe Boat Yard and Opobo Boat Yard. I am calling on the Federal Government to resuscitate our water transportation in the country as a whole. The Boat Yard Industry only serves to provide the vessels for water transportation. The country has suffered a lot economically, politically and socially because we divert our attention from water transportation. Many accidents do occur on our roads which would not have cost many lives if, in fact, the riverine areas and the various water transportation facilities had been made use of.

Loads are carried from place to place and these loads cost much to transport. Not only this, we have got most of our strategic areas located along the coastline. Without the development of water transportation we will not be exploiting fully the potentialities of the country's economy. This is why I am trying to refer to the world's civilization in order to convince us that those old empires, like the British Empire and the present USA got their civilization through the development of water transportation.

The Boat Yards we are talking about are Industrial Projects in this country. Epe Boat Yard was established in the 1940's. After the establishment by the then Western Region—

**Mr Shem E. Asuk (Bonny I) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, point of Order.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, what is your point of Order ?

**Mr Asuk :** Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of order is Order 21 (1) of the Standing Orders. With the permission of Mr Speaker I shall read it. It says :

*Amendments proposed to any motion of bill under consideration in the House or a committee thereof shall only be in order if they are relevant to the question or matter then under discussion.*

[Mr ASUK]

The proposed Amendment is not relevant to the main Motion. Mr Speaker, Sir, the main Motion calls specific attention to Opobo Boat Yard Limited and the fate of its workers. It does not talk about Boat Yards all over the country and all over the world as we are being told.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you very much, Mr Asuk. I think the Amendment is in order. Please, continue, Mr Sadiku.

**Mr G. B. Sadiku :** Thank you, Mr Speaker for saving the House from this parochialism which concentrates attention on only a small Local Government area rather than on the nation at large.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I want this House to support the Motion that is on the Floor with its Amendments. We cannot over-play the importance of water transportation and this is why I am calling on the Federal Government through this House to revive, in fact, not only these two boat yards but other boat yards that are available in the country. (*Interruption*)

**Mr Speaker :** Have you not finished? If you have finished then we can vote on your Amendment. You know we have to vote on your Amendment first.

**Mr G. B. Sadiku :** As I was saying before I was interrupted, during the creation of States, Lagos State was carved out of the Western Region. The Western Region of Nigeria then was the originator and founder of the Epe Boat Yard. Since that time the yard has been left idle and the country has lost the service of the materials and products of this industry. Previously, various parts of Nigeria were buying boats from the industry at Epe Boat Yard and from evidence it was stated in fact that the boat yard was subsidised at that time by the Federal Government. That subsidy was then withdrawn and this is why it has now become the responsibility of the Federal Government to return the subsidy which it withdrew from the Epe Boat Yard. Besides that, just as the Federal Government has cultivated very keen interest in the development of transportation all over the country, it should also cultivate interest and invest money in the development of Boat Industries and Water Transportation.

A number of our roads in the country which are termed Trunk A Roads, were built, maintained and sustained with Federal revenue. As at now the airports are scattered all over the country and each airport is a Federal Government-owned property. I am therefore calling upon this House to ask the Federal Government to come in a very big way to support the resuscitation of Epe Boat Yard and Opobo Boat Yard which before, had enjoyed the patronage and financial support of the Federal Government.

Thank you.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, the Leader of the House or anybody acting for him should please move that the Question be now put.

**Mr J. Damisa (Adavbi Okehi) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, may I move that the Question be now put.

**Mr Speaker :** Please hon. Members if you want to challenge the Question, stand up and say you challenge the Question. Do not just sit down and complain that the Speaker does not see you. The Amendment, hon. Members, is as proposed in the Order Paper by Mr G. B. Sadiku. I will now put the Question.

*Question put and negatived.*

Order! Order! So, Mr Inoh your Motion stands. Well, we now go on to argue your Motion. The original Motion is now all right; it is going without amendments. So hon. Members please make your contributions. Yes, PRP.

**Mr Sidi H. Ali (Danbatta) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members of this House, this topic may not look very much interesting to the majority of Members, but I think I support it for the fact that the person who brought this Motion may have special interest in his area where we know boating and other things are vital to the economy of the people. A situation of this nature, Mr Speaker, needs our support and also we need to look at other sections. For example, Mr Speaker, it is only in Kano, Sokoto, as well as Borno States that you have Hides and Skins business going on and yet we have the same Federal Government banning Nigerians from exporting this very vital product while allowing only foreigners to handle it. Hides and skins, like boat business, are very important to the areas I have just mentioned. Many people may not even know because in some areas, when an animal is killed, it is eaten together with its skin but we remove the skins and make shoes with them.

So I feel that an important Motion of this nature, although it may not have relevance to our areas, we think it should be given full support and therefore I call on the Federal Government and this honourable House to support this Motion and see to it that the Federal Government reactivates this boating business so that the people of this area may have the necessary economic activities resuscitated. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Bayo Akinbisehin (Ifesowapo) :** Mr Speaker Sir, as the Motion stands I beg to support it. I beg to support it for the following reasons.

I believe that in a country as big as ours the Federal Government should attempt to have an industry at least in one Local Government Area and since Opobo had been demarcated to be a boat yard area, the industry should be allowed to thrive. I heard from a reliable authority, and I am sure that for the past few years Opobo Boat Yard Industry had almost collapsed. I know from sources close to me that this industry is owing a group of companies to the tune of over two hundred thousand naira. The policy of our party is to provide employment for people and to have nice things of life. If an industry is in a place and it is a government industry, it must thrive. You must be able to make an industry pay for itself. The mere fact that an industry is owing shows that the people managing it or those responsible were not doing good job. I would not say that the collapse of the Opobo Boat Yard Industry



[MR AKINBISEHIN]

Industry was due to the Civil War. Some industries have since been reactivated. The Cement industry in Nkalagu had been reactivated and is doing well; the one in Calabar is doing well. So, I see no reason why the Opobo Boatyard Industry should not do well.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would also contend that this might be an eye-opener to everyone of us and we must be critical of the way Civil Servants run industries in this country. One of the things we have to look into is this idea of keeping Permanent Secretaries and Military Officers as Chairmen and Directors of Companies. They have no knowledge, they have not acquired the experience to run industries. This type of people should be discouraged and we must encourage capable men to be on the board of directors of Federal owned industries or companies.

Yesterday, we were talking about NNPC and at that time in question, Brigadier Buhari was the ruler of NNPC. He had no knowledge of running an industry like the oil industry in this country. I was unable to say something on this issue yesterday because we had closed it and I am not trying to reopen it either, but my insistence is that we should scout round in this country. There are capable men in this country who can run industries and make profits. We must not be sentimental. If we know that somebody from Kano is capable of running an industry like the Opobo Boatyard, send him there. Let him do his best. If it is a Calabar man that is good in textile work, let him go to Ibadan or Ado-Ekiti to work, and this is my belief.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these few remarks, I beg to support the Motion that the Government should come out in earnest to support the industries that are collapsing or otherwise, they should wind up all the industries. (Applause)

**Mr S. O. Olowu (Ikale)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion.

My reason is that it is a rule of a long and healthy life for a man to support what is good. A man should not oppose a Motion because it comes from a particular person or group of persons. It is a good thing to consider the plight of our people wherever they reside in the country. It is a good thing to remember that those who have the fortune, outside their own making, of residing in a particular place deserve to be cared for by the Federal Government. It is also a good thing that those who, out of no fault of theirs are residing in a particular place and have the misfortune of using a particular transportation, should be considered by those who have the opportunity. This National Assembly, particularly the House of Representatives, has a unique opportunity to remember our fellow brothers all over the country. It is, therefore, necessary that the Federal Government should, in accordance with the provisions of this Motion, help to reactivate the Opobo Boatyard. I beg to support.

**Mr A. Ukpanah (Ukanafun II)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the original Motion as it stands on the Order Paper.

Mr Speaker, here again is a case of serious neglect by certain planners in this country. Mention has often been made in this honourable House of certain people in places of authority at certain times in this country, because of not coming from the area where certain industries or certain projects were situated paid very little attention to these. The Opobo Boatyard or the Opobo Boat Industry is one of the first boat industries in this country and it was a very promising industry until the Civil War broke out. This Motion has made mention of 350 workers who have been laid off and I would again say with the greatest respect that by today, 1980, this number would have risen to 750. Opobo is a complete rural area and this honourable House is so concerned about rural development and rural integration. This is one of the first Federal Industries, that had been established in the rural areas, East of the River Niger, but it had been allowed to rot away.

Mr Speaker, this Motion is not only timely but I consider it very expedient now that, perhaps, the Budget of 1980-81 is being prepared and I dare agree that this should be looked into by the Federal Government and included in the Budget of 1980-81.

Mr Speaker, Sir, Opobo is in a unique position. We also are living witnesses of the Government of this country watching Opobo port clogged up with silt. This was one of the navigable ports in this country before the fifties. In fact, I know that it was because of the attraction of this port that brought the Opobo Boatyard to that place, but the Opobo port is being allowed to block up. We hope that with the reactivation of the Opobo Boatyard the port will also be dredged and used because it is very near the Bonny Terminal and Finima where the Federal Government is going to build the New Gas Industry.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I support the Motion for the reactivation of the Opobo Boatyard.

**Mr Shem E. Asuk (Bonny I)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion on the Order Paper.

In supporting this Motion, I would like to associate myself with the sentiments expressed by the last speaker about the position of the Opobo Boatyard. Though the boatyard is in Cross River State, the position of the boatyard is such that it is not only beneficial to Cross River State but it also serves the Rivers State. We in the riverine areas of the Rivers State stand to gain very much from reactivation of this Boatyard. During the brief period of the existence of this boatyard, we found it very easy to get home from that point. Ordinarily, it takes us eight to eighteen hours to get to our own villages in the riverine areas but during the period of the Boatyard functioning well, it only took us 45 to 50 minutes to get to our places. This was because the boat yard made available speed-boats which one could hire at any time one wanted to get home.

It is very important to us in that it would help to solve the problem of transportation. As good roads are important to those who live on the mainland, so is a Boatyard important for providing boats

for those of us who live in the riverine areas. It is true that the plight of workers is so neglected. We are not only praying for the reactivation of this boatyard mainly in the interest of workers alone, but it is also for the benefit of all those who live in and around the riverine areas.

So, Mr Speaker with this I humbly ask this honourable House to give a full and maximum support to this Motion. Thank you very much.

**Mr J. K. Ugo** (Gwer East) : I rise to support the Motion that the Opobo Boatyard should be reactivated. This is because we have just been told this morning that food prices in that part of the country are so high. We should reactivate that Boatyard so as to make possible the movement of goods and services to that part of the country. If this is done we would transport particularly food and other essential commodities to that area so as to beat down the prices of food-stuffs and other essential commodities which are urgently needed.

On the plight of workers, in my view, the Government is bound to find alternative employment for these people. Before and during the reactivation of the Boatyard, the government should find alternative employment for these Nigerians so as to alleviate their hardships. There have been some temptations for State Governments to call on the Federal Government to perform some functions which are within their competence. This, I think, the Federal Government should resist. A Member suggested this morning that Epe Boatyard should be taken over by Federal Government (though that amendment was defeated). I think we should not perform functions which are purely state Government's functions. A State Government in need of aid should either seek a loan from the Federal Government or other sources so as to improve the lives of their people.

Mr Speaker, with these few remarks, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr V. U. Ekpo** (Ikot Abasi I) : Boat building is an important industry the world over and it receives the support of all governments within its areas of operation. I think this is the reason why the Federal Government and the Cross River State Government decided to open up the Opobo Boatyard. It was also designed to give services to the whole country since cheap fish which is abundant within Opobo area is conveyed by these boats to the mainland and is transported to all parts of Nigeria. It is also necessary to use this boat system to carry the abundant garri, yams and all other food products from all other parts of Nigeria across the riverine areas to the people who live in the riverine parts of this country. The Federal Military Government considered it necessary and expedient to continue to maintain this Boatyard at Opobo and that was why they sent in some money to keep that Boatyard going.

What is surprising is that, if you get to the Boatyard today, you would find trained personnel within Nigeria in that industry having nothing to ; because the government has not reactivated it and has not

sent in money to run that place. I know of a Chartered Accountant who had been forced because of circumstances to become a Manager of production staff. This is a waste of manpower and it is important now that the Federal Government and perhaps along with the Cross River State Government should send in money and do something about changing the management of that place. I believe that the Boatyard has two important aspects of a run-down. The first was the Civil War and the second was the attempt to send Civil Servants and perhaps Permanent Secretaries to do production work. You would all agree with me that if you put a square peg into a round hole it would not fit. So, I am using this opportunity to call on the Federal Government to help or do everything possible to reactivate the industry in its entirety.

I wish to refer to the Speech made by the President of this country on 16th October, 1979, where he admitted that Water Transportation is vital in this country. He said, and I beg leave to quote—

*We plan to improve inland water way system and other forms of water transportation.*

The President made this promise. I feel it is proper to extend, to maintain and to preserve the existing ones, rather than going to open new ones. I am saying, therefore, that this Motion is really proper at this time and that immediate steps should be taken by the Federal Government that aims at Rural Development and preservation of existing industries. The Federal Government should send enough money to the Cross River State Government or straight to the Boatyard for the reactivation of this industry. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr David Agi** (Oju) : I rise to support this Motion. (*Interruptions*) I say, I rise to support this Motion because I have some caution to make. Hon. Members, it appears that everyday the Proceedings and Debates in this honourable House continue to confirm the belief of Professor David West—that we Nigerians are people who are afraid of ourselves. I say this because this Motion was introduced and because hon. Members felt that they should take various positions on the matter, they chose to write up various kinds of amendments. The amendments were not aimed at helping the original Motion but they were aimed at helping themselves in the various positions that they wanted to take on the Motion. That was why the Opobo Yard was changed to a number of other names so that it would be acceptable to them. In the end, what is meant to be debated in the House is not the intention of the original Motion but shifted interest brought about by shifted positional Members of this honourable House.

If you really make some deep analysis into this state of affairs in this honourable House, you will discover that we are not really being fair to ourselves and because of this, we continue to be afraid of ourselves. We are afraid of ourselves because we do not want to face facts. When something comes on the Floor of this House and we feel that it does not fall in line with what we think or what we think will benefit us, we begin to label it as sentimental.

[MR AGI]

We begin to say it does not come with the proper motive. It is only those things that suit our interest that we begin to regard as facts. This will not take us anywhere.

Well, let me come to the point I want to make. The Motion deserves some support from me because I believe that the people that come from this area should be the people that would be in the best position to tell this House whether there is real need for the revitalisation of this industry. No other person can claim to have any useful contribution to the state of affairs of what brought about this Motion. Because of this, I would recommend and appeal to Mr Speaker to allow this Motion to be referred to the Committee on Industry so that proper investigation can be carried out and then a recommendation brought to the House.

It does not suffice for us to say here that about 1,500 people have been laid off and so on. If people are laid off because the industry is not viable, well, there is no need for us to come and say here that it should be revitalised. But, if people are laid off for no just cause and the industry can contribute some useful quota to the entire development of this country, then we can look at it and ask the Committee to give us useful recommendation and we can ask that the industry be revitalised.

So, Mr Speaker, I would like to say that this matter can best be done justice to by referring it to the Committee on Industry. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr E. N. Nweke (Nkanu)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, fellow honourable Members, I rise to oppose this Motion. The reason for opposing this Motion is that it looks sectional because there are so many other boatyards in this country which, up till now, have not been reactivated by the government for one reason or the other. I would have supported the Motion if the Mover had included the rest of the boatyards. For instance, there is one at Epe and another one in the Delta Area. There are so many others that have not been reactivated. Why did the Mover single out Opobo alone?

**Prince A. O. Awa-Ekpo (Eket II)** : Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, there is a point of order.

**Prince Awa-Ekpo** : Mr Speaker, my point of Order is 26 (6).

*No Member shall impute improper motives to any other Members.*

**Several Hon. Members** : No! No!

**Prince Awa-Ekpo** : It is my contention that the hon. Member for Nkanu (*Mr Nweke*) now contributing to the debate is trying to impute motives of sectionalism into a Motion that has nothing to do with sectionalism.

**Mr Speaker** : That is all right. Yes, you can continue, Mr Nweke.

**Mr Nweke** : My second point is that there are so many other Federal industries in this country. Take NEPA for instance. In Port Harcourt, you have the Afam Power Station. In Anambra, you have the Oji Power Station. Up till now, these two industries are yet to be reactivated. Why then should a colleague in this House first of all talk of these things?

I am, therefore, asking that with these two points this Motion should be thrown overboard. Thank you, Sir.

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, please before we continue, remember to put something on the Table in support of the family of our departed colleague.

Yes, Mr Ugwu.

**Mr F. C. Ugwu (Nsukka)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion on the Floor with some reservations. In supporting the Motion, Mr Speaker, I wish to point out a few salient points.

These salient points are firstly, that the Mover of the Motion has not convinced this House of the assurance that if the Federal Government pumps any money into the Opobo Boatyard, that the Boatyard would perform better than it did during the civil war.

Secondly, I wish to point out that an industry or company which employs only 350 workers cannot qualify as a medium-size industry in this country. As such, I would have expected that the Cross River State Government would be viable enough to run such a small industry without bothering the Federal Government.

Thirdly, I would like to point out, Mr Speaker, that in a Motion like this, we would require all the facts available to enable this House approve the expenditure of money from the Federal Government. In this wise, I would support my hon. colleague who suggested that this matter should really go back to the Committee on Industry for further investigation and further assurances.

I do not oppose the reactivation of the industry *per se* but the method of reactivation and the assurance that if we pump any money from here we will get results. So, I support the idea that the Motion be referred to the Committee for further investigation.

**Mr Godwin Wodi (Port Harcourt II)** : Hon. Members, I invite you to look at this Motion very broadly in terms of the overall economic development of this country. And by doing this I invite you to approach it from two perspectives :—

- (1) Considering the development on land ; and
- (2) that on water.

All Members will agree with me that water abounds in this country. I am not quite sure if the area covered by water is not more than that covered by land. If we can establish a Volkswagen Assembly Plant in

Badagry and Peugeot Assembly Plant in Kaduna, I do not see why we should find it difficult or rather the Federal Government should not establish an industry to produce boats.

I want to explain to most of my friends who perhaps do not understand what a boatyard is. It is an industry capable of producing a means of transport used on water. It is almost synonymous with a vehicle assembly plant. If we assemble vehicles for use on land why must we ignore the assembly of vehicles to be used on water? You see, its overall development in this country in terms of the fact that for many years now we have been using canoes. A Canoe is just that cut-out instrument from a log and it is moved by human exertion partly which is retrogressive. It does not help or improve the life pattern of Nigerian populace that they should continue at this stage to paddle and exert all their energy in that action. The only way to improve is to build boats which have automatic system that can move them and preserve the human energy. If we are out to develop this country we should not overlook this aspect of it.

I know a good many of our friends living around the water-ways may perhaps begin to think in terms of roads, bridges and what have you. I want to inform them that it is very expensive building roads and bridges in riverine areas. What therefore is the alternative? The alternative is to provide better system of water transport and a Boatyard is one of the instruments that will bring this into existence. A good many of my friends here have mentioned the Epe Boatyard, the Warri Boatyard and what have you. Is it not high time we specialised in this country? I take time to pronounce this word, must we not specialise? What is wrong in Opobo Boatyard building all the boats we want in this country. What is wrong if we develop the Opobo Boatyard to the extent of a dry-dock capable of making repairs to numerous boats we have in this country? What is wrong with our putting all our financial resources into one source and building it up to a very significant level instead of sharing these things to Opobo, Epe and what have you all over the country, and they cannot contribute anything good to the development of this country?

I want to mention one significant thing and which is special with this Opobo Boatyard. It is that the Federal Government has been involved and is still involved as this Boatyard, unlike the Epe Boatyard which is built by the former Western Region or any other. We have been talking about money being taken away and perhaps stolen but this is money we have invested in a very viable industry and we are now asking the Federal Government to neglect it and then that money is wasted and lost. We should put a little more into it and then develop this Boatyard and get that capital there to earn income.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to urge this House to leave sentiments aside and approve this Motion in its entirety. I beg to support.

**Mr Idirisu Medugu (Madagali):** Mr Speaker, Sir, let me pass a small judgment here. We were responsible for the closure of the Opobo Boat Factory. Therefore it is not a matter of long grammar. We were all responsible for its collapse and we should be responsible for building it up. This Boat Factory was operating before the Civil War and to put it simply we were responsible for this Civil War and as such the Federal Government is the number one criminal—(Interruptions)

**Mr Speaker:** Hon. Member, please try to choose your words properly.

**Mr Medugu:** Mr Speaker, Sir, I withdraw that statement. Well, I hope the hon. Member who spoke earlier is not from the riverine area. That is why he is opposing this Motion. I think this is a right factory that we should all support and then ask the Federal Government to reactivate it immediately. This is because it affects the economic development of that area, the movement in that area and the employment of the people there. You see, a lot of roads are being built with millions of naira; you cannot build roads on sea or river. It is a matter of sending two or three million naira and the Boat Factory will be on its feet. While we spend millions of naira building roads and bridges in Lagos, why should we not start this small factory and give it two or three million naira? Therefore, please hon. Members let us put sentiments aside and support this Motion without passing it to any Committee of this House so that the Federal Government could give out money and the Opobo Boatyard will go into production.

Thank you very much.

**Mr Muhammadu Tudun Wada (Waje):** Mr Speaker, Sir, in contributing to this Motion, I would like to first of all express my surprise at the amount of time that has been spent on it. As far as I am concerned this is a straightforward matter and it would not have occurred to me that it would take so much time. The issue that is under review, as far as the Motion is concerned, is the reactivation of an industry, a Boat Industry, which is located in a specific area and that area is a component part of the Federation of Nigeria.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not think that the desire to reactivate an industry wherever it may be located is a controversial issue. The only thing that would have been of interest, if it had been included, would have been misdemeanour or some issues affecting probity which caused the collapse of that industry. But as far as this industry is concerned and from the facts before us, that industry collapsed as a result of some certain calamity. Since that national calamity has been sort of rescinded, I do not actually see any reason why we should not consider reactivating that industry. As far as I am concerned, that Industry was a source of employment to so many Nigerians and it will be a source of employment to so many Nigerians when it is reactivated. So, from all angles, whether you look at it from the economic point of view, or from the social point of view, or from the political point of view, you will find that reactivating that industry is more of a priority to us than actually

[MR WADA]

indulging ourselves in unnecessary semantics with regard to either reactivating it or not. Therefore, Mr Speaker, with all due respect to the House generally, I think we actually do not need to spend more time on this Motion because the matter is straightforward. It is not something that needs in-depth controversy.

Mr Speaker, I support the Motion and I beg and move that the Question be now put.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members may I now ask that the Question be now put.

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members the Question is that this House urges the Federal Government to reactivate the Opobo Boat Yard Limited without further delay, in view of the fact that this Boat Yard was originally operating before the Civil War but has so far failed to take off unlike all other Federal and States industries which have since taken off after the War, in spite of the fact that it is the only Federal and State-owned industry in that Local Government Area, and above all the 350 workers who have since been laid off are still without work and are thereby facing untold hardship.

Hon. Members, those in support of the Motion say Aye.

**Several hon. Members** : Aye !

**Mr Speaker** : Those against the Motion say No.

**Several hon. Members** : No ! (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker** : Order ! Order ! I will put the Question again and if anybody wants to challenge the Question, to avoid any confusion, let him stand up and say so.

Hon. Members, those in support of the Motion say Aye.

**Several hon. Members** : Aye !

**Mr Speaker** : Those against the Motion say No.

**Several hon. Members** : No !

**Mr Speaker** : It is too close. (*Prolonged Interruptions*). I think there should be a Division. Order ! Order ! Please hon. Members sit down. Hon. Members you will realise that the voices were so close ; so let us put the Question all over again. Get yourselves prepared and clear your voices now.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Resolved** : That this House urges the Federal Government to reactivate the Opobo Boat Yard Limited without further delay in view of the fact that this Boat Yard was originally operating before the Civil War but has so far failed to take off unlike all other Federal and States industries which have since taken off after the War, in spite of the fact that it is the only Federal and State-owned industry in that Local

Government area, and above all the 350 workers who have since been laid off are still without work and are thereby facing untold hardship.

**Mr Speaker** : The next Motion stands in the name of the hon. Member for Ihitte Uboma. (*Mr G. I. Anukwuem*)

#### Review of the Activities of the Price Control Board

Adjourned Debate on Question,  
17th December, 1979

*Motion moved and Question again proposed* : That in view of the fact that the Price Control Board which was created by Decree No. 33 of 1970 has long been under serious public criticism due to its nefarious activities, this House directs the Committee on Commerce to investigate the activities of the said Price Control Board to show any justification or otherwise for the continuance of the existence of the Board.

**Mr G. I. Anukwuem** (Ihite Uboma) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name in connection with the review of the activities of the Price Control Board—

That in view of the fact that the Price Control Board which was created by Decree No. 33 of 1970 has long been under serious public criticism due to its nefarious activities, this House directs the Committee on Commerce to investigate the activities of the said Price Control Board to show any justification or otherwise for the continuance of the existence of the board.

I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker** : Is there anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Debo Akande** (Ibadan North) : I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes the hon. Member for Ihite Uboma (*Mr Anukwuem*).

**Mr Anukwuem** : Mr Speaker, Sir, the Federal Military Government established the Price Control Board as one of the measures to combat inflation in this country. It is now evident that this measure has hardly solved or checked the inflationary trend in this country. Inflation is a world-wide phenomenon and no nation of the world can check inflation by mere control of prices.

**Mr Speaker** : Mr Anukwuem, I hope you are not reading your speech. Do not read your speech. Put it in your pocket and make reference to it.

**Mr Anukwuem** : No, I am not reading it. I am saying that no nation of the world can control the prices of commodities on mere decrees and legislation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is my considered view, and this view is backed by the economic laws of demand and supply, that only the quantity of goods and services available in a non-monopolistic economy

coupled with the cost of production can effectively and check set prices of any commodity, (*Interruptions*) Mr Speaker, Sir, we all are witnesses of the adverse effect of set prices of commodities such as beer, milk, salt and other essential commodities.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Alhaji Mohammed A. Yelwa (Yauri) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of order is Order 26 (1). The hon. Member is reading from his paper. He is reading.

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order !

Please, hon. Member, do not read your speech.

**Mr Anukwuem :** I am not reading my speech, Sir.

Mr Speaker, Sir, by controlling prices, many citizens of this country, particularly the poor retailers are sent to jail as a result of their selling some of the commodities above the controlled prices. One needs to check to know that really the big distributors, the general managers and sales managers of some of the producing companies are the people who make these goods to be scarce and inflate prices. They escape the hands of the law. Mr Speaker, Sir, is it not true that when the laws of the land permitted the importation of beer that beer was sold at 30k a bottle ? And when the ban on importation—

**Mr Speaker :** Mr Anukwuem, why not allow others to make contributions ? You have moved your motion and it is wonderful.

**Mr Anukwuem :** Let me keep the paper away ! (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order !

Please, the hon. Member for Ihitte Ubome (*Mr Anukwuem*), if you may sit down and let some other Members make contributions. You have moved your Motion and it is well done. You have finished. It is all right. Let some other Members contribute.

The hon. Member for Shendam East (*Mr Gapsuk*).

**Mr Anukwuem :** I want to complete my contribution.

I am entitled to about 30 minutes. Allow me to complete my contribution.

**Mr Speaker :** The leader of your Party, the NPP wants to say something.

**Col. Amadi (Owerri North) :** I wish to address the minds of the Members of the honourable House to the point at issue which the hon. Member is trying to make. It is a very important Motion and should not be disrupted.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I think any hon. Member has the right to make some reference to his notes in terms of any contribution he would like to make in his honourable House. I think a lot of people are deliberately giving the impression that the hon. Member is reading his address. We who are sitting

near him have found out that that is not correct, Mr Speaker, Sir. He is making reference to his notes and there some people who—

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Col. Amadi :** I would crave your indulgence, Mr Speaker, Sir, to give him further protection so that he could go on because he still has a lot to contribute to this Motion.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you.

Hon. Member for Ihitte Ubome (*Mr Anukwuem*) continue with your contribution, but do not read your speech.

**Mr Anukwuem :** Mr Speaker, Sir, this nation has done a lot of harm to the economy and welfare of the people of this country in the guise of protecting our Foreign Exchange (*Applause*). We cannot at this instance say that for the sake of protecting our Foreign Exchange, the masses of this country should continue to suffer in the hands of unscrupulous managers in very many industries and firms that sell some of these commodities.

I have to refer you, Mr Speaker, Sir, to a speech made on the 14th of this month on the Floor of the Senate. With your permission I will read. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member for Ihitte Ubome (*Mr Anukwuem*) make your reference.

**Mr Anukwuem :** This was in connection with the Price Control Officials. It was a contribution made by Senator A. Abogade. It reads :

*Mr President, Sir, I am grateful for permission to speak on the motion for adjournment, and I wish to deal with the Price Control Department of the Federal Ministry of Trade.*

*Those of us from the rural areas of the country share the view that the Price Control Department has outlived its usefulness to the public. Mr President, instead of this arm of the Ministry discharging its functions in conformity with laid down policy given to it by the military administration, it goes on harrasing petty traders in the rural areas. Experience has shown that these petty market men and women sell articles like matches, milk and such other items that are not worth between twenty to forty naira. They are usually arrested and dragged to court, and a fine of ₦200 imposed on them at every appearance in court. This has contributed a great deal to the inflation in the country. If this matter is viewed seriously, it will be discovered that it is those items that are under restriction and which are sold at inflated prices that one sees daily. So, I think the time is now opportune for the government of the people and for the people to think seriously of how to eradicate this menace that is afflicting the people of this great country.*

*Mr President, I believe that the Price Control Department should be scrapped or abolished and all its personnel absorbed into the Immigration Department. The continued existence of that Department has done the people of this country no good. For example, a visit to the big firms that sell cars would reveal that approved prices for cars are not adhered to. Even where the government wants to buy a car, it is asked to pass through an agent. (Interruptions)*

On this note Mr Speaker, Sir, it is the duty of this honourable House to better the lot of the common people in this country. They have the hope that this country would rescue them and give them means of livelihood by protecting their interests at all levels. They have the hope and we also have the hope.

I therefore ask hon. Members to lift up their hearts and eyes to that bright hope of morning stars, within even the breath of human beings in order to assist and make sure that this particular Motion receives blessing. (Applause)

**Mrs J. Eze (Uzo-Uwani)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion on abolishing the Price Control Unit.

The Mover of the Motion is very much concerned about the sufferings of the paupers of this country. For a very long time actually, people had been telling us that they were controlling this or that. Actually there is nothing like controlling anything other than that a group of people I believe, got themselves together and saw to it that licences only went to those people who were attached to them. A few that were attached to them called it control. On the other hand, they make the country suffer because something you should buy at ₦10 and you would pay ₦16 for it. This adds to the fluctuation of the value of our Naira. Before the control and ban on foreign exchange, our Naira had better value than it is now. And then they said they were controlling beer. Now we buy beer, say for ₦1.20 a bottle but when beer was allowed to flow into the country freely we were paying 70k or less for a bottle of beer. On the other hand, the only people I see that suffer for most of these items are the people in the low-income group. But the big ones have always found their ways either by getting these things through their big brothers that go to Europe or they get them through their big brothers who may be leaving Europe for other continental countries.

I therefore very much support the Mover of this Motion that the Price Control Board should be abolished. I pledge in this honourable House that it would be most beneficial to this country if it could look into these items of food that the general public consume a lot and also look into import licence for things that are edible.

We cannot control what we do not have. It is only natural for people to control what they have. For instance, if you go around villages you see women who are pregnant, you see children and they all have

what they call anaemia. Children have kwashiorkor, you see their tummies protruding because they have no protein in their food. They put a ban on frozen food and on meat items. Formerly we used to pay ₦2.50 for a frozen chicken, but now you cannot buy it with ₦7.00.

I support the Mover of the Motion that we should control the items we have and not the items which we do not have. If we control the items which we have, then there is no need for the Price Control Board. Thank you very much.

**Mr E. O. Chukwu (Okigwe North)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of the House, I rise to support the Motion.

Ever since 17th December when the Motion appeared in the Order Paper, I have had the opportunity of going through Decree 33 of 1970. I saw the good intentions of the people who promulgated the Decree but unfortunately, from what we see in our daily life, the operators who are called upon to put the Decree into action have so polluted the Decree that it is now meaningless. Mr Speaker, Sir, I am in total support of the Motion. I have to give one or two examples of the abuse of office on the part of the Price Control men.

I was in a court one day. I happened to force myself to be a legal aider. A woman was brought to the court because of selling a bottle of Coke over and above the controlled price. What did she do? She sold a bottle of Coke for 35k and they charged her to court. Everbody was moved. People were asking the Price Control men what they normally did with the big business men who really sell goods above the controlled price. What did they do?

So, Mr Speaker, looking at the operation of the Price Control Unit, one can agree that it is meant to be for the benefit of the big business men. It is no more protecting the interest of the masses. Mr Speaker, I am urging all Members to support the Motion because the Mover of the Motion is calling on us to do one thing and that is, to direct the Committee on Commerce to investigate the activities of the Price Control Unit to show any justification or otherwise for the continuance of the existence of the Board. He is not asking us to scrap the Board here, but he is asking us to ask the appropriate Committee of this honourable House to go further and find out what is really happening and report back why the Board should continue to exist.

So, Mr Speaker, I support the Motion and I want every hon. Member here to support the Motion.

**Mr Joseph Okoli (Ezeagu)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to look at this Motion from a slightly different perspective, and that is, from the view point of our responsibility in this House.

It appears to me that on a number of occasions when issues do arise as far as institutions or establishments in this country are concerned, we always think of banning or scrapping. I think that we should accept our responsibility to enact rules, regulations or laws to control these systems or those who operate these systems.

If we look at the Price Control System or Decree and there are issues or sections of this Decree that do warrant any amendment, I think it is our responsibility to amend those particular areas, and not think first of scrapping or banning as we are thinking of JAMB and other systems and institutions in this country.

I think that we should first of all accept our responsibility by studying the Decree properly, see how the operators have carried on, and identify whether the ineffectiveness of the system has been as a result of the inefficiency of those that we put there. If it is so, investigate and get rid of those who operate them, if they are guilty. The idea of wanting a system or a Board scrapped for the sole reason that those we put in-charge of these Boards are not effective or efficient is something that I think, we should look at again, and accept our responsibility in making laws, regulations or revisions of these Decrees so as to be effective as we want them.

Thank you Mr Speaker.

**Mr A. Sunday (Song)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members I support this Motion. May I appeal to this honourable House that the Price Control Board was formed with good intentions but the officials execute their functions to enrich themselves only.

I support the view of the hon. Member for Uo-Uwani (*Mrs J. C. Eze*) who said that the Board should be abolished entirely. There is no need to leave the Price Control Board to exist and continue to cheat the poor people.

I will give you an example. If the Price Control Inspectors go to a village to buy something worth ten kobo and the seller sells it at about twelve kobo they will arrest him. If you look at what the trader in the village has in his shop, they are all worth not up to ₦20. This is the type of people that suffer in the hands of the local *Alkalis*. The big men with bigger shops give them bribe ; so they do not worry this class of people.

I therefore strongly appeal to this honourable House to vote in support of the abolition of the Price Control Board entirely.

**Mr Hamza M. Ngadiwa (Biu North)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion.

Hon. Members we are once again reviewing the existence of a monster in the midst of our economy which is the Price Control Board. Right from its inception the Price Control Board became a sick baby and we are looking at it whether it should exist or not. The Price Control Board became a sick baby when it turned from Price Control Board to Price Contamination Board. It became an agent of oppression of the small scale traders. It became a secret agent of profit making for the small and petty manager. Mr Speaker, Sir, the Price Control Board as a monster, is eating deep and increasing the rate of inflation and recession in this country. I therefore implore this honourable House to vote unanimously for its abolition in its totality.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, Sir, a few weeks ago a man no less than a Federal Minister for that matter, in whose charge the Price Control Board is, spoke the indefensible, and that is, the continued existence of the Price Control Board. I think that the position the Minister took is condemnable. He is trying to support an agent of oppression. He is trying to support an agent that is being opposed for all sections of this country, especially in the rural areas where the Price Control Board has ceased to be a Price Control Board and has exhibited itself in the society as a Price Contamination Board.

Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members the Price Control Board should not be allowed to continue any day longer than is necessary.

With these few contributions, I beg to support.

**Mr Aliyu Isa (Makarfi)** : Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise to support the Motion.

In the first instance, I do not think that the Price Control Board should have existed at all if there had been a standard government in this country. It existed because we had a sub-standard government which brought a lot of difficulties by protecting some people that they called industrialists. This protection should not have come up because the government by doing this is encouraging monopoly in our market. The so-called Economic Advisers had deceived our government in believing that these industrialists should be protected and that they could supply enough goods. But this has not been done. Even if the government wants to control the prices of goods, it should first of all make sure that it controls production costs and the government should give a small profit margin to the industrialists. The government should also have been in control of production and distribution of goods. So the Price Control Board should have been established to deal with the manufacturers and not the ordinary man in the street.

The establishment of the Price Control Board created the problem of hoarding. The manufacturers dictated what price they would sell to the people, thereby making at times, 300 per cent profit ; and the government approved of this. That is not all. They hoard these goods and the man who is being punished in the long run buys at more than the controlled price.

From the beginning the Price Control Board has been a corrupt organisation and a failure, and it should be scrapped. Thank you.

**Mr Mohammed Shu'aibu Kaugama (Aliyo/Kaugama)** : Thank you, Mr Speaker for giving me this opportunity to talk on this august occasion about the corrupt practices of this nefarious Board, called the Price Control Board. This is a Board that was established in good faith to serve the generality of Nigerians but unfortunately it happens to be a breeding ground for corruption. It serves no purpose other than helping the big guns to have their ways. It is only the small businessmen that suffer from the oppressive hands of this organisation.



[MR KAUGANA]

As contained in the Motion, this Board has long been under serious public criticism and thereby deserves no right of its existence. It is nothing other than an organisation that is responsible for the inflation that is facing this nation.

This affects the common man, the man in the street and the common businessman that sells his wares in the market. I honestly sympathise with the original Mover of this Motion. He should have brought this Motion in form of a Bill in order that we could really debate on this Bill and then pass a Resolution on it. This will be sent to the President for his assent and get this Board scrapped, not to have anything to do with it any more. The original Mover of this Motion has already been in sympathy with this Board in bringing this Motion in form of a Motion and not as a Bill. So, please in the future Motions of this sensitivity should be presented to us in form of Bills so that our powers can be exercised.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these few words I beg to take my seat.

**Mr Debo Akande** (Ibadan North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I seconded the Motion subject to the feelings of the Mover of the Motion. If I had been called earlier, I intended to suggest an Amendment and having listened to the views expressed by most hon. Members, I think there is no need to send this Motion to any Committee. It is very clear that most, if not all the Members, are satisfied that the Price Control Board is useless. There is no need to ask the Committee to go and find out—

**Some hon. Members** : No ! No !

**Mr Akande** : That is my own view ; I am entitled to it. Mr Speaker, Sir, I seek your protection.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, go on Debo.

**Mr Akande** : There is no doubt as I was saying that the Price Control Decree is one of the panic measures adopted by the defunct Military Government to meet some emergency situations. An hon. Member said if a civil government was in existence, there would not have been any need for such a panic measure. I believe that the new government has its proposals, which I am sure will soon come out from the Budget Speech—proposals that would be put to the House—for guarding against the economy of the country. The intention of the Military Government in promulgating the Price Control Decree was to guard against the economy but there is no doubt that it failed on all fours. I think the point we have to consider is : why did the Price Control Decree fail ? The grounds are so obvious. One, ineffectiveness ; two, abuse by the functionaries and thirdly, the consequences to the ordinary man in the street. These three points are so clear from the operation of the Decree and I would support the Motion that if the House finds it necessary, we should send it to the Committee. I am sure the Committee would come back here and tell us that there is no need to further retain the Price Control Decree while we wait for the new government to put its own proposals for guarding against the economy of the country.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr Dele Fayemi** (Badagry) : Mr Speaker, Sir, Price Control Board and Import Restriction Order are two regulations that really went against the commoners of this country.

If you look very closely into the economy of the nation, you will see that the imported goods are so scarce in the country and the home manufactured goods are as well scarce and what you do not have you want to control. Who suffers ? The final consumers. When the final consumers are forced to go to the black market to buy the necessary goods, they buy these goods at very high prices. You say you have Price Control Board and this Board only drives into underground the people, the sellers who have very few commodities to sell. You do not have the commodities on the markets, the home manufactured goods are not enough, the imported ones are under control, then what do you have ? Nothing, but black market. That is why most of the functionaries in this particular Board make good of their positions to the disadvantage of the commoners in the country. The only way out of this is not only to scrap the Price Control Board but to look very closely into the articles that are placed under restriction when it comes to matter of import. Whether you scrap the Price Control Board or not, and you do not think about the restrictions placed on the goods, the final consumers will still be the final losers in the end. As we think of the Price Control Board, the Bill or Motion that will come up on the restriction of goods—

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Member you will continue after the break.

Hon. Members the House is accordingly suspended until 3 o'clock this afternoon.

*Sitting suspended : 12.55 p.m.*

*Sitting resumed : 3.05 p.m.*

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, the debate on Motion No. 2 continues. An hon. Gentleman was speaking before the House suspended sitting this morning. If he is not here now to continue his speech, another Member may wish to speak.

**Mr Stephen B. Abodunde** (Oyi) : Mr Speaker, Sir, speaking on the Motion on which we were debating before we went on recess this morning, I would like to say as follows :

The Price Control Board has outlived its usefulness. The original intention, of course, was to combat inflation. You will agree that the people who suffer from inflation are the masses. People like us and quite a number of civil servants can afford to buy things at high prices. For example, if we control the price of beer and say that a bottle should be sold for one naira, many people can afford to buy it. But if it is increased to, say, two naira, many of us can still afford to buy it ; but the poor man in the street cannot afford to buy a bottle of beer for two naira. This means that in the long run, the poor man in the street is denied the opportunity of a higher standard of living.

For this reason, we pray that the Price Control Board is no longer serving the purpose for which it is instituted. Who benefits from this control? As it is well known to us, it is the officials of the Price Control Board. They go about collecting money and thereby enriching themselves at the expense of the poor traders. I have seen some distributors who would charge very high prices for their commodities but on the receipts issued to those who buy from them, you would find the official prices that ought to be charged. They have agents who collect what is known as *back-money*. The actual amount so collected would not appear on the receipts. The society is aware of these goings-on, yet nobody has been able to curb them.

In this wise, I see no reason why we should continue to uphold a law which we cannot enforce. Therefore, hon. Members, I implore everyone here to, please, support this Motion so that we can get rid of this arm of the Government that is no longer useful to the society. Thank you, Sir.

**Prince Lateef B. Kataiyeyanjue** (Iwo East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion.

I am in sympathy with the Mover of this Motion. Though I heard what other Members have said on this Motion before the House went on recess this morning, may I respectfully ask that this Motion, as important as it is, be referred to the appropriate Committee. This is because if we continue on this Motion from this afternoon till tomorrow morning, we shall come to the same point. We all know what is happening, and what is wrong with the Price Control Board. We know that the Board has outlived its usefulness; but if we continue like this, we would not achieve anything. If we want to get at the root of the problem of the Price Control Board, we had better refer the Motion to the appropriate Committee so that the Committee can look into the matter properly.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I suggest that this Motion be referred to the appropriate Committee. With this, I support the Motion.

**Mr Damisa Jimoh** (Okehi Adavbi) : Mr Speaker, Sir, the Mover of the Motion has said that this matter be referred to the Committee on Commerce.

I think all we have been doing is, probably, to collect enough materials for the Committee to work upon. We talk about the Price Control Board and talk probably about beer. I think what we really want is to satisfy the ordinary man. If you want to drink beer, that must come from part of your surplus. If you can live, have shelter, and educate yourself, then anything outside all those is in excess. So, if they sell beer for ten naira and you can afford to buy it, it is your own business. If the sellers do not get customers they would probably reduce the price to 25 kobo per bottle.

Our problem, as one Member has rightly suggested, is misuse of this Price Control Board. This is quite true. I am of the opinion too that there is no need to have a law we cannot enforce in our statutory books. It is better we refer this matter, as it is now

in the Motion, to the Committee on Commerce to review it properly and see if we really need this Price Control Board. If we do not want the Price Control Board, we should not forget that the Board was set up by a Decree which we cannot throw away by a mere Motion. It must come by a way of a Bill.

With this little contribution I beg to have my seat.

**Mr Lakem Ofem Okoi** (Obubra II) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise most honestly to oppose this Motion.

I am opposing this Motion not because this Motion has not got any good intention but because of the experience which I, and quite a number of Members of this honourable House, had when matters were referred to Committees. When a matter like this is referred to a Committee, the Committee only sits there to observe certain irregularities. The Committee would rise only to refer the matter back to this House for more details.

Much as I sympathise with the Mover of the Motion, I am of the view that not enough facts have been fed to this honourable House to compel this House to be sympathetic enough to refer it to the Committee. The Mover should be requested to furnish more details on this matter. I have a feeling, Mr Speaker, that if this matter is ever to be referred to the Committee on Commerce, then the Mover of the Motion should come up with specific details of the notorious activities of the Price Control Board. For example, I do not see any justification whatsoever in saying that a Body that has been legally set up, and has been given specific duties to perform by a Decree which is still upheld, is not performing its duties properly without referring specifically to certain offences, or omissions, or acts committed by this Body. So, I am of the view, Mr Speaker and hon. Members, that if at all we want the Committee to be useful to this honourable House or to make certain useful recommendations, then the Mover of the Motion should give more details and not overwork the Committee on Commerce.

With that contribution, Mr Speaker, I oppose this Motion.

**Mr Nuhu Poloma** (Tangale-Waja North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion. (*Applause*)

In supporting this Motion, I have to refer to the speech of the last speaker. The last speaker said he would want some instances and specific issues quoted to support the Motion. I have to call the attention of the speaker to the cost of vehicles in Nigeria. Cars are under the control of the Price Control Board. There is no single car you can buy in Nigeria today at the actual control price. This is known to almost every Nigerian. If you go to any car company and say you want to buy a car, you certainly would pay the actual control price but you would pay an additional amount of maybe ₦500 or ₦1,000 which will not be included in the receipt. This is known to virtually everybody who has bought a car within the last two years.

**An hon. Member : Hear ! Hear !**

**Mr Poloma :** Now, another issue of control is the control of house rents. You find Government controlling house rents in this country, but if you go to a landlord and you want to pay for a house, the landlord, maybe will demand more than the actual control rent and give you a receipt for the control rent. This is known all over the place and it is a specific instance that the last speaker is quite aware of.

Now, I come to the question of control of all commodities that are under the Price Control Board. It is almost impossible to control the prices of commodities that are not available to almost everybody. This is the law of demand and supply. If you have one shirt and the control price is ₦5 and you have ten people looking for that shirt, they are prepared to pay any amount, whether it is controlled or not, and there is nothing the law can do about it.

Another vital issue here is that the Price Control Board is not aware of values. No Official of the Price Control Board knows the value of either the commodities manufactured locally in this country, or those imported. They just come and say they want to fix or control prices. How can you control what you do not know the value? There was a time they were controlling the price of beer in this country to the extent that they almost sent all the breweries out of production because they did not know the price or the cost of production of a bottle of beer. You have to consider the cost of labour, cost of raw materials, taxes and then the marginal gain. They never worked on that. Rather, they just went on and controlled prices of these commodities and almost sent all the breweries in this country out of production. We have to get an organisation that can work out the details of the manufacture of a commodity before arriving at a price and then control that price.

Now, on the question of importation, if you ask any price control officer to tell you the value of a commodity imported into this country, he will tell you that he does not know. He does not know the invoice value, he does not know the cost of freight and he does not know the cost of insurance. How do they arrive at the controlling of the prices? I will give an instance in this case. There are some vehicles that have gone out of supply in this country, for example, Range Rovers and so on and so forth, because of the controlled prices of these vehicles. The controlled prices of these vehicles are so low that if the importers of this type of vehicle import them, they will sell at a loss, and as such, they decided not to import these cars into the country. So, it is a question of somebody going into an issue he does not know about. He is just dabbling into it wrongly.

The next issue concerns the rules and regulations governing the control itself. If you want to buy a vehicle today in this country, for instance, you can go to a price control officer. The chances of your getting that vehicle easier are faster than you going to buy yourself because the price control officer is in

illusion with the company since whatever price they sell it (which is not going to be indicated in the invoice) may be shared between them and the price control officer. Otherwise why go through the price control officer before buying a car?

So, with these few points, Mr Speaker, Sir, and hon. Members, I beg to take my seat and support the Motion. Thank you.

**Dr Emmanuel Y. Atanu (Idah South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, in speaking about this Motion, I would like to say that there are two issues here. The first is the issue of the necessity for a price control system *per se*. The second is the efficiency or the effectiveness of the price control system as it exists in Nigeria.

I think it will be a sad affairs to say that there is no need to control prices. There is no country in the world where prices are not controlled. It is only when you have a perfect market system that it becomes unnecessary to control prices. Price control has several functions or several advantages. First of all, you have a commodity and you have to determine what price it is to be sold at. If you leave it to the whims and caprices of the manufacturer, his interest is to make profit and he will set it at a rate at which he will make a maximum profit. To protect the consumer, therefore, it is necessary that we impose some control, some regulatory system on the price of the commodity. Therefore, I believe that the existence of the price control mechanism in Nigeria is very necessary.

The second is the efficiency of the Price Control Board as it exists in Nigeria. Unfortunately, we have a sad experience of the functioning of the Price Control Board in Nigeria because as it has happened to many of our well-thought out ideas and proposals in this country, the implementation is a draw back. People who are called upon to implement good ideas destroy the purpose, destroy the meaning in which these ideas have been suggested and for which mechanism has been set to work.

I understand, and I sympathise with those who call for the abolition of the Price Control Board, but I believe that if we do that, the consumers in this country will lose mostly. There will be no means then of determining the price of a commodity and there will be no means of protecting buyers and consumers. Therefore, I think we will not be acting properly if we suggest that the Price Control Board should be dismantled. What I would suggest, however, is that the Price Control Board be re-organised in such a way as to remove the evils that now exist as a result of its implementation. I do believe that if we give the Ministry concerned sufficient opportunity, and if we give advice on how to go about this re-organisation, we can get a system which is both profitable to our economy and to the consumers as a whole.

Mr Speaker, when this debate was initiated, a few of us made a short visit to the Ministry of Commerce to try and investigate what was happening there.

We came out with a few findings. In fact, as at now, there are only seven items under full price control. Those items are matches, milk, flour, bicycles, motorcycles, motor vehicles and petroleum products. You can see that most of these things are imported articles from other countries. If we destroy the Price Control system, then we will allow people from other countries to come and exhibit their wares at any price they want and extort our people. I do not think we would advocate a position like that.

There are also some items which are under price maintenance. By price maintenance, it is meant that the Price Control Board sits with the manufacturers and decides on a price that should be charged for a particular commodity and it is the business of the manufacturers to police the implementation of the agreed price among the distributors. They have a source of power in the sense that they can curtail the amount of goods they supply to a particular distributor. They can in fact cancel his permit to act as a distributor. So, they have a very effective weapon in controlling these commodities. It is not true that every item on the market is under Price Control. They are very few and I have mentioned seven of them.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I agree and I support those who say that this matter should be committed to the Committee to investigate and that the Minister or his representative who is in-charge of price control should be called upon to come and give evidence and we can put our suggestions to him. But to call for the disbandment of the Price Control Board, I think, is a negative approach and it would not serve the purpose. (*Applause*)

**Mr Charles A. Adoga (Ogoja):** My contribution here, Mr Speaker, Sir, is that I do not support the idea that the Board should be scrapped. I think, there must be a reason why the authorities instituted a Price Control Board and the reason is that the middlemen or the dealers were responsible for making such items or such commodities which were available to the public very, very scarce. The system which they used was to collect so much and hoard. It was this act of hoarding which actually gave rise to the establishment of the Price Control Board. I do not think that the scrapping of this Board would actually help the exercise.

In most cases where these Board exist they are unable to cope with the number of dealers in the various commodities that exist. In each of the areas where we know that the Price Control Board exists, in fact when they are operating in one side of the town, you would see that one awful thing is happening again in the other area and they are unable to control such things. So hoarding is a way of increasing the amount of profits which every dealer makes, and every dealers actually gives a lot of weight to it. They are thus unable to control these things very effectively. I do not think that it is the Board itself which is responsible for this, rather it is we ourselves who are in a community that are so undisciplined. We cannot keep to rules, we make things difficult for ourselves and we also make things difficult for the people to operate the machinery

for control. We even go to the extent of tempting them, which is very bad and that is what is giving rise to the ills of this Nation.

So, Mr Speaker, I do not think it is necessary to belabour ourselves on this matter. It is right to refer this matter to the appropriate Committee to look into it properly.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South):** I would like to say a few things about the Price Control Board.

The Price Control Board came into existence in 1969. Mr Speaker, I happened to be one of those who were appointed to this Board. I think and I believe that the Government had very good intentions about this Board itself. I had served on this Board for good six years and I believe that the Board was not established to encourage corruption or anything of that nature. We did all we could in that Board to see that the prices of commodities were controlled so that the poor people could enjoy Government control over these commodities. But unfortunately, Mr Speaker, being Nigerians that we are, we are all oriented capitalist type of people who like to exploit at all times. We are not really very disciplined to observe or obey the rules of this country.

When the Government makes rules or regulations that are expected to be obeyed by the citizens, Nigerians do not obey them. We make it very difficult for the Price Control Regulations to be effective. We do not help the law enforcement agency at all to make these things effective. If you know that a car costs ₦4,000 and a car dealer tells you that you have to pay him an additional ₦1,000, why do you have to agree with him and pay? You should take that man straight to the law enforcement agency, or report him. You do not have to buy that car. You have to agree and obey the rules of the country. But you as a culprit, you will not obey the law, you would pay him that additional ₦1,000 because you believe you can pay it. This is because you know that even that additional ₦1,000 which you have to pay him was acquired by you by exploiting somebody else. That is why it does not pain you to go and add an additional ₦1,000 to the dealer of that car. You know it would not cost you anything by paying the additional ₦1,000. So this is what is happening in our society. The same thing happens with ordinary milk. When you know that the Government control price of a tin of milk is 20k and you see it being exhibited in the market at 25k, because you believe 25k is nothing to you, you pay for it at that inflated price. Later on, you come back to complain that the Price Control Board is not doing this or not doing that. I think we ourselves are not helping at all to make these laws effective. This is one side to it.

As the hon. Member for Idah South (*Dr E. Y. Atamu*) has just mentioned if we insist on scrapping price Control Board, we would come here and begin to cry again that it would have been better if we had left it in existence. It is still helping the poor

[ALHAJI KALTUNGO]

people. Let me tell you hon. Members that even in advanced countries, prices of their commodities are regulated. In places like America, London and other advanced countries, they are still enforcing prices of their commodities. I agree they have a lot of supply to match the price control which we lack in this country. We lack them because we do not also want to produce. We rely very much on what we can get from outside up till today. It is not that we cannot produce in Nigeria but that we just do not want to produce. If we determine to produce today, I do not think Nigerians can drink all the beer that would be brewed in this country. Mr Speaker, Sir, having said these very few things about the Price Control, I am in support of what the last speaker, Dr Atanu, has said that we should not scrap the Price Control Board just for sentiment's sake.

The Mover of the Motion himself has requested that this matter be sent to the Committee to examine this case properly and very well. The Minister of Commerce made a statement recently which some of us were not happy about. This Committee has got the right to invite the Commissioner to come and place before it what will actually convince the Committee that the statement made by the Minister is correct because of the way he protected the Price Control Board and the National Supply Company. So, hon. Members, I hope we will be doing good service to this country if we can take our decisions on realities rather than expressing sentiments. I am, therefore, appealing to all of you to agree that this matter be taken to the Committee for their scrutiny. In this respect, Mr Speaker, Sir, if you allow me, I would move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

**Resolved :** That in view of the fact that the Price Control Board which was created by Decree No. 33 of 1970 has long been under serious public criticism due to its nefarious activities, this House directs the Committee on Commerce to investigate the activities of the said Price Control Board to show any justification or otherwise for the continuance of the existence of the Board.

**Mr Speaker :** We would now go to the next item which stands in the name of the Leader of the House, Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo.

**Dr Junaidu S. Muhammed (West Ward) :** Point of explanation.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, let us hear the point of explanation. Please Alhaji Kaltungo let him make the explanation.

**Dr Junaidu S. Muhammed :** Mr Speaker, Sir, it was not my intention to interrupt the hon. Leader of the House before he moves the Motion, but I think the information I have to give is highly relevant. We debated extensively yesterday and concluded that we were going to set up a Committee. I would like to inform the House of a few interesting points. First and foremost, I would like to warn

this House that the investigation we are about to set up is not an easy one. I have a reliable information that files have been removed.

**Mr Speaker :** Hold on Dr Muhammed. Are you debating a Motion that has not been moved? Why not wait until the Motion is moved then you can make your contribution.

**Dr Muhammed :** No, I want to make a point of explanation, Sir. It is important. It is absolutely relevant to what the Leader of the House is going to say and I feel the House should be informed.

**Mr Speaker :** Let him say it first. He has not said anything. Let him move the Motion.

**Dr Muhammed :** With due respect, Sir, what he is going to say is not subject to debate because it has already been agreed upon by the Leaders of Political Parties in this House and I am not going to challenge what he has to say. What I am going to tell the House is of enormous relevance to what is going to be investigated, not just what the Leader of the House is going to say.

**Mr Speaker :** No, this is not the appropriate forum. If you want to say anything about the investigation, then you go and say it to the Committee. We are not going to make use of any materials here. Please, Dr Muhammed, let us not waste time on this matter.

**Dr Muhammed :** All right, Sir. Thank you, Sir.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Alhaji Kaltungo.

#### Composition of the Special Committee on the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, the Motion standing in my name reads :

That in accordance with House Resolution 48 of 15th January, 1980 the Special Committee on the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation should be made up of 15 Members to be composed as follows :

- 6 Members of the NPN
- 4 Members of the UPN
- 3 Members of the NPP
- 1 Member of the PRP
- 1 Member of the GNPP

I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, who is seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Jimoh Damisa (Adabbi Okehi) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Does this require any debate, because we have already agreed on this Committee ? All right, let us hear from Dr Muhammed.

**Dr Muhammed :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I hate to sound alarmist, but I would like to make it abundantly clear to this honourable House that the noble step we have taken in establishing a high-powered Commission of Inquiry to investigate all aspects of

the NNPC is not going to be an easy task. I say this with all seriousness because I have a reliable information that from the very moment this Motion was passed yesterday, there has been a flurry of activities in the Headquarters of the NNPC and in other Government offices of this country. Files have been removed and are being shredded. Vital documents which we may wish to ask for are being destroyed. I do not see how we can make a head-way if these documents are being either hidden or destroyed.

I have also to inform this House that some of the important personalities we may wish to question are not available. So, I think it is absolutely important for the Speaker to further inform the committee by using his discretionary powers to co-opt a few more people in his capacity as the Speaker, people who may have an information and who may be experts or otherwise to help this Committee do its work. I said at first that I did not want to challenge what had already been agreed upon in a very gentlemanly manner by Leaders of the various parties. I would have thought that the best thing would have been for parties to have equal representation. But now as things are, this has been agreed and it is not in my nature to challenge what has been agreed upon. It is absolutely important for people to realise that, firstly, if we do not have important evidence, this Committee will grind to a halt. Secondly, I think it is absolutely important that this National Assembly votes some money to bring in specialists, if need be, who could help us go into some of the vital files, those that are now available. Thirdly, the most important witness, as far as I see, will be Chief Feyide who has resigned as Chief of the Inspectorate Division. He knows more than anybody else.

Another thing is that we have to subpoena the Council Memo which was written and submitted to the Council asking for a transformation of the NNOC into the NNPC. These are very vital documents and vital personalities. Another person will be the former Chief Internal Auditor who has resigned and is now in Britain as the Representative of the Nigeria National Supply Company. We have got to summon some of these people. It is absolutely important, Sir, that you co-opt more people as the Speaker of this House in order to make this Committee's work succeed, otherwise, we are up against a very powerful clique. Today, Mr Marinho, the Managing Director of NNPC, was in this House and I understood he came to meet the Leader of the Senate. The Senate has been sitting on the Bill sent by the President to discuss and re-organise the NNPC. This gives us room for enormous suspicion and I think it is absolutely important we know the enormity of the task before us so that we do not deceive ourselves. Mr Speaker, Sir, we may find that the Committee with all its intentions may be a worthless exercise. I want to add that we take it with all seriousness.

**Mr Speaker :** Let us hear the hon. Member for Danbatta (*Mallam Sidi Ali*).

**Mallam Sidi Ali (Danbatta) :** Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir, I think the point raised by the hon. Member for Kano Westward (*Dr Jinaidu Mohammed*) is very vital in this issue.

If we are going to be sincere to ourselves about the people involved in this case of great magnitude, I am sure every Member would remember when the Military Officers were asked to step down from their offices as Federal Commissioners and leave the various Ministries to civilians. The then Chairman of the Petroleum Corporation, Col. Buhari, who is now a Brigadier was transferred to Dodan Barracks and NNPC was taken to Dodan Barracks. Therefore, it was still being controlled by the then Chief of Staff and the Head of State. In this investigation, we need to bring the former Chief of Staff, Major-General Shehu Yar'Ardua, the former Head of State, General Obasanjo, as they will have vital information on this issue. In supporting the hon. Member for Kano Westward (*Dr Jinaidu Mohammed*), I think we should invite these people.

Chief Feyide is one of the most knowledgeable people on oil matters in this country. He was very important that he became Secretary-General of the OPEC and when he was about to return to Nigeria some sort of *coup* was arranged to prevent him from coming back to the oil Ministry. Therefore, I think he too has a lot of information which he will offer in this investigation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these few remarks, I beg to sit down.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you very much. I can assure you that the House contains very distinguished people and I am also sure that the parties will nominate to represent them distinguished Members of this House, and knowledgeable ones for that matter, who will conduct this investigation. Please let the Question be now put.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, since this Resolution is just about the appointment of the Committee which will look into this issue, may I now move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

**Resolved :** That in accordance with House Resolution 48 of 15th January, 1980 the Special Committee on the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation should be made up of 15 Members to be composed as follows :

- 6 Members of the NPN
- 4 Members of the UPN
- 3 Members of the NPP
- 1 Member of the PRP
- 1 Member of the GNPP

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, it will be of interest to announce that NPN and PRP have already submitted the list of their nominees. So, we are waiting for the nominees of the UPN and the GNPP and as soon as we have them the Committee will start work. This is a very sensitive and important matter.

[Mr. SPEAKER]

Motion number 4, Composition of the Special Committee on the Discipline of Members, stands in the name of the hon. Member for Tangale-Waja (*Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo*) Leader of the House.

#### Composition of the Special Committee on the Discipline of Members

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, this Motion on the composition of the Special Committee on the conduct of Members reads as follows :

That this Honourable House set up a twelve-Member Special Committee on the Discipline of Members, to be composed as follows :

- 5 Members of the NPN
- 3 Members of the UPN
- 2 Members of the NPP
- 1 Member of the PRP
- 1 Member of the GNPP

I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker** : Is anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam** (Oron II) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, hon. Member for Tangale-Waja (*Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo*) have you anything to contribute ?

**Alhaji Kaltungo** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I think this Motion speaks for itself. In a House of this nature we must have a Committee dealing with the conduct of the Members of the House. It is very important we have this particular Committee to maintain the prestige and dignity of the National Assembly in general. Our conduct either in the House or outside is subject to public criticism or public support. Therefore, if we are to maintain this type of dignity, we have to set up this particular committee which will be responsible for looking into the conduct of the Members of this House.

The practice is world-wide in any Parliament you know of. For example, Mr Speaker, Sir, in the United States, the country we visited recently, and the country we are trying to copy the type of democracy it is practising and where super-democracy is exercised, Nigeria wants to follow suit. Hon. Members, if the word *super* is too strong, I tell you it is the type of democracy we want to copy. When we wanted to copy the Presidential System in this country, we did not take any example from anywhere else in the world. We said we wanted to copy the American system. So this type of Disciplinary Committee exists in the American Parliament. I know we are not copying America entirely. We do those things that suit our own condition in Nigeria but where we find some of the things which can be adopted in the American system we do adopt them.

Two days ago the Deputy Speaker presented to us some of the things happening in America. We were so happy about them. There was a loud applause about them. We thought we were going to do the same thing in Nigeria.

**An hon. Member** : Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker** : You are calling the Leader of the Mr to order ?

**The hon. Member** : Yes.

**Mr Ambrose Gapsuk** (Shendam East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to apologise to the Leader of the House for interrupting him on this Order 71. I beg to know the stranger sitting on the right-hand side of Mr Speaker. Perhaps he is one of the Ministers we saw some time ago.

**Mr Speaker** : He is a staff of the National Assembly.

**Mr Gapsuk** : Thank you very much, Sir.

**Alhaji Kaltungo** : Thank you hon. Member for Shendam East (*Mr Gapsuk*). I thought you were calling me to order for my contribution but I thank you that it is not for that reason.

Hon. Members, I cannot do without making reference, and I hope you will excuse me when I make references to other countries. We are learning a new system of Parliamentary Democracy and since we want to maintain the dignity of this country, I believe that our attitude in the National Assembly will tell much on the ordinary people of this country. Today I believe if we want this country to be peaceful it will be peaceful ; if we want this country to be destroyed today it will be destroyed. So, we are responsible for the things which happen in this country and I believe none of us will doubt this fact. I am saying this because if our conduct is not so good the same thing will apply to the man in the street. Therefore, if we behave ourselves here it will serve as a good example for the people of this country ; and that is what this Motion on the Committee on the Conduct of Members is all about. In America also it does not only apply to the Members of the Houses ; it even extends to the officials of the Assembly and the whole of this Book in my hand is about this type of conduct. Everything is written there. We are going to write our own. We are not going to follow strictly what others follow but it can serve as a guide to us.

Mr Speaker, Sir, two days ago some Members were called to order because they were not properly dressed to be in this House. This is the type of thing this Committee will have to look into. We would not like to see our Members, when they show their identity in any public place as Members of the National Assembly, Members who make rules and regulations for this country which people are supposed to follow, are being disgraced in the street. I believe everywhere our Members go to they should be given due respect. You have to respect yourself before an ordinary man can respect you as a Member.

I had seen in one of the States where a Member engaged in boxing in an hotel with somebody. This is a disgrace. It happened in Nigeria and not in the United States. It was not in the Federal House that this thing happened. I do not want to tell you something which had happened around here. I would not mention a very disgraceful thing which had happened in the place where we are living at Badagry Road.

This type of thing has to be checked and that is why we find it necessary to establish this particular Committee on the Code of Conduct for our Members.

**An hon. Member :** Point of order.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes.

**Alhaji Hamman Dikko (Maiha) :** Order No. 20 (1). The Order Paper reads—*Composition of the Special Committee on the Discipline of Members* and the Mover of the Motion is saying *Conduct*.

**Mr Speaker :** Order 20 (1) says :

*Where under any Standing Order (or the practice of the House notice of motions or amendment is required, such notice shall be given on a day on which the House is sitting, by being handed in at the Table ; or by being received at the office of the Clerk within the hours prescribed by Mr Speaker for the purpose when the House is not sitting.*

**Alhaji Dikko :** He has amended it.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes say it is amended ?

**Alhaji Dikko :** Yes. The Order Paper says Committee on *Discipline* and he is saying *Conduct*.

**Mr Speaker :** Oh, I see. What you are saying is that the notice of the amendment was not given. I can understand your problem. You are saying he has altered *Discipline* to read *Conduct*. That is what you are saying.

**Alhaji Dikko :** Oh, yes.

**Mr Speaker :** Alhaji Kaltungo, what you have on the Order paper is *Discipline* of Members.

**Alhaji Kaltungo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I consulted my lawyer before I began to move this Motion and he said *Discipline* seemed to be too strong on the Members and he advised me that the word *Conduct* would be better. That is why I said *Conduct*. It is not a question of amendment, Gentlemen. The other example I have here also says *Conduct*.

Mr Speaker, Sir, may I say that the presentation which I have just made must have convinced the hon. Members of this Assembly. I believe that this Motion which I have brought will have the support of every Member of this House as other Members whom I have consulted have actually agreed that it is not a matter to be bragged about. It is a straightforward issue and I have given all my reasons in support of this argument.

So, Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to sit down for your support. Thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member for Oron II (*Mr Edet Bassey Etienam*).

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, in supporting this Motion, I would like to make one clarification that the Special Committee which we are asking this honourable House to set up is quite different from the Code of Conduct Bureau

which is expected to be established under the Constitution. The Committee which the Leader of the House is having in mind, I am sure, has something to do with the general behaviour of Members within and outside this honourable House. Since we started about three months ago, quite a number of things have happened to give cause for the appointment of this Committee. If it were possible, I would suggest that we also ask our Colleagues in the Senate to set up a Similar Committee to oversee the conduct of their Members because the behaviour of some of them at the Badagry residence where we are staying is very embarrassing to some us. (*Interruptions*)

With this observation, Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to say that I support the Motion.

**Prince J. S. Sangha (Bori I) :** Mr Speaker, I rise to support this Motion. I do recognise that in an organisation like this, we could not perform properly or meet up some of the obligations imposed upon us without some degree of discipline. Again, I share the view very strongly that if we want to make rules for this country, we must somehow conduct ourselves in a way seemingly or otherwise to demonstrate to the public whom we take charge of, that we have internal type of discipline. But I would ask in order to make this Motion more palatable that we call it the Ethics Committee and that removes the obnoxious thing about discipline and other things because discipline comes when there is misconduct of any type. So, I think Ethics Committee could have been more savoury.

I beg to support this Motion with this little Amendment.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member for Idemili (*Mr J. C. Ojukwu*).

**Mr J. C. Ojukwu (Idemili) :** I rise to speak in support of both the Motion and the Amendment proposed by the last speaker. My reasons are that we should not give the impression that we are a bunch of vagrant school children who need to be followed with long strokes before we behave. Therefore, the word discipline does not connote something palatable.

**An hon. Member :** It connotes serious misdemeanour.

**Mr Ojukwu :** Yes, it denotes serious misdemeanour as a Member has just suggested to me. It will be better for us to insert ethics.

In supporting this Motion, Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to say that what is more important for all of us is to realise the importance and need for self-discipline rather than to be frightened by the yellow book which the hon. Leader of the House has shown us. In saying this, I want to say that we must be wary of what some people refer to as Bible punching moralist. It is not enough to preach one thing and do another. It is also hypocritical to parade high-sounding morals in order to appear well-behaved whilst at the back of the House we do a different thing. Some day these things will reveal themselves, for it is said that there is absolutely



[MR OJUKWU]

nothing that is secret under the sun. I am, therefore, saying, Mr Speaker, Sir, that I support this Motion but we should address ourselves as individual Nigerians to the need for self-discipline which is a thing that is very seriously lacking in this Nation and when we attain this, there may even be no need for any written ethics.

**Dr Eze Nwala (Ikwerre/Etche)** : Mr Speaker, Hon. Members, I want to support the Motion on the Floor particularly the one that has been amended by the hon. Member for Bori I (*Prince Sangha*) in his contribution that we should rather call this Motion the Committee on Ethics or the Ethics Committee. I think that is a better and more refined nomenclature for this Committee. But something is not quite well defined and I am wondering whether the Leader of the House (this is being addressed to the Leader of the House) knows whether this honourable House has set up the Rules and Regulations governing the behaviour of Members.

Another thing that we should know is whether it is the duty of this particular Committee to set up the Rules and Regulations governing the behaviours of Members of the House. He has not told us really what he wants in this Motion. I think the Motion is not clear. It is rather ambiguous.

I am not sure the Leader of the House is listening to my contribution because he is talking.

**Mr Speaker** : No, go on. You are addressing Mr Speaker. You are not talking to the Leader of the House.

**Dr Nwala** : Before we set up a Committee on ethics we should at least address ourselves to the ground rules, a set of rules that will govern the behaviour of Members. It is my considered opinion that this Committee that is being called upon now will set up the rules. It is not the Committee that will enforce the rules. Based upon that explanation, I would support the Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : Thank you. Yes, GNPP.

**Alhaji Iiyasu Hong (Hong)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, while I support the Motion on the Floor, I oppose the composition of Members of the committee. Membership of the Disciplinary Committee should be on equal representation from the five Political Parties, otherwise it is just useless trying to discipline anybody with the composition as it stands. I therefore call on the honourable House to support the composition of the Members by equal representation from all the five Political Parties.

With that, I support the disciplinary Committee but not the composition of Members. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Isyaku Gumawa (Gabasawa)** : Mr Speaker, Sir and hon. Members of the House, I rise to support this Motion on the formation of a Committee to take care of the discipline of Members. Any hon. Member who is really sure of himself and the way he behaves will wholeheartedly support the idea. But what I am afraid of is the way the Committee is composed of.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I personally have the fear that the ten Members from two parties, for example, the NPN and any other Party with more than one nomination, can sit together and decide on any Member from the other parties. They may victimise him for one reason or the other. So, therefore I support the suggestion by the previous speaker that this particular Committee should be composed of equal representation from the five political parties.

Another reason is that if a Party is represented by one Member only, there may be a situation where the Member may not be able to attend a meeting. What will happen if that particular Party is not represented? Therefore, whatever the case, I hope the Speaker would make sure that these two Parties with one Member each are given room for substitution.

Still another reason is that a particular Party Leader may be either selfish or may feel that it is only his Party that can do the job. In that case he may put himself on the Committee and use the opportunity to oppress either his people or misrepresent them.

With all these comments, I wish to emphasise that I support the idea but I urge the House to review the representation or the number of people representing each party. Thank you.

**Mr Speaker** : The Deputy Speaker wants to say something.

**Alhaji Idris Ibrahim (Minna North)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, in contributing to the Debates on the special committee for the conduct or ethics of Members, I wish to say that feelings had been expressed by the five Political Parties that there is a tendency that this Committee being a disciplinary committee for regulating the conduct of Members, may be used to victimise Members in the House. I quite understand that it is the responsibility of us to maintain peace and trust one another, and I do not expect that this matter should be controversial. So, it is important that Members do agree. When you talk of ethics in the House or conduct of Members there are laid down Rules and Regulations on how Members and staff of the National Assembly should conduct or behave themselves as long as we are here.

Now, this Committee is very powerful. It is very powerful in the sense that for example, an American Member of the Congress was sentenced to one or two years' imprisonment. I believe it was for the misuse of fund that was given to him for the employment of his staff. This Code of Conduct is very important. We have no objection that these things should be done on equal representation.

We have heard and we have seen what is going on in the different States of the Federation. There is the question of victimisation which has brought about fears in the minds of people, and we should try as much as possible on the National level to remove these fears from the minds of Members who think that the Conduct Committee can be used to victimise Members of the other Political Parties.

[ALHAJI IBRAHIM]

On that note, I believe, it would be helpful if the Speaker and the Leaders of the Political Parties could meet and decide who should serve on this Committee. Thank you.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, as the Mover of this Motion I would ask this honourable House to agree that this matter be deferred until I have had enough consultations with other Political Party Leaders.

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, the Leader of the House and the Mover of this Motion is asking for the Motion to be deferred.

**Alhaji Kaltungo** : I would ask, Mr Speaker, that this matter be deferred for the next two weeks.

**Mr Speaker** : Since the Leader of the House does not want to go on with the Motion, the Motion will be deferred for the next two weeks so that the Business Committee will now fix another date for the meeting after two weeks.

*Motion by leave deferred.*

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members may I now move that this House stands adjourned till tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock.

**Mr Speaker** : Is there anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr D. Princewill** (Degema I) : I beg to second the Motion.

Mr Speaker, Sir, in doing so—(Interruptions)

**Mr Speaker** : Have you seconded the motion ?

**Mr D. Princewill** : Yes.

**Mr Speaker** : Please sit down, hon. Member for Degema I (*Mr Princewill*).

**Mr Princewill** : I wish to make some contributions, Sir.

**Mr Speaker** : There are two requests here on Motion for Adjournment.

#### Low-income Group and Destitutes in Nigeria

**Mrs J. C. Eze** (Uzo-Uwani) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to seize this opportunity of speaking on Motion for Adjournment to express my feelings about what is happening to the low-income group in Nigeria.

Most of us who can afford three square meals every day in the country do not seem to appreciate what is happening to the other people around us. Since we came to this honourable House, I have been expecting that a number of issues would be brought here. When the issue of destitutes was brought to this House I was shocked when this

honourable House turned down the Motion that we should give support to the destitutes. If there are no destitutes in other States of the country, there are destitutes in my own State, but I believe that we have destitutes in the whole of Nigeria.

I am speaking on the care of destitutes because if we go round the villages and the urban centres there are little children who are not as fortunate as our own children. They do not know who their parents are. They are not being taken care of by any government, and there are no rehabilitation centre for them. I have found out that some of them are not really mentally unbalanced or handicapped as such. It is only that they have poor parents and they have no homes. They keep roaming about ; thus they grow up to become rogues and pick-pockets, just because there is nobody to care for them.

I am therefore appealing to this honourable House to please take this matter into consideration. We should once again re-open this issue of destitutes. There should be rehabilitation centres in all the States to take care of the destitutes and children of poor parental heritage.

#### Ban on Food Items

To continue with my speech, I would like to speak on what is happening in most of our urban centres. I said in the morning that if we went to most Hospitals and Health Centres we would see children who are sick, not because they are attacked by one disease or the other, but because of malnutrition. This is because they do not have enough protein in their food. Their means of having protein in their food is by eating imported food items like frozen meat, frozen chicken and frozen fish ; yet a group of people got up and put a ban on things that they know we do not have in this country. If the country has to ban any commodity, it should definitely not be commodities like food items that contain protein because every growing child, pregnant women and elderly people, have to live on protein in order to grow well and survive.

I therefore implore this honourable House to please put before the President of this country, the lifting of ban on these food items. Even milk was banned. I have never seen a country where milk is banned because children live on milk. I therefore, once again implore this honourable House to please put before the President the question of lifting ban immediately on food items that give us protein.

Thank you very much.

#### Cultivation of the Spirit of Nationalism in the House

**Mr G. B. Sadiku** (Epe) : Mr Speaker, I intended earlier than now to express a feeling of disowning a statement very accidentally made yesterday in respect of the very august visitor to this House, in person of Dr K. O. Mbadiwe, the Presidential Adviser of Parliamentary Affairs. After due consultation, I am constrained to leave the matter to a more co-ordinated body and a more appropriate time to make the correction. But I wish to say that that statement

[MR SADIKU]

was a statement of a single individual and it does not in any way represent the majority of the people on this side of the House.

That statement is a tag on what happened this morning. This morning, we witnessed another aspect of the one-sidedness, the parochialism, the partial and the unnationalistic way many of our Members behave and speak or react to Motions on the Floor of this House. Yesterday, a Party Member decided to ignore the fact of the contribution of a noble son of this country to the political development in this country. This morning some Members as well decided, because of partisanship, to deliberately go against the Oath which they had taken to serve the common man in the country, by refusing to support the Motion which was meant to bring amenities and comfort to the common man for whose sake they have been elected into the House.

I have made a write-up, which I hope would be distributed tomorrow, to appeal to Members to be more conscious in their reaction to matters on the Floor of the House. Candidly, everyone of us was elected to this House on Party platform; but once the election was over, we are individually and collectively acting as nationalists. The whole country is an area that should enjoy our patronage. The whole country is a constituency whose sufferings should touch our hearts. The entire country is entitled to our sympathy and the Oath of Office we took before we assumed sitting in this House was an Oath meant to serve every corner of the country.

Brothers and Sisters, I am not preaching a sermon. I am only directing our minds to the facts of history. In the sixties, the country broke into pieces because groups were intolerant of one another. It escalated out of proportions beyond which none of us could control. For good thirteen years we were trembling and quibbling, and we were suppressed by Military men. We were virtually, throughout the thirteen years, under the terror of machine guns. An opportunity has now been given to us. I think the whole sufferings of thirteen years, the bloody war we waged, the loss of property and the deaths of relations would be a waste if we, youngsters of today, do not learn to compromise, learn to accommodate one another, and learn that we are keepers of one another. Brothers and Sisters, I am asking that we cultivate the habit of more friendliness in the interest of the Nation.

We have set up various Committees since this House started convening. But one thing has been lacking, and that is that we have failed to give date-targets for the conclusions of investigations to be made by each committee. Today, if we go through the records, there have been Motions, not less than twenty, that have been referred to various Committees. If we ask how far each Committee has gone with the assignment given to it, we may discover that—(Interruptions).

**Mr T. O. Badejo** (Mushin Central I) : He is giving a sermon on the mountain. (Interruptions)

**Mr Sadiku** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I hope I am protected. (Interruptions)

**Mr Speaker** : Mr Sadiku, we enjoy what you are saying but do not forget that this is not a church. (Interruptions). This is a National Assembly and we talk politics here. (Interruptions)

**Several hon. Members** : Fire on ! Fire on !

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, Mr Sadiku, Members say you should go on. So, continue.

**Mr Sadiku** : Thank you, Mr Speaker, for protecting me. I am commenting on some defects in some of the steps we have been taking. We have set up Committees. When we refer a matter to a Committee, it is important that we give that Committee a date-target within which it should complete its work. Otherwise, we shall continue to refer Motions to Committees and we shall never have any conclusions.

In conclusion, rather than asking for probes of various Corporations, as we are doing now, piecemeal, I am suggesting to Leaders of Parties to consider at their meetings a general direction that every Committee should take every Board under its Ministry and examine the lacking and the failure of each Board. Within a space of month, each Committee should make recommendations for improvements in the administration of the Board concerned. I think this should have given the whole House and, indeed, every Member some specific assignments.

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. (Applause)

**Mr Speaker** : Thank you very much, Mr Sadiku. That has been a wonderful address.

#### Local Government Elections

**Mr M. Yusuf Ibn Muhammed** (Moro) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I have an issue which has been burning in my heart. Now, I wish to direct the question to the Speaker and to my hon. learned colleagues.

The issue is on Local Government elections in this country. I happened to be a councillor during the election before the last one. When the Federal Government reformed the Local Government system in this country, it was seen that a general and uniform Local Government election—

**Mr Speaker** : There is a point of order.

**Prince J. S. Sangha** (Bori I) : Mr Speaker, Sir, the Order is 26 (2). What the hon. Member is talking about now had been carried on the television and he had spoken about it in this House.

**Mr Speaker** : Well, he is saying that this matter on Local Government has been dealt with here.

**Mr Yusuf Ibn Muhammed** (Moro) : And therefore ! (Laughter)

#### Condition of Roads in Lagos State

**Mr L. A. Alli** (Lagos South I) : Mr Speaker, Sir, in contributing to the Motion for Adjournment, I like to draw the attention of this House to the condition of roads in Lagos State today. Not very

[MR ALLI]

long ago, the Federal Military Government distributed a sum of ₦19 million to each State to enable the State Governments rehabilitate the roads in each of these States. But unfortunately the grant which was to have been made available to Lagos State was withheld by the Federal Ministry of Works on the ground that rehabilitation projects would be carried out by them. I regret to observe that this maintenance and rehabilitation work was never effected.

As at today the Lagos State Government is obliged to carry out the rehabilitation of many of the Federal roads in Lagos so as to give relief to the travelling public. I sincerely think that this House would advise the President to instruct the Ministry of Works to release this sum of money to the Lagos State Government so that it can carry out the work far more efficiently than they are doing now at the moment.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I observe that the population of the House is getting smaller and smaller. May I now ask that the Question be put.

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, the Question is that the House do adjourn till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That this House stands adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 4.50 p.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Thursday, 17th January, 1980  
The House met at 10.15 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Request for the Creation of a New State

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, I am sure you have all got today's Order Paper which is for Thursday 17th January, 1980. We have Notices of Motions and one Adjourned Motion. The first Motion is a request for the creation of a new State. The Motion making the request stands in the names of the hon. Member for Kankara (*Alhaji Magaji Kankara*), the hon. Member for Safana (*Alhaji Shehu Y. Runka*), the hon. Member for Musawa (*Alhaji Rilwanu Garba Musa*) and seventeen others.

The hon. Member for Malumfashi (*Alhaji Datti M. A. Malumfashi*), who is moving your Motion ?

**Alhaji Lirwanu Garba Musa (Musawa) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of this august Assembly, I stand to move this Motion for the creation of a new State from the present Kaduna State to be known as Katsina State. I move—

That in accordance with Section 8 (1) (a) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1979, the representatives of the people of the former Katsina Province (Katsina and Daura Emirates) of Kaduna State of Nigeria pray the House of Representatives to receive the request for the creation of a new State from the present Kaduna State to be known as Katsina State comprising the following Local Government Areas :

1. Dura
2. Dutsinma
3. Katsina
4. Kankia
5. Mani
6. Malumfashi
7. Funtua

and accordingly request this House to expedite action on Section 8 (1) (b), (c) and (d) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1979.

I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you. Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Inuwa Ali (Jos North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you. Well, hon. Members, you know that Section 8 of the Constitution is highly technical and I am sure hon. Members have received their own copies of the request for the creation of Katsina State.

Several hon. Members : Yes.

**Mr Speaker :** I will suggest, without wasting any time, that we set up a Committee of this honourable House to go into the request and make a report before we resolve whether or not the request has been received by us. I do not think all of us can sit down here to go through the request and be able to say something. I think we shall set up a special Committee to handle this and any other subsequent request that may come in future. So, the Mover of the Motion should amend it to read that this be referred to a Special Committee of the House.

**Mr S. U. Wanganga (Aba) :** Point of explanation.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of explanation.

**Mr Wanganga :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to explain that the procedure for the creation of a State is that once a request has been sent to this honourable House or the Senate, we note it and wait for other requests to come along. We cannot set up a Committee to consider one particular request. All the requests have to be dealt with at the same time. (*Interruptions*)

Several hon. Members : No ! No !

**Mr Wanganga :** Let me finish what I am saying I am entitled to free speech. Let me explain what I am trying to say.

**Mr Speaker :** The hon. Member for Aba (*Mr S. U. Wanganga*), no please. We have so many Lawyers here. What you are saying now is exactly what the Committee will say after they have looked into the matter. Our duty is not to note it. Our duty is to accept the request and when the request has been accepted by a Resolution, we inform the Executive that the request is lying down here in the honourable House and that we have accepted it. The Executive will go on to organise a referendum in the particular area and thereafter the rest of the procedure will follow. It will then come back to this honourable House for a detailed debate.

**Alhaji Sidi H. Ali (Danbatta) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, the question of Katsina State is something which all of us fully support ; there is no question about it. (*Applause*) But Mr Speaker, the present document is a false document because we have four hon. Members who are present in this honourable House. I am going to call them, Sir, and they are going to stand up, to deny that the signatures are their own. Therefore, this document—

**Mr Speaker :** The hon. Member for Danbatta, (*Alhaji Sidi H. Ali*) please hold on. Let us have a Motion for the setting up of a Committee from the Leader of the House.

An hon. Member : He is not here.

**Mr Speaker :** The hon. Member for Oyo East (*Mr Ohusola Afolabi*) is here. (*Interruptions*) Order ! Order !

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I formally move that the first Motion on the Order Paper be referred to a special Committee.

**Mr O. Akinboro** (Oke-Ona/Owu/Gbagura) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Motion referred to a special Committee.*

**Mr Speaker** : You know, we shall require a formal Motion. A formal Motion would come up tomorrow for the setting up of this special Committee but meanwhile, the Party Leaders would meet in my office during break so that we could agree on the number of Members on the Committee and other things.

We shall go on to Motion No. 2. The Motion stands in the name of Mr I. D. Hassan.

#### The West African Examinations Council

**Mr I. D. Hassan** (Dase-Tafawa Balewa) : I rise to move the Motion standing in my name on the Order Paper—

That in view of the persistent public complaints about examination leakages, notwithstanding the implementation of the Sogbetun Tribunal (1977) on leakages embroiling the West African Examinations Council, and also in view of the increasing delay in releasing results, this House directs the Committee on Education to re-examine the issues involved with a view to providing permanent solution to this perennial problem.

I beg to move—

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, is there anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Alhaji H. Dikko** (Maiha) : I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, continue hon. Member for Dase-Tafawa Balewa (*Mr Hassan*).

**Mr Hassan** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not think that any Member here is ignorant of the embarrassment, hardship and inconveniences the West African Examinations Council has caused this nation, in conducting its affairs. The West African Examinations Council was established with good intentions and with good objectives, but unfortunately those to whom was entrusted the duty of gearing this Body to achieve its objectives have lost sight of the objectives.

**Mr Speaker** : There is a point of order.

**Dr E. Y. Atanu** (Idah South) : Mr Speaker, this Motion is on Notice. Why is the hon. Member speaking on it now ? Should we not go by the Order of the Day and leave this Motion on Notice until it is scheduled to come up ?

**Mr Speaker** : No, it does not mean that the Notice of the Motion is now being given. He filed his Motion within time and it is in order. It is the business of the Business Committee to ensure that Members receive Notice of this Motion in advance. I think they are doing so now. The fact that it is called Notice of Motion does not mean that Notice of the Motion is now being given.

Yes go on hon. Member for Dase-Tafawa Balewa (*Mr Hassan*).

**Mr Hassan** : Thank you Mr Speaker. The officials of the West African Examinations Council lost sight of the objectives for which the Council was established to achieve. They allowed two specific serious evils to bedevil WAEC, one of that being examination leakages. As a result of persistent leakages, in 1977 the Federal Military Government appointed a Commission to look into the problems and the causes of the persistent leakages in WAEC and to make recommendations as to how the problem of leakages in WAEC could be solved once and for all. This Commission went into business and finally submitted its recommendations as to how the problem of leakages could be solved. The recommendation of the Commission was implemented but unfortunately that has not rid WAEC of its problem of leakages.

The second problem WAEC has is serious delay in releasing examination results which has caused serious embarrassment to many candidates. I know that each year students go to Schools of Basic Studies and many of them are turned back after three months when their results are not released by WAEC. This delay in releasing results has caused serious embarrassment to candidates who seek admissions into the universities. Some of the students who are denied admissions, normally, could have gained admissions into appropriate institutions of learning, if WAEC results had come out at the appropriate time. Sometimes these candidates have nowhere to go because of the lateness of the WAEC results. So, I am asking this honourable House to ask the Committee on Education to re-examine the issues involved with a view to providing permanent solution to the problems of this Body. Thank you Sir.

**Mr D. A. Zubairu** (Jama'a North) : I rise to support this Motion.

It is absolutely true that WAEC takes more than it can handle. You would realise that most of the examinations in this country, even the Civil Service examinations and all types of examinations that are supposed to be conducted by different Bodies, are being controlled and conducted by WAEC. When WAEC was first established, it was very effective. It was from 1967 that it started to deteriorate in the way it is conducting the examinations of this country.

Every year, we hear about leakages of all kinds of examinations ; and these have continued for quite some time. Apart from that, you would find out that the results of examinations taken in December, will not be released until June of the following year. As you know most of the universities in this country would want candidates who apply for university admissions to send in their results by March. Those people who are likely to get their GCE results from London or results from other examination Bodies are the people who are likely to be admitted into these universities. The candidates who took WAEC examinations would have a lot of difficulties. The same thing is applicable to those who take the RSA examinations and so many other examinations. So, I feel that this House should support this Motion and call for the review of the activities of WAEC as soon as possible. Thank you.

**Mr J. U. Uyeh** (Vandeikya East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I would not like to say that I would like to oppose the Motion, but I have few remarks to make on it. Now that Ministers have been appointed, and in keeping with what the Deputy Speaker enlightened us on with regard to the procedure in the United States, I think we should put a stop to the habit of bringing up unnecessary Motions that would waste the time of this honourable House. When Motions of this nature come up, they should be sent straight to the Committee that has been set up for them. The Motion should then come from that Committee to the Floor of this House. I think it is just a waste of the time of this honourable House for us to keep taking Resolutions which would not be implemented.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I beg to move that this type of Motion should not be brought to the Floor of the House again.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, can we hear from the GNPP ?

**Mr Idirisu N. Medugu** (Madagali) : Mr Speaker Sir, the West African Examinations Council is responsible for the fall in standard of education in Nigeria. If you employ somebody with a Degree or a West African School Certificate, you will realise that he or she cannot do anything. This is due to the leakages in examinations, because even when a student knows nothing, he or she can still pass his examination. There are instances in this country when firms or Statutory Corporations recruited people with certificates but when the jobs are given to them, they cannot perform them satisfactorily. This is due to the irresponsibility of WAEC that often leaks examinations.

This Motion has come up at the appropriate time because we have said that 1980 is a year of action. It is a year of action for eradicating corruption in the West African Examinations Council. This House, therefore, should give this Motion the sympathy it deserves, and all the necessary facilities in the Committee so that appropriate scrutiny can be done. If some people are found guilty they should be tried in public. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr M. L. Na-Rogo** (Karaye) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion. It is unfortunate that in the morning, I approached the Clerk of this House for an Amendment to these Motions, and it is also unfortunate that on coming to the Chamber, I still found that we are going to deliberate on these issues. Nonetheless, I rise to contribute my quota with regard to this institution which is known as WAEC.

Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I would not like to go into the mechanisms of WAEC or on how they conduct their affairs. It is well known to each and every individual Member of this House and other Nigerians that WAEC has already outlived its usefulness. If I am to be sincere to myself and to our junior brothers and sisters who are now in schools, Mr Speaker, I would like to make the following recommendations to the Committee on Education.

Henceforth WAEC should be dissolved and all its functions, duties and responsibilities delegated to the University of Ibadan, University of Nigeria, Nsukka and Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria which should now start conducting all these examinations at Ordinary Level, Advanced Level and Degree Level. Mr Speaker, Sir, I would not be doing anybody justice if I failed to condemn WAEC. Why should all powers for conducting examinations be concentrated in WAEC where all the social maladies exist? We cannot under-estimate or ignore the vices and other shortcomings of WAEC which have in the past led to examination leakages. This situation has somehow tended to create a feeling of cheating by certain sections of the country.

With this short contribution, Mr Speaker, I beg to sit down.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, can we hear from UPN ?

**Dr O. Ogunkoya** (Ijebu Remo) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion. The West African Examinations Council has outlived its usefulness and the earlier it is wound up the better. They have caused a lot of damages to the progress of so many Nigerian children. We must realise this fact. I cannot go on with all the details without comparing some instances in England and this country.

We have more or less tailored our educational system towards the English system. But, unfortunately, we are so unscrupulous in this approach and even worse than the English who taught us the system. I happened not to have done my West African School Certificate examination in this country. I did it overseas, and I can tell you very precisely that most of us who lived in England in those days and did the equivalent of West African School Certificate examination and passed, might have got a lot of problems doing it in this country. It is not because we know better or know less, but it is just because of the maladies which have been besetting the West African Examinations Council for a long time. It is still a peculiar problem in this country today that once you fail English Language in the School Certificate examination, you are more or less perished.

I have seen quite a number of students who are brilliant in physics, Chemistry, Biology and Mathematics but who are not so good in English Literature or English Language and still they have made their mark in academic field. Why should we continue to tailor our education exactly to system where a few people will just have to decide which fate should belong to a particular child ?

As far as the question of leakages is concerned, it is unfortunate that the society has a lot of responsibility to carry. Some of the teachers are irresponsible. Some of the organisers of the examination are even more irresponsible. I was told that most of the question papers are being printed by the Security Printers. How come that some of these questions still leak? In order to win some girlfriends or boyfriends some school officials become tools for the leaking of examination questions. Why should that happen? Are we not in a dilemma that we

[DR OGUNKOYA]

cannot even manage the ordinary West African School Certificate Examination? Once more I should remind most Members of this House that a lot of students have done this examination for the past two years and up till now they have not received their certificates. Why is this happening? Is it so difficult to print certificates and give them to those who should have them? I think we have to look into this. I want us to tailor our system again into this question of division of responsibility. In England they have the London University GCE system, they also have the Cambridge system and the AEB. We can organise something of that kind.

My dear Colleague who has just spoken said it may be possible for Ibadan, Nsukka and Lagos or Ahmadu Bello to organise a system or a sort of AEB examination. It could be called Associated Examination Board. If anybody is not willing to do the West African Examinations Council's examination, he or she could jolly well do any of those university GCE examinations. When he passes it he is qualified to enter any university in this country. We are all at the threshold of progress in this country and the only way to make progress is through education. Our educational system must be so balanced as to help those who aspire to be better qualified and not to discourage those who wish to carry on in future.

With these few remarks I support this Motion and I whole-heartedly give my full weight to it that West African Examinations Council should be dissolved and replaced by a well organised body.

Thank you.

**Mr Lam Adesina** (Ibadan South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members I would like to correct one impression created by one hon. Member that we should not discuss this Motion here. I think we want this country to continue several years after we might have left as this concerns the education of our children who have been born and those who are yet to be born. Even if we use the whole day discussing this problem of WAEC in this august House, it is not too much.

Mr Speaker, Sir, having been a school Principal for several years before I came to this House, I think I am in a position to X-ray some of the problems of the WAEC. The Motion has three salient points. Firstly, it talks about examination leakages, secondly, it talks about the delay in releasing results ; and finally it seeks a permanent solution to these problems.

Well I will begin with number one. As regards the leakage of examinations, I can take your mind back and tell you that it is as old as the WAEC itself. I took the Senior Cambridge in 1959 and I think after Independence, the WAEC took over from the old Cambridge. Since then, if you examine the issue of WAEC as it is now, their examinations have been leaking. It only came to light in 1967 or so when everybody knew that the examination had been leaking. That is my first point.

What are the causes of these leakages? We want to examine them. Firstly, you have incompetent

officials working in the WAEC. They are incompetent in the sense that at times when they send packets of question papers to schools, for example, they mark English Language on a packet and when you open it on a day when you have English Language, you just find Bible Knowledge there. There and then the question leaks out. If the Principal, the Supervisor or the Teacher is an unscrupulous person, you will discover that the questions will circulate like that. So, this is what I mean by incompetence of WAEC officials.

Secondly, you have the issue of corruption which has eaten deep into the very fabric of this country. WAEC is made up of Nigerians, though it is an international body. Most of the Officials there are Nigerians and we know that corruption is the bane of our society. What is more, some of these Officials like money and they like to get it. Some parents like to bribe them to get out these questions. Again, there are some of them who have interest in making love to students and then they give out these questions, yet we say we do not know how these questions get out !

Thirdly, you also have to put the blame on the school teachers and some of the supervisors who just hawk these questions about. Concerning the causes of leakages, it is the lack of dedication on the part of the WAEC Officials. I say this because personally if you assign a duty to me I think I should be able to supervise that duty very well. But you find that they use the Civil Service red-tape attitude there. Perhaps the Registrar or the Deputy Registrar, once he has done his own part, he does not bother to supervise the rest at all.

Fourthly, the Officials in the WAEC lack any sense of nationalism because if you believe that this country is yours and you want to salvage the name of this country, I see no reason why question papers should be leaking every year. There had been a time when examination probes had been set up but in spite of that, WAEC still continues to behave like the French Royalist who has learnt nothing and has forgotten nothing. I think this is why we have to be very, very careful about WAEC in this country. It is spoiling the name of this country.

Fifthly, there is unusual importance attached to the possession of certificates in this country. I say this because if you employ somebody on the basis of his competence, you do not need to worry about paper qualifications. But I can bet that in the Ministries or in any Government Department or even in the private sector, unless they see your certificates they may never employ you. So, parents and students are aware that unless they can produce these papers, they cannot get any job and they now want by any means to get the certificates. These are the causes and let us go to the effect.

The effects which these causes have brought to this country today are firstly, it has impaired the validity and integrity of the examination itself. I will not deceive you, since the examinations have been leaking, I do not have so much confidence in the



[MR ADESINA]

certificates awarded by WAEC. This is because it is very possible to find a student with Grade I Distinction who does not merit a Grade Three Certificate.

Secondly, it has exposed us to ridicule to the outside world. They would say that these people say they are Nigerians and that they can manage their affairs, but they have not been able to manage it. Thirdly, it has shown to the outside world that we do not like just and honest things.

On the delay in releasing results, Mr Speaker, Sir, (I am sorry I am taking the time of this House), but because of my commentary on the public affairs of this country, I want to say that I have received four letters from different people. The first is on RSA; the second is on Grade Two Teachers' Examination. The next one is on GCE 'O' Level, and the last one is on GCE 'A' Level. They all said they took these examinations in 1977 and up till now they have not got their results. Where do we want these children to go? They are lamenting now. What is causing this delay? I think WAEC is chewing too much; it has too much on its hands. Happily, today Mr Speaker, Sir, it appeared on the back page of New Nigerian that as from 1982 WAEC would now run two examinations but 1982 is still far away. I have to suggest certain measures. Now, WAEC should not handle too much.

I think the WAEC should not be partial in the allocation of scripts to markers, because if you are friendly with WAEC Officials (I had been an examiner before in English Language and Yoruba) they will give you more than you can mark. The problem is that you may not get the time to mark them. This is because the more papers you mark, the more money you get! Again, you have also the irresponsible attitude of some Members who are markers. You discover that when they collect the papers, some of them go about drinking. There is a story of a gentleman (I do not know whether he is a gentleman) who locked up the scripts of children in the boot of his car and went to the bar to drink. But before he came back, the boot had been forced open by robbers. The scripts were carried away and WAEC released some results. Where did they get them?

There is NEPA too which is another useless body. They say any time the computers are processing the results NEPA would take light; so, that is a technical problem. Now the effect of these on the country is that is ruining the future of our children. If you delay result then a particular child cannot get to the university or to the polytechnic or to an institution of higher learning. Secondly, it is also giving our children unnecessary psychological attention because if a child took an examination, waited for the result and the result never came out, then he would not know his fate.

Now to the solution Mr Speaker. The WAEC is an international Body. It cuts across Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia and Sierra Leone; so whatever decision we take we have to bear that in mind. I once called on the Floor of this House for the scrapping of WAEC but ever since then I have re-adjusted my position.

We are not going to scrap WAEC now; we are going to give it less duties to perform. And what is more, let there be a Nigerian Examinations Board set up to administer different examinations in this country. Let there be a board to administer examinations on technical subjects; let there be a board to administer examinations on commercial subjects and let there be a board to administer examinations on other affairs. It is only by doing this that we are going to save the future of our children and we are going to salvage the name of this country which WAEC has almost ruined. Thank you, Mr Speaker. (Applause)

**Mr Speaker:** In the interest of Members who were not here yesterday, the Table is still open to receive donations for the benefits of the wife of our deceased Colleague. Anybody who has something to donate can still put it on the Table.

**Mr E. U. U. Inyang (Ikono):** Mr Speaker, Sir, the last Speaker has exhausted very important points I would have liked to make but—

**Several hon. Members:** Then sit down.

**Mr Inyang:** I still have one other point, Mr Speaker, that has not been covered I find that in this country the human element which is at the bottom of our problem with WAEC has been playing a lot of havoc. I find that if people are punished or are afraid of a very severe punishment, they will restrain from taking some courses of action. Our children are affected and many of us know what this has meant year by year. I am asking the Committee on Education to which this has been referred to consider what aspect of punishment should be added so as to act as a deterrent so that those who are concerned in whatever body we are going to set up or re-organise may perform better.

I find that the moment a Nigerian knows that the punishment he is going to receive for doing a particular thing is very severe, he will think twice. I am talking about the deterrent aspect. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Dr O. O. Oreh (Arochukwu):** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion on WAEC. I would have loved to move a Motion for the scrapping of WAEC because I know for certain that candidates who sat and passed the WAEC examinations in 1972 have not yet received their results. I had cause to write a petition to WAEC and I was asked to let the person swear to an Affidavit, attach a passport photograph, get the Principal or a Clergy-man or a Lecturer to sign an undertaking saying that the person took the examinations at such and such a centre and with such and such candidate's number. In fact I thought the Public Relations Officer who is my friend would have helped, but it was to no avail.

The problem here is that when we find an organisation to be inefficient, we remove the high echelon of the organisation and those who perpetuate the malpractices in such an organisation continue at the intermediate level. I think that is one of the problems of WAEC. It was not enough to remove

[DR. OREH]

Mr Vincent Ike from that organisation and to leave those who made sure that the question papers meant for examinations were in fact distributed to students before ever they sat for the examinations. I stay near a Secondary School and I was appalled during the last WASC examinations that the students had in fact the scripts and for six naira or two naira they gave you a copy so that the following day you would come and sit for the paper, having memorised the answer. The examination questions also leak because when teachers of science subjects like Biology are asked to collect specimens, they make sure that they tell their wards (I know of a Principal who gave WASC examination questions to his wife) or their candidates what specimens they are collecting for what questions. The result is that there is landslide leakage of examinations.

I know also that the WAEC is in fact now compounding the problem by issuing certain categories of certificates which are worthless. If you did not pass English, they would give you S.R. They say they give you G.C.E. but that G.C.E. is confusing. The Universities want five Ordinary Level passes if you are to be allowed to sit entrance examinations to the universities. Now they give you G.C.E. when in fact you have not made up to three credits. So one does not know what WAEC wants such certificates to be used for. The need for scrapping WAEC cannot be over-emphasised. I think it is high time those people working in WAEC were sent to look for jobs elsewhere because they have failed us.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would wish to say that this country is large enough to conduct its own examinations without having to conduct examinations with Ghana, Sierra Leone, the Gambia and other West African countries. It is unnecessary. I do not see the need for it. It is not that we need that joint International Venture in order to go and work in Ghana or Sierra Leone. I do not see why we should not have a body competent to organise examinations in this country. I know also that WAEC which conducts Teachers' Grade II examinations does not send the results in time. You will find that States' Papers come out three months before WAEC is able to send out the Federal Papers and yet WAEC is such a big organisation that I do not know why they are unable to conduct these examinations.

It is a pity really that we are proposing investigating and improving it instead of discussing the mechanism for scrapping it and finding a better organisation. Thank you Mr Speaker.

**Alhaji M. G. Shamaki (Katagun)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I stand here to support the Motion. It is very shocking to see that we have got a Council which is supposed to stand and help the whole nation but unfortunately it is misusing its own opportunity. This Council has been working for long and has been established for years, but it is not contributing anything which will raise our standards.

Examination itself is not the only true way of testing one's knowledge. When a child is taken to school we do not start to think of the examination

itself but we shall have to think of educating the child first. When the child is receiving instructions, that moment, the teacher himself is testing the child. Then when finishing up, he will come and face some examinations in the class itself not from the West African Examinations Council. Many people have brought the idea of setting the examinations in the various Universities and this I think will remedy some of our problems. Because of the leakage itself, you can find a paper in the market or somewhere being sold. Instead of that child or the parent of the child who bought the paper helping the child, he is misleading the child to be selfish or to be unable to rely on himself. So, that would be the foundation of somebody's selfishness. The leakage itself is a cheating to some people who are ready to take the examinations. By this, I mean that some students are ready to take the examinations, but if it happens that there is a leakage, then, they will all be disqualified and that may even cause some of these students to lose admissions to the various Universities to further their education. On the other hand, if they are fortunate, they may be considered to go and attend one year's remedial class which is very unfortunate to some of our students in Nigeria.

The delay of the results itself is something which we have to consider. These examination papers are usually taken in July and it takes weeks and months or even a year before somebody could get his or her result. So, I think that if WAEC could be dissolved in the near future it would give us ample time to think of what we have to do in future. May be we have to decentralise the Council by having it in the various States.

So, with these few remarks, I beg to sit. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Hassan Gambo (Mayo/Balwa)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion.

In supporting the Motion on the leakages and delays of the West African Examinations Council, I will say that this Council is already rotten. It has not been providing good services for our brothers and sisters, and as far as the nation is concerned, this Council has not been doing its duties in the appropriate way. Most of the students miss an opportunity to go to the Universities because of the delay by the Council. Now, if you look at it in one way or the other, the Council itself is not prepared to improve or to make any progress in discharging its duties.

The reasons are that the Council has many ways of twisting the examinations in that somebody who has not been enrolled for the examinations is allowed to take them and when the results are out, the name of the very person who passes is never mentioned. This delays the result which may take about one or two years to come out and if care is not taken, its delay will also bring backwardness to the development of education in the Federation.

I appeal in strong terms to the Committee on Education to see that this Council is completely scrapped now that another body will come in to represent that particular Council. With these few remarks, I beg to sit down.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you.

The Chairman of the Committee on Education.

**Dr E. C. Emekekwe** (Onitsha South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of the House of Representatives, I stand to speak in support of this Motion.

WAEC has disgraced this country, WAEC has let Nigeria down and WAEC is an eyesore to this nation. It is a nuisance that I would not ask us to find ways of disposing of, but a nuisance that would find ways to change into something for the better for this country.

One of our Members spoke saying that he took his School Certificate Examinations in England and he wanted us to applaud him for that. As a matter of fact, I say that that is a shame that he should leave this country to go overseas just for the purpose of doing the School Certificate Examinations. I did my School Certificate Examinations in this country at the famous Dennis Memorial Grammar School in Onitsha whose tie I am wearing. I am proud that I did my School Certificate Examinations there. I can say that our standard at that time was as high if not higher than any other comparable institution overseas. It was the time when there was *Pax Britannica*.

**Mr Rasheed A. Shitta-Bey** (Lagos North-Central) : Point of order.

**Mr Speaker :** Make your point of order.

**Mr Shitta-Bey :** Section 26 (5) of the Standing Orders says :

*It shall be out of Order to use offensive and insulting language about Members of the House.*

**Mr Speaker :** Go on, the hon. Member for Onitsha South (*Dr Emekekwe*).

**Dr Emekekwe :** Mr Speaker, Sir, at the time when we did our School Certificate Examinations, there was *Pax Britannica* in this country. The so-called *Expo* was at that time unknown and it is because of this that I am going to say something which I would not mind if that makes me unpopular with any section of the community, but that is my conviction that since we have tried to reform WAEC and failed, we must think of bringing some external foreign examining bodies to take over the functions of WAEC for a short time. I say this because we have had precedents in this direction. This country had tried to run the Nigerian Railway Corporation and failed and it handed the Corporation over to the Indians. We all know that we failed.

**Several hon. Members :** Shame! Shame!

**Dr Emekekwe :** This country had tried to run the Nigerian Airways and it ran into difficulties and it called the Dutch Airline to take over. This country had tried in the Lagos State to run the transport. It ran into difficulties and it called in the Australians to come and help us. So, I am suggesting that for a change, we should bring over some external foreign examining bodies to take over for a while and see whether we can get this nuisance into better use.

I will also say that the fault is in us. We make laws and do not enforce them. We catch people who sell these examination papers and they are let off without any punishment. I was in WAEC office last Tuesday making some investigations about this and I put a direct question to the Officer I was interviewing whether to his knowledge anybody had ever been jailed in the WAEC establishment for offences connected with examination leakages. He told me that to his knowledge, nobody had ever been sent to jail. It is therefore our moral laxity, laissez-faire attitude, our callousness in this country that have put our children in jeopardy. It is a very bad thing to deprive a child a whole year in his life especially when a child has gone up for an examination and has done that examination successfully. After working hard ; and just for the mere fact that one or two students were caught in that vicinity with forged examination papers, the whole class would lose a year. I think this is what we must stop and I think that if we have to do anything we have to look at ourselves for the answers. I beg to support.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, I have the pleasure to announce to the Members the presence in the Box of His Excellency the Governor of Bauchi State, Alhaji Tatari Ali. (*Applause*) His Excellency has come to pay this House a courtesy call and on behalf of the House I thank His Excellency very sincerely for his wonderful gesture.

Yes, Member for Enugu (*Dr Ufondu*).

**Dr I. B. Ufondu** (Enugu) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of the House, I want to state that I am in support of this Motion and in standing up, I must categorically oppose any idea of bringing in any foreign body to substitute WAEC. If we cannot develop, we can never hope to become a developed nation if we must always depend on outsiders. WAEC, as we know, is a regional body.

I strongly support regional co-operation within the African continent for purposes of development. We are already engaged in various regional co-operation efforts with our African brothers. I do not see anything wrong with that. However, we do know that the WAEC has a primary function of effectuating accountability and efficiency in the administration of educational services. This particular body has disappointed all the West African countries, not only Nigeria.

We do not only have leakages, we do not only have examination results missing, we do not only have WAEC withholding results but we also have gross corruption and abuse of power in that Examinations Council. I must state, and I know that my colleagues may want to speak for their Constituencies, that Anambra State has suffered tremendously in the hands of WAEC.

In Enugu, Mr Speaker, for many years, one would notice that the schools found their examination results withheld for months and when the results did appear, they came out in bits and pieces. I can give several examples but for lack of time I just want to state that

[DR UFONDU]

as a Member of this National Assembly, Mr Speaker, I want to see the WAEC scrapped and replaced with a National Examination Council that will be organised in co-operation with the Universities. I do believe that we have the expertise in this country, the greatest country in Africa that is highly respected all over the world for its academic excellence. Mr Speaker, Sir, the sooner we begin to deal with the issue of scrapping WAEC and actually implementing it without just dangling in the orbit of unnecessary oratory the better for this country.

With this contribution, Mr Speaker, I wish to sit down. Thank you.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, may I now move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That in view of the persistent public complaints about examination leakages, notwithstanding the implementation of the Sogbetun Tribunal (1977) on leakages embroiling the West African Examinations Council, and also in view of the increasing delay in releasing results, this House directs the Committee on Education to re-examine the issues involved with a view to providing permanent solution to this perennial problem.

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, the next one is adjourned Motion—Implementation of Sections 14 (3) and 157 (5) of the Constitution.

#### Implementation of Section 14 (3) and 157 (5) of the Constitution (Federal Character)

Adjourned Debate on Question,

17th December, 1979

*Motion moved and Question again proposed* :

That the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria implements without further delay the provisions of Section 14 subsection 3 and Section 157 subsection 5 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, so that all Federal Ministries, Agencies, Statutory Corporations and other Parastatals, reflect the federal character as regards appointment and staff composition of Chairmen, Managing Directors, Board Members and Civil Servants and other employees within Grade Levels 07 to 17 including provision of guidelines for the composition of the junior staff in all these establishments, as well as the siting of these Ministries (or branches thereof), Agencies, Statutory Corporations and other Parastatals.

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel** (Degema II) : I rise to move the Motion in my name and that of my Co-Mover Dr E. Y. Atanu—

That the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria implements without further delay the provisions of Section 14 subsection 3 and Section 157 subsection 5 of the Constitution of the Federal

Republic of Nigeria, so that all Federal Ministries, Agencies, Statutory Corporations and other Parastatals, reflect the federal character as regards appointment and staff composition of Chairmen, Managing Directors, Board Members and Civil Servants and other employees within Grade Levels 07 to 17 including provision of guidelines for the composition of the junior staff in all these establishments, as well as the siting of these Ministries (or branches thereof), Agencies, Statutory Corporations and other Parastatals.

I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker** : Is there anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Ingo Mac-Eteli** (Brass) : I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Bob-Manuel** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, the purpose of this Motion is to ensure that the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria takes note that we have nineteen States in the Federation now. Twenty years ago, the Federation was composed of three Regions. In 1964 we had four regions, when the Mid-West region was created from the old Western Region. In 1967, with all that happened, we had 12 States. In 1976 the country was sub divided again and we had nineteen States, and up to October 1979, there were still nineteen States in the Federation.

I would like to refresh the memory of hon. Members that in 1960-64 the Civil Service was controlled by people that we can call those who sought differences among themselves. In 1976 the Civil Service was being controlled by the same people.

**Several hon. Members** : Who are the people ? Name them.

**Mr Bob-Manuel** : The country has now been divided into more States. It was first of all three, and it was increased to four, and from four it was increased to twelve. From twelve it was increased to nineteen that we have now. But the policy-makers are still the same people.

**Several hon. Members** : Who are the policy-makers ? Tell us. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker** : Order ! Order ! Everybody will make his own contribution.

**Mr Bob-Manuel** : I would not like hon. Members to be sentimental over this matter. I am just telling you the story of what happened.

When we had four Regions in 1964 the people in control were the same and the same people were in control when we had twelve States in 1967. We praise those sections who were able to keep the Federation together during these trying days. We are also happy that they were able to keep the Federation together up till today when we are now nineteen States.

The Constitution came into effect from the 1st of October, 1979. Our Motion is only seeking the President to reflect the Federal character of Nigeria

[MR BOB-MANUEL]

in everything in future. We are 448 representatives in this honourable House ; so we need these 448 people to be represented as well in the bureaucracy. This is the import of our Motion. We are not saying that the people who are there now should be sent away from where they are and made scapegoats. What we are saying is that the Nation has now 449 Constituencies ; so the bureaucratic machinery of the Federal Government of Nigeria should reflect these Constituencies.

**Several hon. Members :** By quota system ?

**Mr Bob-Manuel :** I shall now digress a bit to tell you how the people who are not represented in the Federal Government feel in their homes.

**An hon. Member :** Tell us.

**Mr Bob-Manuel :** I will give you examples later. In the Civil Service, we all have been seeing the Office Directory of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The Federal Government of Nigeria is not reflected in the book. We want the Federal character of Nigeria to be reflected in this book. I would like to draw the attention of hon. Members to Section 14 (3) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and I quote :

*The Composition of the Government of the Federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such manner as to reflect the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity, and also to command national loyalty thereby ensuring that there shall be no predominance of persons from a few States or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in that government or in any of its agencies.*

Anybody that is here and does not want the national unity of this country should forget about the Oath that he has taken and get out of this House. We must abide with the provisions of the Constitution and make sure that the peace and progress of this House are sought for. That is why we are all here. We should also take note that the Constitution says that there should be no predominance of persons from a few States or from a few ethnic or other Sectional groups in the Federal Government or its agencies.

If you look at the Official Directory of the Federal Government you will see what I am talking about. The Federal character of Nigeria should be reflected as from 1st of October, 1979. We do not want to rob Peter to pay Paul.

**Several hon. Members :** Fire ! Fire !

**Mr Bob-Manuel :** From the 1st of October, 1979 all appointments under Section 135 (2) and (3) of the Constitution should reflect the Federal character of Nigeria, and I quote the Section :

*Any appointment to the office of Minister of the Government of the Federation shall, if the nomination of any person to such office is confirmed by the Senate, be made by the President.*

*Any appointment under subsection (2) of this section by the President shall be in conformity with the provisions of section 14 (3) of this Constitution.*

This has been reflected since the beginning of this regime on the 1st of October. What we are now asking from the President is to ensure that future appointments continue to reflect the Federal character of Nigeria. We are not asking the President to remove the people who are already there.

**An hon. Member :** Point of order, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Mr Effiong Ononokpono (Oron I) :** Mr Speaker, my point of order is Order No. 28 (5). It says :

*Members shall not make unseemly interruptions while any Member is speaking.*

Mr Bob-Manuel did interrupt me when I was speaking. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** All right, please, hon. Members, do not interrupt when any Member is given the Floor.

**Mr Bob-Manuel :** Mr Speaker, as I have quoted earlier, Section 135 has been satisfied by our President who is the father of this Nation. He is a God-given man. We are still begging him to use his Godly and fatherly manner to appoint people into positions in such a way that the appointments would reflect the Federal character of this nation.

Section 157 says :

*Power to appoint persons to hold or act in the offices to which this section applies and to remove persons so appointed from any such office shall vest in the President.*

(2) *The offices to which this section applies are, namely—*

(a) *Secretary to the Government of the Federation ;*

(b) *Head of the Civil Service of the Federation ;*

(c) *Ambassador, High Commissioner or other Principal Representative of Nigeria abroad ;*

(d) *Permanent Secretary or other Chief Executive in any ministry or department of Government of the Federation howsoever designated ; and*

(e) *any office on the personal staff of the President.*

(3) *An appointment to the office of Head of the Civil Service of the Federation shall not be made except from among members of the Civil Service of the Federation or of a State.*

(4) *An appointment to the office of Ambassador, High Commissioner or other Principal Representative of Nigeria abroad shall not have effect unless the appointment is confirmed by the Senate.*

The most commanding aspect of Section 157 is subsection (5) therein. It says :

(5) *In exercising his powers of appointment under this section, the President shall have regard to the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity.*

[MR BOB-MANUEL]

However, we are still begging the President to, please, make appointments to these positions in such a way that would reflect the Federal character of Nigeria. I am referring to those positions which he has not yet made appointments into. We know that he has already appointed the Permanent Secretaries, but he is yet to appoint our Ambassadors, Chairmen of Corporations, Board Directors and so on. We want all these appointments to reflect the Federal character of the nation. (*Interruptions*) What I am saying is this—

**Mr Speaker :** Please, Mr Bob-Manuel, you are repeating yourself. You have repeated yourself several times and the repetition is getting tedious. You should not go over one point several times.

**Mr Bob-Manuel :** They disturb me a lot when I talk. However, I shall try to wind up now. I have almost exhausted the points I want to make

Now, I want to explain why this Motion should go through. We have the Report on the Third National Development Plan for 1979-80 with us. If you go through the Report, you will see that those States that were not represented on the bureaucracy are not taken care of in the Development Plan. What I am saying is that the Body that made up the Plan, the Plan Designers or Plan Motivators, did not reflect the Federal character of Nigeria. Therefore, those areas that were not represented on the bureaucracy are not developed. These are states like Imo, Anambra, Rivers, Cross River, Bauchi, Niger, Gongola and so on.

**Mr Fola Omidiji (Egba Alake) :** Point of order!

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, what is your point of order?

**Mr Fola Omidiji :** The Motion on the Floor is on reflection of federal character in respect of appointments, but the hon. Member on the Floor is now talking of Development Projects. This is irrelevant to the subject matter under discussion.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, I agree that the point which Mr Bob-Manuel was raising is irrelevant to the Motion on the Floor of the House.

**Mr Bob-Manuel :** The reason for my raising the point on the National Development Plan is that many States were not represented on the bureaucracy. (*Interruptions*) If you go through this Report, you would see that there is no development in the areas that were not represented on the body that made the Planning.

In conclusion, I would say that I would leave further discussions to other Members of the House.

**Dr Emmanuel Y. Atanu (Idah South) :** Mr Speaker, first of all, I want to explain the motivation behind this Motion. I think it is important to put this Motion in its proper context. I have spoken briefly before on the Floor of this House on this Motion, and for the benefit of those who were not here then, I want to repeat myself. We are not here to challenge or chastise any persons or groups of persons in this country who have taken advantage of a prevailing situation in the country. But as young and aspiring Nigerians, we want to set in order what has bedevilled this nation for many years.

Our intention is to create a new Nigeria, and by so doing, we have to concentrate on those things that bring us together. (*Interruptions*) Mr Speaker, I crave your protection, please.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, go on.

**Dr Atanu :** Thank you, Mr Speaker, I think that this country cannot be one nation if we allow those things that divided us in the past to persist. I do believe that one of those things is the lack of psychological commitment to unity. I happened to be one of those who took part in the deliberations at the Constituent Assembly. Therefore, I am in a good position to say that those who inserted this clause in the Constitution had, at the back of their minds, the need to establish Nigeria on a sound footing.

You can read the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly. There was unanimous decision that we should find a good basis for running this country in the future. If we have produced statistics or data to support our contention, it is not because we want to cast aspersions on any group of people. It is a matter of fact that these things exist and if we are really true to ourselves we should examine them and find solutions together and try to find a way of getting out of the mess that has always prevented the unity of this country. So, please, I like to appeal to Members to read the documents presented to them with some commitment to this business of finding a solution to Nigeria's problems, not as a means of bringing to the fore the idea that some people have been cheating. I do not think anybody has cheated. People have been smart enough to take advantage of a situation and I think that is just fair. (*Interruptions*)

Moreover, I like to say too that this nation should be thankful to those people who have carried out the business of running this country so far no matter what other benefits they have got out of it. However, what I think we should do in this House is to look at the areas where we think we can do something to bring about a better expression of our oneness and I want to propose three areas to be looked upon. One area is the area of the redistribution of wealth. Those budding socialists in this country would agree that there is a shrewd distribution of the wealth and resources of this country and that is not good for this nation.

Secondly, we have to create a system that guarantees equal opportunities for all people. I think we have all advocated that in our constituencies and that we would work towards this end. But, more importantly, we have not only to create equal opportunities, we have to guarantee that there will be equal access to the existing opportunities, equal access because—(*Interruptions*)

Mr Speaker, the Constitution is replete with references to the provision of these three things. If you look at Chapter Two it is full of references to the guaranteeing of equal opportunities for education, for social amenities, for participation in the economy and it does empower this House, to do certain thing. In fact, if you look at Section 16—Economic Objectives, sub section 3 says :

[DR ATANU]

*A body shall be set up by an Act of the National Assembly which shall have power—*

*(a) to review from time to time the ownership and control of business enterprises operating in Nigeria and make recommendations to the President on the same ; and*

*(b) to administer any law for the regulation of the ownership and control of such enterprises.*

That is the crux of the matter. This spirit behind the Constitution is that those who make decisions on behalf of this country must reflect the composition of this country because it does not matter whether or not you are the General Manager of a big business concern, provided, however, that you can influence decisions in that area. The tendency or temptation is always to influence it, or at least, much of the time, to influence it, towards the particular section of this country which is best known to you. I do not think we have to deceive ourselves. This is the normal human tendency and we are saying, therefore, that if this country is represented fully and equally to the best of our ability, I think we can resist the temptation to do that, we can resist the temptation to place an industry in a location where it is not likely to be most suitable but because we come from there we attempt to locate it there without any opposition.

**Mr Speaker :** Wind up.

**Dr Atanu :** I will wind up but I want to say this, that there are various areas to consider. I do not think that Members have to be given the trouble to have these areas enumerated. The data we have produced will speak for themselves but I am more concerned with the area of the economy and the area of the services and the agencies of Government so that people who represent us, represent the Federal character of Nigeria. In the External Affairs matter that we have looked at, there are some data on it. We find, as I have said before, that the External Affairs is the area where we come in contact with the external world, where investment from outside world is channelled to Nigeria and I believe that we have to do something.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, round up.

**Dr Atanu :** Mr Speaker, I thought I had an entitlement to thirty minutes.

**Mr Speaker :** Round up.

**Dr Atanu :** Okay, Mr Speaker, I think I will give other Members the chance to speak.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you. Yes, Dr Sowho.

**Dr J. E. Sowho (Ethiopia North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, this Motion standing in the names of hon. T. O. Bob-Manuel and Dr Atanu, my two good friends, is a very important one. However, figures have been circulated which when screened, tend to give an impression that a certain section of this country has not behaved fairly well to the others in the sharing of these positions, that is Bendel. I would like to draw the attention of

Members to the circulated figures and to remind us all that this country started off from a point where we had four regions. These figures circulated here represent the figures for one region, and figures for States that have since been created from the other regions. If we add them together, we will see. I have made a simple addition and the figures are with you if you could do that. In the case of the tables for the External Affairs, Bendel as a region had 73 positions, the former Western Region 116 positions, the former Eastern Region 56 and the former Northern Region 72. So, you will see, in fact, that the former Western Region had more positions. And for the former Eastern Region we must remember there had been an intervening civil war. People made sacrifice to keep Nigeria one and Bendel made that sacrifice. (*Applause*)

**Several hon. Members :** Fire ! Fire !

**Dr Sowho :** This country would not have remained what it is today if certain individuals—(*Interruptions*).

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order !

**Dr Sowho :** This country would not have remained what it is today if certain individuals did not have the wisdom to make this necessary sacrifice. If we take the second figures we will find that Bendel, from the totals given, has 23 positions, the former Northern Region 40, the former Eastern Region 13 and the former Western Region 42.

**Mr E. Bassey Etienan (Oron II) :** Point of order, Sir.

**Several hon. Members :** What Order ?

**Mr Etienam :** Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of order is that my hon. Colleague—

**Several hon. Members :** What Order ?

**Mr Etienam :** Order 26 (2). I will make my point of Order, please. Section 14 (3) of the Constitution which is mentioned specifically in this Motion makes reference to the Federal character of this country and is based on the 19 States structure and not on the Regions. So, I am submitting that my hon. Colleague should not draw us back to the days of the Regions which have nothing to do with us here. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** The hon. Member for Ethiopia North (*Dr J. E. Sowho*), you can go on.

**Dr Sowho :** Mr Speaker, hon Members, we now have to examine the effects of the creation of more States in the former Regions of this country. Since these States were created, most of the new States needed staff and they recalled their members who were in the Federal Service to serve in the new States. So, their numbers can never remain the same. I have the figures.

I would like to emphasise, Mr Speaker, that while Bendel State made the sacrifice in holding this country together by providing the manpower, Bendel State was not allowed to have the benefit of having a larger share in the sharing of the Revenue of this country. So, you see, all we did was to hold

[DR SOWHO]

people together. Mr Speaker, Sir, from the figures circulated, while I subscribe entirely to the idea of a federal character, I would like to emphasise that even in Bendel State, the Delta area is not even represented there. However, these figures give us sufficient reasons to bring up a Motion which will soon come before this honourable House that there is indeed a case for the creation of more States in Bendel State so as to bring down these figures.

**Mr S. U. Wanganga (Aba) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, in supporting this Motion, I am doing so with a great deal sense of responsibility and I am not interested in casting aspersions on any section of Nigeria. I am interested in our trying very hard to find a lasting solution to the problem of unity in Nigeria and the problem of contentment in Nigeria. I believe that live and let live is the best rule to ensure contentment and that is all we are trying to do. We are not trying to make people lose their jobs.

Mr Speaker, this Motion calls for a massive support from every section of this honourable House because I cannot imagine an hon. Member who would say that it is wrong to be fair or that it is wrong to ensure equity. It is only if the Motion is intended to punish any particular section, then they are entitled to oppose it but this Motion, as far as we understand it, is intended to ensure fairness. Hon. Members, this Motion seeks to enthrone fairness, equity and justice and we shall be shocked to know that there are people who, because probably, they are benefitted today, will oppose this but tomorrow it may be the turn of somebody else to benefit and he will hold what he has. This is not how we can run the country. We must run it in such a way that all of us participate actively and sincerely. We must share our liabilities, share our assets and share our opportunities and that is the only way.

I will draw your minds back to the cause of trouble in Nigeria. That trouble did not start with the civil war. It was a built-up and the civil war was the climax. That trouble was the attempt by one group or the other to grab what belongs to all Nigerians and that trouble ended up with a war. Nigeria went to war to lose her very valuable citizens. She lost hundreds of thousands of citizens in order to prove a point that Nigeria should stay one and that we should be fair to one another ; no victor no vanquished ; that was the conclusion. If Nigeria can take such a drastic step to ensure fairness and equity, then what we are trying to do is rather mild. All we are trying to do, in fact, is to ensure that there is a system of ensuring distribution of appointments, a system of ensuring membership of corporations and a system of ensuring the allocation of shares of companies owned by the Nigerian Government. I do not see an hon. Member who would say that this is not the fairest way to deal with a federation because Nigeria is a country of many nationalities. The colonialists in a derogatory way called it tribes, but it is, in fact, a country of many nationalities.

The idea of federalism means sharing, it means balancing of interests and balancing of interests cannot stop with purely being represented in the

House. If it did not matter, perhaps, one section could send all those to make laws for Nigeria but because it matters we took pains to share positions and opportunities for every section of Nigeria to be represented here. That means that federalism is being obeyed as far as legislature is concerned but it is not being obeyed as far as employment opportunities and the control of the national economy is concerned. To that extent, I believe personally that anybody seriously opposing the Motion, the main interest of this Motion, rather than the sentimental aspects of the accusation could be accused of anti-federalist activities and even anti-Nigerian activities. Because an attempt to monopolize what belongs to all of us must be resisted no matter who is making that attempt.

Mr Speaker, Sir, permit me to illustrate this evil in our national life with just one example. There are so many but I will not bore the honourable House with too many details. I am using the Nigeria Police Force as my example. The Nigerian Police Force is a federal institution and to ensure unity in Nigeria and protect us, we have to have belief in that Force, we have to have a sense of belonging in that Force. By we, I mean all sections of Nigeria. But look at the composition of the Nigeria Police Force. The Inspector-General of Police is one man and, therefore, he can come from any State but in this case he happens to come from Gongola State. That is not a serious issue. (*Applause*)

**An hon. Member :** Point of information.

**Mr Speaker :** There is nothing like a point of information.

**Mr Wanganga :** We have four Assistant Inspectors-General of Police. Now, out of these four, one comes from Benue State and the other three come from between Oyo and Lagos States.

**Several hon. Members :** Mention the States.

**Mr Wanganga :** All right, since you want the details I will give them to you. We have 24 Commissioners of Police in Nigeria.

**Mr T. O. Badejo (Mushin Central 1) :** Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of Order.

**Mr Badejo :** As regards the general rule of debates—

**Mr Speaker :** Read your order and let us hear.

**Mr Badejo :** *A Member must confine his observations to the subject under discussion and may not introduce matter irrelevant thereto.*

What I am trying to say—

**Mr Speaker :** No. You have finished. The hon. Member for Aba (*Mr S. U. Wanganga*) can go on, please.



**Mr Wanganga :** Mr Speaker, Sir, if I may continue after the interruption from my hon. Friend from Mushin Central I (*Mr T. O. Badejo*), we have 24 Commissioners of Police. Three of them are from Cross River State, six are from Bendel State, seven are from Oyo, Ondo and Lagos States and ten are from the Northern States.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr S. U. Wanganga :** I am addressing the Speaker. Mr Speaker, Sir, I think the best thing would be to circulate the details because I would not like my time when debating to be taken up by interruptions. To that extent I would go on to make the other points I have.

One of the points I wish to make is that—

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member for Aba (*Mr Wanganga*). Please hold on. This debate is getting extremely rowdy and it is most unbecoming of very hon. Members. I think it would be in our interest to defer this Motion until a more convenient time so that Members would do more home-work.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Speaker :** Please, sit down. Is it the wish of the Members that we should continue with the debate ?

**Several hon. Members :** Yes !

**Mr Wanganga :** The other point I wish to make is that a lot of well educated Nigerians have let us down because this problem of lack of National character in appointments is caused by highly educated Nigerians in positions of authority. They go abroad and they see how other people run their countries with fairness, equity and harmony. When they come back they change that and they then employ their relations. To that extent, I feel quite disappointed by what highly educated Nigerians in all the Corporations and Civil Service have done to this country.

I also have a word of, not warning, but a word of caution. The Military ruled this country and we thought that they should have done a lot to ensure National character but the problem got worse under the Military Regime than it was under the Civilian Regime. In fact, many of the soldiers became nepotic and bigots and they forgot all the rules of fairness. They just shifted people and commanded them with immediate effect to take up positions. I think the soldiers caused the problems that we are now trying to solve. There is a very important aspect of this debate. That important aspect is the economic implication of lack of Federal character in Nigeria. That economic implication is the imbalance in the Nigerian economy as at now. I would like to draw the attention of hon. Members to Section 16 (2c) of the Constitution. Mr Speaker, Sir, with your permission I read :

*that the economic system is not operated in such a manner as to permit the concentration of wealth or the means of production and exchange in the hands of few individuals or of a group ;*

Now, what has happened with the Nigerian economy being controlled by a particular section that a lot of industries in Nigeria now, are monopolised by people who are so powerful that they can dictate the pace of progress for the rest of Nigeria. (*Interruptions*). I am not interested in mudslinging, I am talking facts and anybody who does not like facts may interrupt.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of Order.

**Prof. Opeyemi Ola (Ekiti West) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to raise a point of order on Order No. 29 (1).

*Debate upon any motion, bill or amendment shall be relevant to such motion, bill or amendment—*

The issue, Mr Speaker, Sir, is the question of the Federal character of Civil Service positions in this country, not—

**Several hon. Members :** No !

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member for Aba (*Mr Wanganga*), please round up.

**Mr Wanganga :** Yes I am rounding up, with an illustration of what happens to a national economy when the means of production are monopolised in such a way that the economic interest dictates the foreign trade policy of that country. Now, as you well know most countries that are advanced today started by trading and the whole-sale margin in trading is the basis for building up capital for investments in industrialisation. This is the case throughout the whole world. It means that Nigeria, when we started, we had more or less a free trade policy. We were buying and our country-men were making high whole-sale profits, and as a result, they were able to accumulate and invest. What is happening now is because we have got some industries indigenised and we are trying to protect these industries, we have whole-sale ban on so many importations. As a result, other sections of Nigeria are not—

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member for Aba (*Mr Wanganga*), you are outside the Motion. You are speaking irrelevantly. Please round up.

**Mr Wanganga :** Finally, Mr Speaker, I want to propose that in order to ensure that the National character of Nigeria is reflected, not only in 1980 but permanently, a Bill should be brought to this House to establish a bureau for equal opportunity. This bureau should monitor all employments and positions throughout the whole Federation as a permanent institution. (*Interruptions*)

So, with this contribution, Mr Speaker, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, can we hear from the GNPP ?

**Mr Hamza M. Ngadiwa (Biu North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion. The non-implementation of the Federal Character entrenched in our Constitution is the main cause why Nigerians do not know themselves.

[MR. NGADIWA]

You have a section of this country that has a supreme control of the main organs of our government and have come to neglect the interest of the other parts of the country. Mr Speaker, Sir, I can say without reservation and be noted for this, that left to those people who are in command of most of the organs of government in this country, transactions even in Cabinet meetings could have been conducted in their own language at the neglect of the other parts of the country. That is why we have imbalances in the economic structure of this country. That is why we have imbalances in the educational set up of this country. That is why somebody who is here in Lagos and who reports matters from other parts of this country will not be correct from his own perspective to say perhaps the Governor of Bauchi State is speaking in his own Capital, Sokoto! We do not know our country because the Federal Character which should have been reflected in our Constitution so that we know ourselves and our problems have been relegated to the background at the expense of National unity and National stability.

Members of this honourable House will agree with me that the council of federalism is an imperfect association. Nigeria's case is more imperfect in the fact that some of the factors of federalism like ethnicity are reflected in a kind of regional expression. You have the Hausas associated with a particular area, so are the Yorubas, so are the Ibos, so are the Tangellians, and so are the other people in this country. This has made the management of our Federalism to be so cumbersome. This has made the management of federalism of this country too so difficult. We are, therefore, faced with a real situation as regards the revelation contained in these documents. Real situations are no witch-hunting against any group in this country. We are, therefore, forced to face facts if the Federal Character of Nigeria should remain a reality. The question of national unity and stability should become meaningful to all the sons and daughters of this country.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I believe sincerely in compromise as the only solution to Nigeria's federalism. I believe, therefore, that no section of this country should have more than its fair share. I have already stated earlier that one of the factors of the Nigerian Federalism is regionally expressed. It is clear to identify who is taking undue advantage of federalism and who is being neglected in this country. I, therefore, sincerely appeal to this House to view this Motion passionately and to vote unanimously for the implementation of the Federal Character as entrenched in the Constitution. Thank you Mr Speaker. *(Applause)*

**Dr Junaidu S. Muhammed (West Ward):** Mr Speaker, Sir, a lot has been said on the Floor of this House in support of this Motion. I believe if in the whole of this calendar year this House does not pass a single Motion after passing this very one, I would have thought that the year had not been wasted. It is a great Motion. I believe it demands the greatest and maximum support of each and every individual nationalist in this House.

Mr Speaker, Sir, we have seen the glaring statistics presented to us this morning and I must say that what we saw here is a serious indictment and gross misunderstanding as manifested in practice of the concept of federalism by those who have been in power in this country since Independence in 1960. Mr Speaker, Sir, what has happened this morning has also exposed the sham of minority versus the majority because all along we have been hearing speeches by the minority that they have been neglected. But when it suits them or when they find themselves in an advantageous position, they prefer to keep quiet. For example, one of the self-styled minority States has more Ambassadors and more Permanent Secretaries than Kano State which is the largest State in the Federation. Mr Speaker Sir, you can see the sham and hypocrisy of belabouring the point of the majority versus the minority. The fact of the matter is one and simple.

**Alhaji M. A. Amzart (Ikorodu):** Point of order.

**Mr Speaker:** Yes there is a point of order.

**Alhaji Amzart:** My point of order is Section 3 of the Nigerian Constitution. The Constitution does not recognise—

**Mr Speaker:** Read it.

**Alhaji Amzart:** *There shall be 19 States in Nigeria, that is to say, Anambra, Bauchi, Bendel, Benue, Borno, Cross River, Gongola, Imo, Kaduna, Kano, Kwara, Lagos, Niger, Ogun, Ondo, Oyo, Plateau, Rivers and Sokoto.*

There is nowhere in the Constitution where the question of majority or the word minority is used. Any State is recognised. *(Interruptions)*

**Mr Speaker:** Yes, go on Dr Muhammed.

**Dr Muhammed:** Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to address this honourable House on the paramount importance of the concept of redistribution of wealth touched upon very ably by my distinguished Colleague, Mr Wanganga. There can be no egalitarian society; there can be no meaningful federalism if a group of individuals control more than their proportionate share of the national cake. There is no way one can justify the fact that one State among the 19 States has about ten to twelve Ambassadors and another State has one. In fact, the Rivers State has not got a single Ambassador. Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like this House to seriously address itself to the danger of the existence of extremes of poverty and wealth and of the extremes of industries and of course lack of industrialisation in different parts of this country.

**Several hon. Members:** Fire! Fire!

**Professor O. Ola (Ekiti West):** Point of order!

**Mr Speaker:** Yes, there is a point of order.

**Professor Ola:** Mr Speaker, Sir, with your permission, I would like to raise this point of order again for the benefit of the House. Order 29 (1). This Order says the debate should be relevant to the Motion on the Floor of the House. We are discussing

[PROFESSOR OLA]

distribution of Federal offices and not the distribution of wealth in this country. We cannot be misled. I crave the indulgence of Mr Speaker for a ruling finally on this issue.

**Dr Junaidu Muhammed :** I can understand those who have vested interest in maintaining the *status quo* because it is to their advantage. They have taken refuge in the fact that the recruitment policy of the Federal Public Service Commission has been based on merit. This is far from the truth.

Mr Speaker, Sir, formerly all our Public Service Commissions in all States of the Federation were allowed to go on recruitment tour both within and outside Nigeria to recruit their own personnel. The Federal Public Service Commission relinquished that and took it upon itself to recruit staff for the States and for itself and distribute these men to all States of the country. When these people who are living in Lagos cannot see the glaring disparities in the proportions of the people representing States in the Federation in the Federal Service, how on earth can they recruit reasonably and reflect the Federal character in their recruitment policy? I do not think this can be possible. (Applause)

Several hon. Members : Fire ! Fire !

**Dr Muhammed :** The *per capita* income of the average Nigerian from the year 1975-1980 has been ₦378 on average. But in other parts of Lagos and certain parts of the country it is over ₦1,000. You can see the amount of danger of this extreme polarisation between societies, because they do not expect a rich man to be happy with a poor man or a man from an under developed State to be happy with a man from a developed State. So, the fact of the matter is this, that the concept of Federalism must not be taken just like that. We must not talk of platitudes ; we must talk of realism.

Mr Speaker, Sir, so long as we continue to shy away from our responsibilities or so long as we continue to come to this House and say one topic is sensitive or sentimental, we shall never make any progress. This House, I believe, has the men of courage, it has the men of calibre and it has the power to go ahead and pass the Motion. Mr Speaker, I beg to move and I urge this House to give this Motion its tremendous support. I will oppose any move to take this Motion to any Committee because it is straightforward ; it does not need any Committee work.

Thank you.

**Mr Speaker :** Let us hear the hon. Member for Lagos North-Central (Mr R. A. Shitta-Bey).

**Mr R. A. Shitta-Bey (Lagos North-Central) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to oppose this Motion.

Several hon. Members : Shame ! Shame !

**Mr Shitta-Bey :** It is significant to note that—

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Mr Sule Lamido (Birnin Kudu) :** This hon. Member is opposing the Constitution because it says Federal character.

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order ! The hon. Member for Lagos North-Central (Mr R. A. Shitta-Bey), the Leader of your Party, the hon. Member for Karimu Lamido (Mr B. M. Mabrama Jen) said you should not speak for them. (Interruptions) Please hon. Members take your seats.

Hon. Member for Karimu Lamido (Mr B. M. Mabrama Jen), are you withdrawing your injunction? (Interruptions) Order ! Order ! Let us hear the hon. Member for Karimu Lamido (Mr B. M. Mabrama Jen)

**Mr B. M. Mabrama Jen (Karimu Lamido) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I will never withdraw my statement. What I have said is final ; I am not a coward. (Interruptions)

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order ! Gentlemen, please sit down. Please hear the Deputy Speaker (Alhaji Idris Ibrahim).

**Alhaji Idris Ibrahim (Minna North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I believe Members have expressed their views on this Motion and tempers have risen. I quite understand that this Motion as it is in the Order Paper is a very important Motion to this House and there is nothing that is tribal or political in it. It is a Motion that touches on the Constitution of the Federation which we have all sworn to protect. It will therefore be most unfortunate if any Member should oppose this Motion because he will be opposing the Constitution he has sworn to protect.

Several hon. Members : Yes.

**Alhaji Ibrahim :** If I may refer you to the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, we all took the Oath saying that we will preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The President we are calling upon to implement Section 14 of the Constitution has sworn—that he will strive to preserve the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy contained in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. This is covered by Section 13 and Section 14 of the Constitution. Therefore, Mr Speaker, I would like to definitely refer these Members to the provisions of the Constitution and to tell them that voting against this Motion will mean voting against the Constitution.

I beg to call on the Leader of the House to please move that the Question be put.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, may I now ask that the Question be put.

Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.

Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.

[ALHAJI KALTUNGO]

Resolved : That the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria implements without further delay the provisions of Section 14, subsection 3 and Section 157, subsection 5 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, so that all Federal Ministries, Agencies, Statutory Corporations and other Parastatals, reflect the federal character as regards appointment and staff composition of Chairmen, Managing Directors, Board Members and Civil Servants and other employees within Grade Levels 07 to 17 including provision of guidelines of the composition of the junior staff in all these establishments, as well as the siting of these Ministries (or branches thereof), Agencies, Statutory Corporations and other Parastatals.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr Speaker : Hon. Members please have your seats. The Leader of the House (Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo) should please go on with the Motion for Adjournment.

Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that this House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved : That this House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned accordingly at 12.42 p.m.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Friday, 18th January, 1980

The House met at 9.05 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENT

Votes and Proceedings

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, I have gone through the Votes and Proceedings of yesterday and they are correct.

An hon. Member says that he has a point of explanation to make.

Personal Explanation

**Mr Adebowale Adeola (Ijero Ekiti) :** My point of explanation is based on our proceedings in this honourable House. It is related to the posts and the offices of Mr Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, the Leader of the House, the five Political Party Leaders and their Whips.

During the week, we all observed that certain things happened. One of them is the proposed Committee on the Discipline of Members. The duty basically meant for the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, the Leaders of the five Political Parties of this honourable House and the Whips is, as it appears to me, to see that things run very smoothly in this House. They are to maintain discipline and in maintaining discipline, they would need our co-operation as hon. Members who are dedicated to the duties so that we can satisfy our electorate throughout the length and breadth of this country.

I regard the proposal to create another Committee for Discipline of Members in this House as very unnecessary. I also regard this as a sort of innuendo and as a sort of circum navigation.

**Mr Speaker :** I thought you were making an explanation.

**Mr Adeola :** Yes, I am still on the explanation, Sir.

**Mr Speaker :** But the debate has already been concluded.

**Mr Adeola :** I am not making a debate on that.

**Mr Speaker :** That is what you are doing. I thought you were trying to explain a point of procedure or something like that.

**Mr Adeola :** Yes, something happened here yesterday.

**Mr Speaker :** No ! No ! We are not going back to yesterday.

**Mr Adeola :** Mr Speaker, Sir, allow me to finish. This has something to do with discipline, Sir.

**Mr M. A. Olukoya (Ijebu-Ode) :** Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes.

**Mr Olukoya :** My point of order is Order 16. Mr Speaker, Sir, it appears that some hon. Members are misusing the opportunity and the procedure under this particular Order. The Order which I cite, if I may with the permission of the Speaker read, says :

*By the indulgence of the House and the leave of Mr Speaker, a Member may make a personal explanation although there be no question before the House ; but no controversial matter may be brought forward nor may debate arise upon the explanation—*

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you very much. We have already called him to order. He will not continue. We are going on with the Order Paper for today.

Motion number one, hon. Members, is Psychiatric Hospitals standing in the name of the hon. Member for Kumbotso (*Mr Umaru Sadiq*). Go on with your Motion if you are Mr Umaru Sadiq. Mr Umaru Sadiq, if you are not prepared to go on with your Motion, it will lapse.

**Mr Sule Lamido (Birnin Kudu) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, he has not yet arrived.

**Mr Speaker :** Let us go to Motion number two.

**Mr Lamido :** Can I move it on his behalf ?

**Mr Speaker :** You cannot do that.

**Mr Mohammed Lawal Na-Rogo (Karaye) :** I have a point of order.

On the Votes and Proceedings of Thursday, 17th January, 1980, I had a point of information to make in view of the fact that some Members talked on the Creation of new States especially that of Katsina State. There were some Members who disagreed with the Motion, but the Votes and Proceedings stated that all the Members from the former Katsina and Daura States prayed the House to receive the request for the Creation of a new State to be known as the Katsina State. There were four Members who said that their signatures had been forged and consequently, they were threatening to take a court action.

**Mr Speaker :** Please, leave that one. Let us finish with today's Order Paper. You can go to the Clerk if you have anything to say.

Motion number two is on Natural Gas and it stands in the name of Chief G. B. Wodi.

**Mr Lamido :** I am trying to move the Motion on behalf of Mr Sadiq.

**Mr Speaker :** No ! No ! please. If Chief Wodi is not here we will go to Motion number three which is Creation of New States. (*Interruptions*)

Hon. Members, I think that because of the rain many Members have not come. It rained very heavily this morning and I am sure that many hon. Members are still on their way. I would urge that this House be suspended for one hour so that the House will resume at 10.30 a.m.

The House is accordingly suspended till 10.30 a.m.

*Sitting suspended : 9.15 a.m.*

*Sitting resumed : 10.30 a.m.*

#### Letter from the Speaker of the Polish Parliament

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order ! Before we start there are one or two announcements. One is a letter from the Speaker of the Polish People's Republic Parliament.

**Several hon. Members :** We have not prayed.

**Mr Speaker :** We have already prayed.

The letter reads as follows—

*Speaker of the Sejm  
of the Polish People's  
Republic*

*Warsaw, September 7, 1979.*

*Honourable Mr Chairman,*

*I take the liberty to convey to you the text of the "Message from the people of Poland to nations and parliaments of the world" adopted on September 1, 1979 at the patriotic rally of the people in Gdansk on the 40th Anniversary of the Outbreak of World War II.*

*I am convinced that both the people and the Parliament of your country will receive this Message as a manifestation of the feelings and will of a nation which has a special moral right and a particular obligation to speak in favour of the cause most vital for mankind : the cause of maintaining and strengthening world peace. At the same time I am allowing myself to convey the text of the speech delivered on this occasion by our nation's leader, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party, Mr Edward Gierek.*

*Please accept, Honourable Mr Chairman, the expression of my highest consideration.*

*Stanislaw Gucwa*

The text of the message is attached to the letter and I think on behalf of the House the Clerk will convey the appreciation of the House through the Polish Ambassador to the Polish Parliament. Also the message will be referred to the Foreign Affairs Committee for consideration and appropriate reply.

#### Behaviour of a GNPP Member

Another announcement hon. Members is on a very deplorable thing that happened yesterday during the Head of State's Reception. A Member, I think a GNPP Member (I have been trying to get his name), had behaved in a disorderly manner during the reception and particularly when the National Anthem was being sung. The behaviour was outrageous. I do not know how to describe it. It was outrageous to the extent that the Head of State, when he was going away remarked that if this man could not even respect that he was there, could he not even respect the National Anthem. Immediately afterwards, the security men surrounded him.

So, it is a case that completely eroded the dignity of this House and I am thinking that the Party Leaders should meet and this man be invited to explain his conduct. It is extremely outrageous to anybody who saw what happened. I think one or two people saw it.

**Several hon. Members :** We saw him.

**Mr Speaker :** It was outrageous. So, hon. Members that is that. I just want to make it by way of announcement so that Party Leaders will meet and this man will be invited. Please, will GNPP try and produce him to come and explain why he behaved in such a manner.

Yes, have you any explanation to make, Mr Ibrahim Ali?

**Mr Ibrahim M. Ali (Maiduguri) :** I think it is better you take up this on a personal basis because the Party has nothing to do with the behaviour of its Members especially in such a forum when the setting is not in the House.

**Mr Speaker :** I understand what you are saying. We are not saying that it is the fault of the Party. We are only saying that he belongs to that particular Party. So his own Party Leader should produce him before the Leaders of all Political Parties, and that will be on Monday at 1 o'clock.

The first Motion for the day stands in the name of Hon. Member for Kumbotso (*Mr Umaru Sadiq*).

#### NOTICES OF MOTIONS

##### Psychiatric Hospitals

**Mr Umaru Sadiq (Kumbotso) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name—

That in view of the deplorable condition of most Psychiatric Hospitals throughout the country, this Honourable House directs the Committee on Health to invite the Minister of Health to explain the causes or reasons for this deplorable condition and how improvement can be effected, and that the Minister examines the feasibility of building new psychiatric hospitals which shall be properly staffed with men and adequately equipped with drugs and materials ; that the Committee reports to the House its findings with a view to enacting remedial legislations to carry out these intentions.

**Mr Speaker,** I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker :** Anybody to second the Motion ?

**Mr Hussein A. Gajango (Malam Madori) :** I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Sadiq :** Mr Speaker, Sir, Hon. Members, we are all aware that everywhere in this country of ours, particularly in urban centres, one finds mad men and women roaming about the streets. I feel this is something which must be arrested. If it is a habit formed during the military era, I think we in the civilian government have a duty to do towards arresting this situation. As we can see, of all the States of the Federation, it is only in Kano, Ibadan and here in Lagos that one finds in hospital of this nature.

So, I feel there is need that such hospitals should be established in all the 19 States of the Federation and if not possible, at least in some States where patients from other States can easily go for treatment. Furthermore, I appeal to our businessmen and women to come to the aid of the Government towards this goal.

Mr Speaker, with these few points, I move this Motion and I hope everybody will support it wholeheartedly. Thank you.

**Mr Mohammed Lawal Na-Rogo (Karaye) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise not only to support the Motion but to condemn the attitude of some Nigerians who contributed to madness in this country.

Mr Speaker, Sir, when these hospitals were built they were small in number, but there has been an era or an emergence of petty things such as illicit gin, Indian hemp, sleeping tablets and other dangerous drugs you can think of. They are the making of Nigerians. These people are not naturally mad, but some Nigerians made them to become mad. The capacity of our hospitals, especially the psychiatric hospitals, cannot cope with the number of mad people.

Furthermore, Mr Speaker, it is worth nothing that it is the people in the highest echelon of Nigerian society who smuggle all these dangerous drugs. They are the people who bring along Indian hemp into this country. On several occasions many Nigerians have been caught in one or another airport smuggling all sorts of dangerous drugs and Indian hemp.

So, the only solution and remedy, apart from building hospitals in all the 19 States of the Federation, is to curb the excesses of these businessmen who are the agents of multi-national Corporations. We know them ; we all know that all these things happen. But the previous Government did not have the initiative to curb the excesses of these people. If we are to be frank to ourselves, Mr Speaker, we should at least formulate a law or bring in a Bill to stop any Nigerian from bringing any drug that is likely to endanger the lives of innocent Nigerians or cause madness simply by taking these dangerous drugs. They cause congestion at the psychiatric hospitals. I think, such people need to be shot at the Bar Beach.

This Motion speaks for itself, and I believe that all Members of this honourable House will support this Motion wholeheartedly.

With this short comment, I beg to sit down.

Thank you.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, I notice that there is an Amendment to this Motion.

Hon. Member for Bida North (*Alhaji Mustapha*) you should have signified that you intend to move your Amendment, or are you withdrawing it ?

**Alhaji M. B. Mustapha (Bida North) :** Mr Speaker, it is in the Order Paper.

My Amendment reads as follows :

Leave out from the word *of* to the end and insert as follows : the increase in psychiatric cases throughout the country resulting in the inability of the existing Psychiatric Hospitals to handle such cases due to lack of necessary infrastructure, namely accommodation, staff and drugs, this honourable House requests the President to come to the aid of all State Governments and University Teaching Hospitals in this area of health services, and make provision to this effect in the forthcoming 1980-81 Estimates.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker :** Is there anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Alhaji Kaita (Kaita) :** I beg to second.

**Alhaji M. B. Mustapha :** My reason for the present Amendment to this Motion is that, if one studies carefully the original Motion, one will find that the Mover of the Motion deserves to be congratulated by going deep into the Health Services and for discovering that this section of Health Services is suffering in isolation. It would appear that to mention the deplorable conditions is not enough. Rather, what we should do is to ask the Ministry of Health to rectify what makes the services or hospitals deplorable. You will see that Psychiatric cases increase daily—

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member for Bida North (*Alhaji Mustapha*) all that you should tell us is why you are proposing this Amendment. Leave the substance of the Motion ; we shall take that later.

**Alhaji Mustapha :** Thank you Mr Speaker. The Amendment is saying exactly what is required in terms of accommodation, staff, lack of drugs, that constitute the deplorable conditions in the existing hospitals. It is therefore better for this House to put this directly to the Ministry of Health so that they can rectify these shortcomings ; instead of summoning the Minister of Health to come and answer questions on what is not clearly spelt out.

Thank you Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, you have seen the proposed Amendment.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi** (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to move that the Question be now put in respect of the Amendment proposed by hon. Member for Bida North (*Alhaji Mustapha*).

*Amendment put and negatived.*

**Dr Junaidu S. Muhammed** (West Ward) : Mr Speaker, Sir, in supporting this Motion, I feel the problems of mental cases and other groups and classes of destitutes are enormous. It is, in fact, a serious indictment to us as a country, and I must admit, it is a national disgrace.

In a country of approximately 80 million people, one cannot realistically talk of three Psychiatric Hospitals being adequate. In fact, I had had the pleasure or I would rather call it displeasure of working in one of the Psychiatric Hospitals, and that is the one in Kano. I would not even classify that shabby, ramshackle, moribund and absolutely badly maintained building as a hospital. I think it is nothing but a dungeon. It is a mental asylum where today, mental cases are chained and caned and, in fact more often than not, they never have the privilege of seeing a doctor.

The attitude, of people to the mentally handicapped in this country is the type some countries passed through in the 18th and 19th centuries and we still talk of the devils, the demons, and what have you. We still have not arrived at a stage whereby in this country we can accept mentally sick people just like any other category of sick people.

Mr Speaker, Sir, speaking as a neuro-psychiatrist, I think this Motion is a little bit technical, and I would urge this House to give the Health Committee a chance. First, to go into this matter exhaustively, and come out with the technical details, invite the Minister of Health, the Director of Health Services, and other sub-Directors in the Division, talk to some of the people and of course invite some of the distinguished Professors. I have in mind people like Professor Tolani Asuni, Professor Ayabinichi of the University of Benin, and Professor Anumuonye. These are people who can really advise us because they have carried out some of these investigations and have made the benefit of their experience available to the Government, but governmental bureaucracies being what they are, up till today we have not heard anything. So, instead of wasting our time and debating a highly technical issue I would rather move that we refer the matter to the Committee so that the Committee can get down to work.

I am glad that my colleague from Karaye (*Mr Na-Rogo*) touched on the problem of drug addiction. If you classify the number of mentally deranged people in this country, you will find that a large proportion of these people really took to drugs because of what we call in social psychiatry an escape phenomenon. These are people who would like to enjoy life and if they cannot, they would take a pep. They would either take it as vitamin in phylloxera or take some marijuana, and that is the end of this

problem. I think this aspect is absolutely important while doing something about taking care of people who are already mentally sick.

We should make it impossible for drug peddlers and other group of criminals in this society to import these categories of drugs. We should also make it impossible by imposing stiff penalties and fines like giving prison sentences without options of fines to anybody caught growing or peddling marijuana, bringing in phylloxera or the use of it in our vitamins. These are the main categories of drugs that have been misused in this country.

As I have said, Mr Speaker, hon. Members of the House, these are highly technical questions. Let us please leave the job to the Health Committee. They have about twelve doctors in the Committee. I believe that instead of wasting our time talking about technical terms which many people cannot comprehend here, let us please allow the Committee do its work.

I beg to support.

**Mr Oluwole Oyatobo** (Oyo South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I very much admire the speech of the last speaker (*Dr Junaidu S. Muhammed*). I am more or less in support except that I want to bring to the notice of this honourable House that the psychiatric case is just one of so many other medical cases.

As we are sitting down here in the Assembly, many of us are not really well. There are more insane people on the streets, than we have in the asylum. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker** ; Please, hon. Member from Oyo South (*Mr Oluwole Oyatobo*), we will not accept that language. We are very healthy men here. Please, withdraw that statement.

**Mr Oyatobo** : With due apology to the House and to the Speaker, I withdraw that statement.

The point I was trying to make is that a case for the medical care of our nation is a very important one and we should not take it as a piecemeal type of discipline. Much as I support our referring this particular case to the Health Committee, I would like to add that other things should be examined critically. Things like preventive and social medicine, and also orthopaedic cases, are many other medical cases which should be examined critically. This should be done not only with emphasis on Lagos, Enugu or Kano, but as far as rural development is concerned.

I am suggesting that those who are on the committee on Health should take account of the development of all the States in the country, as far as health care is concerned, in a very comprehensive manner. By so doing, I am asking this honourable House not to waste further time but to throw this particular Motion to the Committee on Health in order to deal with it very comprehensively.

Only this week I read in the paper of a case where our Governor in Anambra State had to intervene before somebody was admitted into hospital in Enugu for orthopaedic treatment. This means that



[MR OYATOBA]

there is lack of facility for this treatment, otherwise this person could not have been prevented from having medical services in that hospital. This will support my own argument for a comprehensive review of medical care for our country as far as rural development is concerned. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**Dr Obatayo Ogunkoya (Ijebu Remo)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this important Motion.

I will support it with some reservations and with some important revelations. I am doing so because I strongly believe that the health-care delivery system of this country has actually gone to the dogs, and the earlier we tackle this problem the better. I am talking as a doctor who is very much interested in internal medicine of which neuro-psychiatric is part of its studies. I am also talking as a man who wrote the Federal Policy on Health for the UPN and asked sincerely for free medical services throughout this country.

The problem of neuro-psychiatric is a very nasty one and I will enumerate some of the causes of mental diseases in this country, some of the reasons why our hospitals are in such a deplorable situation, and also the recommendation which I personally think is fit to be applied to this problem.

My medical colleague, Dr Junaidu Muhammed, has suggested that this particular case be referred to the Health Committee. I beg to disagree with him. I disagree because we should really know what problem we are facing. You are all very intelligent and highly respectable citizens of this country. If we know the problems, we shall all join hands together to find solutions to them. In the whole Federation of Nigeria, there is the problem of drug inadequacy in our hospitals, our clinics and our health centres. This is well known to all of us. There is the problem of shortage of medical personnel. This too is very well known to all of us.

**Dr Junaidu S. Muhammed (West Ward)** : Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker**: Yes, what is your point of Order ?

**Dr Junaidu Muhammed** : May I ask that my distinguished colleague in the medical profession (*Dr Obatayo Ogunkoya*) should stick to the issue before the House. We are not talking about inadequacy of drugs ; we are talking about psychiatric hospitals. I do not think anybody can be a mental case by swallowing a few tablets only. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker** : Well, doctors are now disagreeing. (*Interruptions*)

**Dr Ogunkoya** : I would tell you why I referred to the case of shortage of doctors. Nigeria has a population of, say, 80 million. Out of this, we have 5,000 doctors to serve the whole Federation. Out of these 5,000 doctors, 1,209 are foreigners and of the rest, nearly one-third of them are within 30 miles radius of Lagos. It is no fault of anybody; it is the fault of the set-up.

I would show you by statistics that we would continue to suffer from shortage of doctors for a long time unless the Federal Government takes the right step in the right direction by producing more doctors for this country.

**Mr Speaker** : Thank you.

**Dr Ogunkoya** : If we really want the mental hospitals to improve, the treatment must improve. In order that the treatment must improve, we must get some highly trained psychiatrists to man the hospital. We must also get highly trained nurses to man the hospital. In the whole Federation of Nigeria, there are only two psychiatric Nursing Training Schools. One of them is in Anambra State and the other one is the Aro Mental Hospital in Ogun State. This is the so-called Neuro-Psychiatric Hospital, Aro, which has now been taken over by the World Health Organisation due to the recommendations of Prof. Dr Lambo. These are the only two Psychiatric Training Hospitals in the Federation and we have only 34 students in these hospitals. Imagine what is going to happen to most people who might eventually become sick in the near future.

Psychiatric cases should not be blamed on anybody ; it is the fault of the society. There are what we call pathological reasons for being sick. One can develop a disease like meningitis and be sick, and one's brain may get scattered. You can even develop the psychiatric illness yourself through alcoholism, that is, drinking too much alcohol, by taking Indian hemp, by taking heroin, LSD, et cetera. This can happen to anybody but if in future anybody is sick, how do you look after him when you have not provided enough doctors and nurses to look after people? We must train the manpower in order to man whatever hospitals we want to build in the future. We cannot just continue to build hospitals one after other without training the appropriate people to man them. There is a natural demand for building hospitals and for expanding hospitals but there must be a natural demand for giving the trained manpower to man these hospitals.

The question of deplorable government hospitals is not only a problem of psychiatric hospitals alone. It is the problem of most of our General Hospitals and even worse enough, the federally-owned Teaching Hospitals. For example, Idi-Araba Teaching Hospital is no more Idi-Araba Teaching Hospital : It is now *Idi-Abasha* Teaching Hospital because the hospital equipments are decayed. Idi-Araba Teaching Hospital is even worse than NEPA or P. & T. There must be a proper approach to these hospitals. The problems rest with the care of the hospitals and the training of the personnel. The earlier we face them the better.

I want to tell you that the problem of psychiatric hospitals—

**Mr Speaker** : Please round up. You will have another opportunity before the Committee on Health if this goes to it. So, please round up.

**Dr Ogunkoya :** I will round up by inviting the feeling of this House that there is no other way we can improve the hospitals unless the Government is prepared to pay its own share of the responsibilities I like to enumerate some—

**Mr Speaker :** No, please. It is time. You will do that before the Committee on Health.

**Dr E. J. Sowho (Ethiopia North) :** While I thank the Speaker for promising to allow all the doctors to speak, I feel this issue which is meant to serve the interest of the masses should not only be confined to doctors for consideration. The issue at stake is simple. Though my educated Friend (*Dr Ogunkoya*) was trying to give us several reasons why we have these problems, I do not think that is what we are here to discuss. The Committee on Health matters will look into the details. The Motion simply states that we should look into the deplorable conditions of the Psychiatric Hospitals in this country. It is true that all other hospitals are also in the same bad shape.

Now, what do we do about this ? The hon. Member for Westward (*Dr Junaidu Muhammed*) is right. We should refer it to the Committee on Health. It is technical but not only the doctors should be there. There are other aspects that we may not be fully aware of because the consumers of these services, that is, the general public would also have a good contribution to make. Certainly, we would not achieve much here, trying to educate the House on the causes of mental ill-health. They are not even interested in that. They just want better services. Let us refer the more technical side to the professionals and try to accept that this Motion be sent to the Committee on Health where proper justice will be done and which will make a proper, detailed, well-articulated study and bring it before the House.

Thank you.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, having listened to my doctor Friends who are not learned Friends, I think it is time that we referred this Motion to the Committee on Health. I now move that the Question be put so that the matter can be referred to the Committee on Health.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That in view of the deplorable condition of most Psychiatric Hospitals throughout the country, this honourable House directs the Committee on Health to invite the Minister of Health to explain the causes or reasons for this deplorable condition and how improvement can be effected, and that the Minister examines the feasibility of building new Psychiatric Hospitals which shall be properly staffed with men and adequately equipped with drugs and materials ; that the Committee reports to the House its findings with a view to enacting remedial legislations to carry out these intentions.

#### Natural Gas

**Mr Speaker :** This Motion stands in the name of Chief G. B. Wodi.

**Chief Godwin B. Wodi (Port Harcourt II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I often perspire very profusely and I can see my hon. Colleagues here too, using their Order Papers in fanning themselves.

**Mr Speaker :** Please go to the Motion.

**Chief G. B. Wodi :** Well, the point I want to make, Mr Speaker, is that the situation of this room is not conducive for me to go ahead with this Motion. I would want to suspend it to a better day.

**Mr Speaker :** You are saying that this Motion should be suspended.

**Chief G. B. Wodi :** Yes, and I have chosen Wednesday—

**Mr Speaker :** No, please. You will leave it to the Business Committee. They will give you a new date because we do not know what they have in their Diary. The Business Committee will give you a convenient day because the day you may choose may not be convenient for them.

*Motion deferred till a new date.*

#### Committee on the Creation of New States

**Mr Speaker :** The Motion stands in the name of Mr Olusola Afolabi, the acting Leader of the House.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to move the third Motion on the Order Paper standing in my name. The Motion reads thus :

That a Special Committee of the House to be known as Special Committee for the Creation of New States be set up, the composition of which shall be as follows :

Speaker—Chairman

5 Members of the NPN

3 Members of the UPN

2 Members of the NPP

1 Member of the PRP

1 Member of the GNPP

Hon. Members, we all agreed yesterday in principle that this Committee be set up. The purpose of this is to formally bring up this Motion.

I beg to move. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Lt-Col. P. C. Amadi (Owerri North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Dr M. B. Ukpong (Abak) :** My point of order is Rule 52 (1) With your permission I read :

*There shall be a committee to be known as the Committee of Selection appointed at the commencement of every session to perform the functions allocated to it by these standing orders, and for such other matters as the House may from time to time refer to it.*

[DR UKPONG]

Mr Speaker, Sir, at the commencement of this House a Committee of Selection was set up and this action was not taken by the Committee of Selection. We have been talking about abuse of office, usurpation of power, Federal character and we think that there are only few people privileged to be usurping power with absolute impunity. This is not an *Asoso Club*. What has been the principle should be accepted. It is a constitutional thing and I am very sure that this thing should be done by the Selection Committee.

In view of this usurpation of power and in view of the fact that these things have not been done by the Committee of Selection, I call upon this House to reject this recommendation. (*Applause*)

**Mr Speaker** : Well, let us read the Order you have cited again.

*There shall be a committee to be known as the Committee of Selection appointed at the commencement of every session to perform the functions allocated to it by these standing orders, and for such other matters as the House may from time to time refer to it.*

Has the House referred anything to the Committee of Selection ?

**Dr Ukpong** : Yes.

**Mr Speaker** : What did you refer to it?

**Dr Ukpong** : This matter.

**Mr Speaker** : We did not refer this particular matter to the Committee of Selection.

**Dr Ukpong** : Mr Speaker, Sir, unless we want to be very consistent in inconsistency, when this matter was—

**Mr Speaker** : Please, Dr Ukpong, do not waste the time of the House.

**Several hon. Members** : No ! No !

**Mr Speaker** : The duty of the Selection Committee is to select Members of the Standing Committee and they have done just that. It is the duty of this House to appoint Members of the Select Committee. This Committee is the Select Committee which is appointed to perform a specific function and we have just done that. The House is perfectly in Order. There is no argument on this matter.

**Some hon. Members** : No ! No !

**Mr Speaker** : There is an explanation. This matter has been handled by Party Leaders.

**Mr P. K. C. Atuwo (Sagbama)** : Mr Speaker, Sir as a result of the explanation given by the Speaker that this is a Select Committee, we can take that, but the House is still concerned about the limit of the Members that have been put here. This is a very important Committee and we would want at least a representative from every State to be there. When we count this number it is only eleven with the Speaker as the Chairman. I think we should expand the membership of this Committee. We should expand it at least to twenty-five.

**Mr Speaker** : Mr Afolabi what do you say

**Mr Olusola Afolabi** : Mr Speaker, hon. Members I think the whole idea of this kind of committee is to have a body not too large and not too unwieldy to be able to look into this kind of matter, otherwise you will get into a situation in which the Committee will not be able to do anything. I would like hon. Members to remember that the Committee has no final say. Whatever it does could only be at best a recommendation. I would suggest, Mr Speaker in the alternative, that if there is need to increase the number here, the Speaker should co-opt representatives from—

**Several hon. Members** : No ! No !

**Mr Afolabi** : Mr Speaker could co-opt representatives from a place where the State is being created. As far as I am concerned I think a composition of thirteen with Mr Speaker as Chairman is just sufficient for this kind Select Committee. I beg that the number be left at thirteen.

**Some hon. Members** : No ! No !

**Mr Speaker** : Let the Party Leaders speak (*Interruptions*) Order ! Order !

**Mr Tom Egbuwoku (Isoko)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to suggest that in view—

**Some hon. Members** : No ! No !

**Mr Egbuwoku** : Mr Speaker, Sir, on the Floor of this House, you voted for Chief Whips as Leaders of their various Parties—

**Mr Speaker** : Speak because I have recognised you to speak.

**Mr Egbuwoku** : So Mr Speaker, Sir, it is quite clear that both composition of the Committee and its structure have got some controversy. May I suggest, Mr Speaker, that this matter be sent back, in view of the comments, to the Leaders for further deliberation before they can bring it back to the House properly.

Thank you.

**Alhaji S. Konduga (Konduga)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, on this Motion about the creation of State which was moved yesterday, the Speaker had suggested that a meeting of the Party Leaders should be held in his office immediately after the House had adjourned for the day to discuss this issue. When we went to the Speaker's office to hold this meeting, he told us that the meeting was not going to take place and we went away. Surprisingly when we came this morning we found this Motion on the Order Paper for today. How we came about to find the formation of this number, twelve, or whatever was arrived at which the Acting Leader of the House presented, we do not know. We the Party Leaders were not aware of when this meeting was held and how they arrived at this point. As such, we have to hold a meeting either of the Select Committee or of the Party Leaders to agree on what formula we are going to use to appoint this Committee.

Thank you, Speaker.

**Mr E. N. D. Uwandu (Mbaitoli)** : I want to make an explanation and my explanation is based on Rule 52, the heading of which says *Special Committees*. There should be no other special committees to be appointed outside the provision of Rule 52 which says :

(1) *There shall be a committee to be known as the Committee of Selection appointed at the commencement of every session to perform the functions allocated to it by these standing orders, and for such other matters as the House may from time to time refer to it.*

So it is the House, and not the Party Leaders, that is referred to. Throughout the whole Sections on Special Committees, there is no where it is stated that this House has got the powers to form other Special Committees apart from the Standing Orders Committee, the House Committee, the Business Committee, the Public Relations Committee and other Committees.

**Dr O. O. Oreh (Arochukwu)** : Point of order on Order 60.

**Mr Speaker** : There is a point of Order. I am glad you have said that. I wanted to refer the speaker to Order 60. If you read Order 60, you will see that you have no *locus-standi*.

**Mr Uwandu** : The Select Committee shall be appointed—

**An hon. Member** : There is a point of order.

**Mr Uwandu** : I have not finished please.

**Mr Speaker** : Please there is a point of Order.

**Dr Oreh** : I want to refer the hon. Member for Mbaitoli (*Mr E. N. D. Uwandu*) to Order No. 60 and Mr Speaker, with your permission, I beg to read :

*A select committee shall be appointed after notice given on motion made and question put, and shall consist of fifteen members, to be nominated by the Committee of Selection, which shall nominate one of the members to be chairman. (Interruptions)*

**Mr Speaker** : You have made a very good point.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi** : Mr Speaker, Sir, in view of the controversy which has been generated over Motion No. 3, I hereby beg to suspend it.

**Several hon. Members** : No ! No ! (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Afolabi** : Mr Speaker, I hereby suspend the Motion.

**Several hon. Members** : No ! No !

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, the Motion is suspended indefinitely.

*Motion by leave suspended.*

**Mr Speaker** : Now, we go to Motion No. 4. Do we do the same thing in respect of Motion No. 4 ?

**Several hon. Members** : Yes ?

**Other hon. Members** : No !

### Composition of Members for Study Tour of the United States

**Mr Afolabi** : Mr Speaker, Sir, with your permission I intend to move the Motion standing in my name—

That a group of twelve Members do undertake a study tour of the United States of America, the composition of which shall be as follows :

Speaker—Leader of the delegation

5 Members of the NPN

3 Members of the UPN

2 Members of the NPP

1 Member of the PRP

1 Member of the GNPP.

This Motion should bring no controversy.

**Several hon. Members** : Why ? Why ?

**Mr Afolabi** : Please let me explain. We have a plan or there was an agreement that we should send 13 hon. Members to the United States as a study group. Based on the strength of the Parties in this Honourable House, it has been decided that the composition of that delegation should be as follows :

5 hon. Members of the National Party of Nigeria,

3 hon. Members of the Unity Party of Nigeria,

2 hon. Members of the Nigerian People's Party

1 hon. Member of the Peoples Redemption Party,

and 1 hon. Member of the Great Nigeria People's Party.

The Speaker will lead the delegation and I want to inform the honourable House that this is the beginning of such a study tour. It is the intention that all Members of this honourable House will have the opportunity to go on this tour. So, it does not mean that if an hon. Member does not go on this one, he will not go later. Therefore, I do not think that it is a matter which needs any controversy

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker** : Are we going to withdraw this too.

**Several hon. Members** : Yes !

**Some hon. Members** : No !

**Mr Speaker** : Is there anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Several hon. Members** : No ! No !

**Mr Bayo Akinbisehin (Ifesowopo)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : There is a point of explanation.

**Mr Tom Egbuwoku (Isoko)** : The explanation is this. I think when we discussed this issue at the Party Leaders' level, the hon. Member for Oyo East (*Mr Olusola Afolabi*) was not at home. I think it must be made clear for the consumption of the public, the Press, and so on, that this is purely an invitation from the American Embassy and that we have only twelve chances given to us. So, these twelve chances

[Mr EGBUWOKU]  
are what we are sharing although at the Party Leaders' level, we have considered the possibility of we in this honourable Assembly also taking it up ourselves. The details are not yet worked out.

I thought it should be made clear so that there would be no question of doubt. It is twelve chances that they have made available to us and that is final.

Thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker :** Do we really want to debate this Motion?

**Several hon. Members :** No debate. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Order! Order!

**Mr Afolabi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I formally move that the Question be now put.

**Several hon. Members :** No! No!

**Some hon. Members :** Yes! Yes! (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Order! Order!

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That a group of twelve Members do, undertake a study tour of the United States of America, the composition of which shall be as follows :

Speaker—Leader of the delegation

5 Members of the NPN

3 Members of the UPN

2 Members of the NPP

1 Member of the PRP

1 Member of the GNPP

**Mr Speaker :** The hon. Member for Oyo East (*Mr Olusola Afolabi*) please move the Motion for Adjournment. (*Several hon. Members stood up to leave the Hall*)

Hon. Members, please sit down. There is one other item. The hon. Member for Oyo East (*Mr Olusola Afolabi*) please give me just one minute. I want to repeat the announcement I made in the morning. The Leader of the GNPP is here now.

The hon. Member for Konduga (*Alhaji Sanda Konduga*), we said before you came that—

**Alhaji Sanda Konduga (Konduga) :** I have heard about it.

**Mr Speaker :** Oh, you have heard about it. Please, the Party Leaders will meet in my office on Monday at 1 o'clock. The Clerk of the House of Representatives, if possible, will give you a letter for that Member so that he could come and explain his conduct.

Yes, the hon. Member for Oyo East (*Mr Olusola Afolabi*) please continue.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I now move that the House be adjourned till ten o'clock on Monday morning.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes hon. Members, is there anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Nuhu Poloma (Tangale-Waja North) :** I rise to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That this House do adjourn till 10 o'clock on Monday morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 11.33 a.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Monday, 21st January, 1980

The House met at 10.15 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Committee Meetings

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, you can see that our Order Paper for today is very short. The reason is that we want the Committees to have enough time to start and do some work this morning. As a result, the meeting of the Committees has been amended as follows :

The Committee on Education will meet at 1 o'clock.

The Business Committee will meet at 1 o'clock.

The Standing Orders' Committee will meet at 1 o'clock.

Also the Party Leaders will meet in my office immediately after this sitting. We have two very important things to discuss.

Hon. Members the only Motion on the Order Paper is the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway. That is the Motion standing in the name of Messrs M. O. Ugwu and Aka Ogbobe. If Mr Ugwu is not here, what about the co-Mover of the Motion, the hon. Member for Igbo-Etiti (*Mr Ogbobe*). He is not here too ?

Has anybody any explanation to make ? Yes, let us hear what the hon. Member for Degema I (*Mr Princewill*) has to say.

Personal Explanation

**Mr D. Princewill** (Degema I) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to remind this honourable House about two important issues. One of them is on Immigration. Shortly before we went on recess, I travelled to some European countries and on my way—(*Interruptions*) Before I left, Sir, I had a letter from the Clerk of the House introducing me as an hon. Member of this august House because my passport is so old that it carries Student on it. So everywhere I went I was treated with that respect and dignity. In fact, some Nigerians were surprised that I was not holding a diplomatic passport because I gave the letter to the Immigration Authority and I was immediately passed without any problem of visa or anything. But on coming back home—(*Interruptions*).

**Mr. Speaker :** Hon. Members, the hon. Member for Degema I (*Mr Princewill*) is on a point of explanation.

**Mr Princewill :** On coming home, Sir, I was given a form to fill. It is called Immigration Form and on it you have to state the place where you slept while you were away and some other things. In fact, I had forgotten the number of my brother's house where I slept. So, I could not put the number of the house on the form. I was delayed for more than one hour. When I introduced myself as a Member of the National Assembly, the boy just treated me with outright banal neglect. If we should enter our country with difficulty I think it is very serious. What happens in other countries is that when one is travelling back home one does not have to fill any forms whatsoever. I would like the Immigration Authorities to note that in Nigeria, too, we do not keep records. The filling of that form is a waste of time, unnecessary and of no use whatsoever.

Please, I wish to express through this honourable House to the Immigration Authorities or to the Minister in-charge of the Immigration Department that any Nigerian coming home should not be subjected to filling forms of any nature.

The second point, Sir, is about something which I have read in the *New Nigerian* issue of today. It has been coming up in the papers but today I have taken time to go round myself and I have confirmed that the story is correct. This is about the display of the portrait of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, by the grace of God, Alhaji Shehu Shagari in public places in the UPN controlled States. (*Interruptions*) Mr Speaker, Sir, by the grace of God, Alhaji Shehu Shagari is the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for the next four years. (*Applause*) He is the symbol of unity of Nigeria. He is the power.

In the words of Saint Paul to the Romans—Romans Chapter 13—(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member for Degema I (*Mr Princewill*) that is all right.

**Mr Princewill :** Mr Speaker, I would have liked to quote it because it is very vital.

**Mr Speaker :** That is a hangover from yesterday.

**Mr Princewill :** In the words of Saint Paul it is stated, *let every person be subject to the higher powers. Let every person subject himself to the higher powers because there is no power that is not made of God.*

**Mr Speaker :** That is all right.

**Mr Princewill :** Mr Speaker, the incumbent President has innermost powers and if he were—(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** That is all right, Mr Princewill. Thank you.

Order ! Order ! Let the hon. Member for Ibadan North (*Mr Debo Akande*) speak but other contributions will come on Motion for Adjournment.

### Omission of Parliamentary Privilege in the Constitution

**Mr Debo Akande** (Ibadan North) : We are not allowed to comment on the speech made by the hon. Member for Degema I (*Mr Dagogo Princewill*) until Motion for Adjournment but I would like to draw your attention to a very serious point, in my view, in the Constitution. Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to say that there is an omission in the Constitution which affects the debates and the continued stay of the Members during their Parliamentary tenure of office. I have found, on going through the Constitution, that the usual parliamentary privilege clause is missing, and we ought to be covered when we are doing anything in this Housing.

It is normal in all written Constitutions to find a clause giving cover as parliamentary privilege to all the Members for their debates and speeches during their tenure of office. This type of clause is also in all written Constitutions, and a similar clause will be found in Section 6, Subsection (1) of American Constitution. Unfortunately, there is no such clause in our present Constitution. I find that we are merely basing this privilege on our assumption as at now. Mr Speaker, Sir, I regard it as a very serious omission and I would like to draw your attention and the attention of hon. Members to this serious omission for our immediate consideration.

If I may, with your permission read the type of clause needed :

*That the Members of the National Assembly or respective State Assemblies shall in all cases except treason and felony be privileged from arrest during their attendance at the Sessions of their respective Assemblies and in going to and returning from same, and for any speech or debate in their Assemblies they shall not be questioned in any other place.*

You will see that apart from debates we shall carry on here during the tenure of our office in the House, we shall not be subject to any arbitrary arrest save in serious cases like felony and treason. So, Mr Speaker, Sir, this is the omission I like to draw the attention of the House to.

**Mr Speaker** : Thank you very much. As a matter of fact, I have taken this matter up with the hon. Member for Ibadan North (*Mr Akande*) who happens also to be a very senior Member of the Bar. I have been able to refer him to Order 73 (1) which reads :

*In cases of doubt the standing orders of this House shall be interpreted in the light of the relevant practice of the Commons House of Parliament of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.*

So, we also got this particular paragraph incorporated in the new Standing Orders that will soon come out for approval. The practice is that whenever our Standing Order is either vague or does not say anything about a particular subject, we shall always, according to this Standing Order, fall back on the practice and convention in British

House of Commons. So because of Mr Akande's insistence I thought that this matter should go to the Judicial Committee and all the Lawyers may be kind enough to attend and look into the matter particularly the legal aspect of it whether we can depend on the rules alone or do we require a substantive law in order to strengthen our position.

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel** (Degema II) : I want to help in this contribution. Under Section 267 of the Constitution we have RESTRICTIONS ON LEGAL PROCEEDINGS. In that restriction they only mentioned the President, the Vice-President, the Governor, and the Deputy Governor of the States but never talked about the Legislative Houses. Maybe when the Judicial Committee will be looking at this, they should amend it so that Section 267 could be enlarged to include Members of the National Assembly and all Legislative Houses in order to restrict us from legal proceedings during our sessions. Thank you.

**Mr Speaker** : We shall leave it to the Judicial Committee and incidentally it contains very experienced Lawyers like the hon. Member for Oshimili (*Mr M. A. Agbamuche*), the hon. Member for Ibadan North (*Adebo Akande*), the hon. Member for Njikoka South (*Mr E. O. Echetabu*), the hon. Member for Warri (*Chief Bon Omoruwa*) and the hon. Member for Ero South (*Mr Olu Olofinlade*). They will be able to make very good contributions.

We go back to the Order Paper of the day. The hon. Member for Udi (*Mr M. O. Ugwu*), we have been waiting for you to move your Motion.

### NOTICE OF MOTION

#### The Lagos-Ibadan Expressway

**Mr M. O. Ugwu** (Udi) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move—[That this Honourable House notes with regret, the deteriorating condition of the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway and calls on the Committee on Public Works to investigate the cause or causes of this deplorable situation just within a few months of the Expressway being opened for public use].

I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker** : Is anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Chief Okon Ikpeme** (Akamkpa) : Mr Speaker Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, hon. Member for Udi (*Mr M. O. Ugwu*).

**Mr M. O. Ugwu** (Udi) : Mr Speaker, Sir, the construction Industry is one of the most important vehicles for the control of the economy of any country by its government. In this country this Industry ranks second to Petroleum in spending and probably has more impact on the people than Petroleum. This industry has been dominated in this country by two companies—The Dumez (Nigeria) Limited and Julius Berger (Nigeria) Limited. It is therefore proper that this august Assembly should duly inquire and look at the roads built by these companies with the tax-payers money. Of course it is important for us to see whether their activities are to the interest of this nation, and there is every reason to believe that that is not the case.

[MR UGWU]

It has been shown, however, that both Companies dominate the construction industry of this country. Most of them, though foreign, have been encouraging the bad government of this country. Both firms, Julius Berger and Dumez, came to this country to carry out projects financed by their governments.

In the case of Julius Berger, it received generous land allocation at Victoria Island and of course at Ijora and the Plots of land perhaps were worth several millions of naira.

Both firms performed their first contracts beautifully and their engineering designs were in fact excellent, but as they understand the language that the Nigerians speak, their performance in fact seems to have dropped and nobody seems to question the drop in the performance. Instead the work-load increases and this increase is to the detriment of this country.

I would like to say, Mr Speaker, that the contributions of those companies to their home Governments have increased within the past few years. I would like to add that Julius Berger rose from the position of real liquidation in Germany in 1964, and in 1978, it became the second largest construction industry in Germany. Dumez Engineering contributed to Dumez International sixteen *per cent* of its profits in 1978 and this money accrued from this country.

In 1978, each firm and its associations and principals in their home countries had two billion naira work order in this country and that was twenty *per cent* of the total Federal Government Expenditure in 1978. I shall illustrate how the standard of their work dropped and I shall mention these projects so as to convince the House that these firms have a case to answer.

Eko Bridge was the first project of Julius Berger and it was a beautiful job because in fact they did it with the specifications of the Federal Ministry of Works. The second one was the Eko Bridge Extension in Western Avenue. Of course this company has become so powerful that it designs and builds which means, that the Federal Ministry of Works has nothing to do with its design. The Company will design and sell the idea to the Federal Government and of course present their bill. It is just like going to a Restaurant to eat food that you don't know the price of. It is a menu without price list and when you have eaten, they will tell you that the bill is one million naira and that is what the tax-payers of this country are suffering from.

In fact, as an Engineer, I cannot see the reason for the Eko Bridge Extension because first of all the Company sand-filled the swamp and elevated it. There is no need for this elevation. If they constructed five lanes of road out of Lagos, the traffic could have been moving faster. But Julius Berger is a specialist in Bridge building and it is more expensive and of course this increases its profit.

Tin Can Island Port. This again is a very good project and a very good work but I am sure it could have been cheaper. This country paid two hundred and twenty million naira to build the Tin Can Island

Port and of course the conditions given were different from others. The fact is that they were paid generous mobilization fees and this Company was paid a pre-determined sum of money every month, just like somebody on a salary. The contract provision is that you are paid when the job reaches a certain stage but here this Company was just paid every month irrespective of what they had done. The same thing went on at Warri Port. This country paid ninety six million naira on Warri Port on the same condition that was obtainable at the Tin Can Island.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon Member, I thought you were talking about Lagos and Ibadan Expressway ?

**Mr Ugwu :** I am trying to develop the thesis. (Interruptions)

**Mr Speaker :** Go on.

**Mr Ugwu :** The second work was the Lagos Inner Ring Road. Of course, this Company did not take into consideration that land in Lagos is very expensive. They put up inter-change within the City where the land is very expensive irrespective of the fact that people want it or not. I have not seen anywhere in the world even in Rio De Janiero where you have what I will call the inter-change built in the City. Of course the intermediate Fly-overs in Lagos are not very necessary because the traffic at the other end of Lagos is in fact very scanty. I am saying, therefore, that the amount of money invested on that bridge was unfair to the tax-payers and it was an idea sold to our Government by Julius Berger. It means, therefore, that the idea of Julius Berger is that the bridge or the fly-over they built leads to another bridge or another fly-over and that increases their profits.

I would like to say, of course, that the natural waterways and water-courses in Lagos cause a lot of flooding and it is because Julius Berger just fill the water with sand and do not care about the natural water-ways. All that it is interested in is to put up a bridge.

**Mr P. O. Obaoye (Irepodun) :** There is a point of Order.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of Order.

**Mr Obaoye :** Order 29 (1).

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, please sit down. Let us hear his point of Order.

What is the point of Order ?

**Mr Obaoye :** Mr Speaker, hon. Ugwu has not confined himself to the contents of his Motion which is on Lagos-Ibadan Expressway. Order 29 (1) (Interruptions)

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Mr Ugwu, continue.

**Mr Ugwu :** In reviewing the contract activities of Dumez, I do not think it is as disturbing as the first Company. In fact the Lebanese Managing Director was quoted as saying that he could get whatever he wanted in this country because he had got the Leaders and the officials of this country in his pocket. I know this is not true. I would like to say as well that certain roads were hurriedly negotiated by this Company in Bendel State and in the Rivers State. They are not terrible along Benin/Shagamu



[MR. UGWU]

road, Warri/Benin Okene Highway and Port Harcourt/Warri Highway. The contract for Benin/Shagamu road was awarded for ninety million naira and by 1978 only 72 kilometres out of 300 kilometres was finished and the Contractors were demanding an increase of three hundred and twenty million naira. On failing to complete these Projects at cost, this contract nearly paralysed this country for there was no communication between the Western States or Eastern States and Northern States to Lagos. Then, after a certain review of the contract, the contract was increased by the Federal Military Government from ninety-six million naira to two hundred and twenty million naira.

**Mr Speaker :** Please, there is a point of Order.

**Mr M. A. Agbamuche (Oshimili) :** The Motion before the House reads thus—

**An hon. Member :** What is your point of order ?

**Mr Agbamuche :** My point of order is Order No. 26 (2).

The Motion reads thus :

*That this Honourable House notes with regret, the deteriorating condition of the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway and calls on the Committee on Public Works to investigate the cause or causes of this deplorable situation just within a few months of the Expressway being opened for public use.*

If I may go on Order No. 26 (2) reads :

*A Member must confine his observations to the subject under discussion and may not introduce matter irrelevant thereto.*

Whether or not I share the view of the hon. Member that what he is saying is quite reasonable, it is outside the Motion before this House.

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order ! Hon. Member for Oshimili (*Mr Agbamuche*) I do agree with you. The rules of law are not the same as the rules of politics ! What he is saying is perfectly correct on point of procedure but this is politics. Go on, Mr Ugwu.

**Mr Ugwu :** Some other roads like Western Highway—Warri/Port Harcourt—were in fact abandoned and these roads would have been some of the most important roads in this country because they go through the oil producing areas. The oil producing areas are thinking that the Federal Government is neglecting them. It is because the contractors given the jobs have abandoned the jobs and are trying to do arms-twisting. The Ibadan Expressway was built by Dumez Engineering and Strabag Engineering and of course, Julius Berger.

As far as I know, a highway is made to last for 20 to 25 years. Then of course, Ibadan Expressway, if anybody has driven through there recently, is in fact a disgrace to engineering because it is not just the question of pouring coal-tar on the road. That is not the engineering part of it ; it is what is underneath the ground. It is the part that carries the stress of the road. If for example you have driven through Ibadan/Ife, the road is very old but it is solid. If you come to the new one that cost this country millions of naira, in fact it is so deplorable

that you cannot even see five to seven kilometres of straight road in Ibadan Expressway and that road has become a death trap to the users. I do not see any reason why this country should spend millions of naira to kill its citizens.

I therefore call on this Assembly to step in and intervene and save what I may call a kind of Mafiasm that is involved in the award of contracts in this country.

I beg to move. (*Applause*)

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, where is the co-Mover ?

**Mr Aka Ogbobe (Igbo-Etiti) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, as a co-Mover of this Motion I stand up to support it.

The purpose of the Motion is not to witch-hunt any company, but it is asking the House to investigate the causes of the failure of a road which cost this country ₦177 million to build within the first few months of its use. As already mentioned by the first speaker, the contractors involved in this project are from the Lagos end Julius Berger, Ibadan end Strabag Germany, and in the middle Dumez (Nigeria) Limited.

In order to bring the matter to the attention of Members, I shall briefly explain the functions of the participants in the real project. There were three principal groups of people involved in the execution of the project—the client in this case was the Federal Government of Nigeria, the Consultants/Engineers and the Contractors. The client is first of all to indicate the type of road he wants to build and also he prepares requirements for the road. The Consultant/Engineer does the survey and the design of the road. It will be impossible within this short period to explain fully the work involved in surveying and designing. But I shall mention that the first thing a Consultant should do is to take a photograph of the route, determine alignment and discuss with the client and then go on with the detailed design. At the end of the design the following information is made available to the client. First of all, the contract drawings. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order !

**Mr Ogbobe :** The contract drawings will indicate the length of the road, the route, culvert position and sizes, bridge position, then the width of the road. It should also show the details of the culvert, and design of the bridges and all items that are to be used in constructing the roads. There are also specifications prepared by the Consultant/Engineers. The specifications in the case of the quality of materials to be used, the type of materials and the control of the work. The third is the document. Document is the Bill of Quantities. The Bill of Quantities gives details of the materials involved in the construction. Every item used in the construction is indicated in the Bill of Quantities and the Engineer prices one of the Bills of Quantities as a confidential document to the client.

When a Contractor is tendering for a road he has no idea of what the cost is but the client has an idea. He is given an unpriced copy of the Bill of quantities. Then the Contractor which is the third participant goes on to build the road. What this House is asking

for is that the Committee on Works should investigate what has happened to this road. Why did the road disintegrate within the first few months of its use? It should find out whether the Consultant did a good job in their design. As really pointed out by the first speaker, when you are designing a road you should look forward to a twenty years' lease. What were the criteria for the road? Did he just assume that the road would carry ordinary cars and that there would be no trailers on it? By the way, the Consultants to this road were Scot Wilson, Kirk Patrick and Partners and they are British Consultants. They are all foreign contractors.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of Order.

**Mr David Adelu (Ibadan East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to refer to Order 29 (1). It seems to me that what the hon. Member is saying is not relevant to the debate on the Floor and it looks as if he is pleading for the fraudulent engineers that have debased the nation.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, I do not agree with you. Thank you.

**Mr Ogbobe :** They have to investigate. Did the contractors abide by the design, procedure and specification? Did they use the correct material for the work? You will also find out who supervised the contract. Did they supervise it properly?

Mr Speaker, Sir, as already pointed out by the first speaker, we are not opposed to the use of foreign Consultants and foreign Contractors in this country. It is necessary that anybody invited to do some work in this country must abide by the accepted principle of doing a good job. It will be of interest to Members to know that there are five foreign contractors who dominate the construction industry in this country. They dictate the contract prices. They manipulate the contract prices to their advantage. They hold their meetings and decide who among them would do a particular job irrespective of what the Bills of Quantities say. In effect, even if they decided that this contract should go to Contractor A, they would still tell him to fix the sum to be so so amount because they know that the contract will fall to one of them. The Committee will be able to investigate who these contractors are.

Mr Speaker, as mentioned by the hon. Member for Udi (*Mr M. O. Ugwu*), the Benin—Shagamu Road is a case in point. There were some checks and balances that were introduced in the engineering design and execution. A Consultant is different from a Contractor because the Consultant does his work and the Contractor has to abide by the designs made by the Consultant. If you dare give a Contractor the job of designing and constructing, you are giving him a blank cheque because he can, for instance, make the pillar of a bridge 1,000 diameters instead of 2,000 diameters. These are the things that happen in this country. The Benin—Shagamu Road was given to Dumez to design and construct. It was a blank cheque. As was pointed out the original cost of the road was ₦96.2 million but it rose to ₦225.9 million in the first three months. These are the items that must be investigated by this House.

As I have said, we do not wish to witch-hunt. We cannot allow this type of situation to continue. It might well be that there may be a further opportunity to talk of other roads built by foreigners in this country. There are good Foreign Consultants and Contractors but there are very many bad ones who are dominating the construction industry. This House must do very well to stop that from going on. Thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Alhaji Abutu?

**Alhaji A. D. O. Abutu (Ankpa South) :** Mr Speaker, thank you very much for giving me the opportunity but I would like to speak during the Motion for Adjournment because I have quite a different topic altogether.

**Mr Speaker :** All right thank you. Let us hear from Engineer Alu.

**Engineer Sam O. Alu (Afikpo) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, Nigerian Engineers and Contractors are very popular in this country. This Motion also tries to highlight that very important question. Is the expatriate contractor more efficient, more useful and less costly than the indigenous engineer and contractor? Now, this Motion also does not intend to victimise our foreign colleagues. But, I think what this Motion intends to do is to bring to the notice of Committee on Works what is going on in the contracting profession particularly the big ones like what my fellow engineers have already said.

My contribution is to ask this House to suspend the relevant order and add into this Motion some portions of the structures and road-ways that I feel are failing untimely in the light of the money invested by this country. I am sure in Italy and Germany where these companies come from, they cannot spend over a hundred million Naira on the bridge-work without guaranteeing it for twenty years, and also there must be proper research on the materials to be used.

If you look at the Eko Bridge which I am sure is not up to twenty years, you will find that the surface is already wearing off. You can see the naked structure or the steel part of it also wearing. I am sure it was not built properly. If the proper material was researched upon and used, it would not have worn out and would not be under repair at this time. Mr Speaker, I would, therefore, suggest to this House that the Committee on works should examine the cause on failure of some of these structures including the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway because a lot of money had been expended on them. When a bridge is being built across a Lagoon like the Eko Bridge, there is a lot of consideration in structural engineering. Material becomes of primary importance. The salt water that covers the whole of Lagos has a special effect on concrete work. You are not just going to order for any type of cement from Nkalagu to build a bridge across the Lagoon but you must order for a special quality cement, the best grade that can resist the corrosion of the salt water. So, some of these companies in order to make money do not give consideration to this very important fact.

[ENGINEER ALU]

So, Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I would like to appeal to this House to suspend some relevant portion of our Standing Orders in order to include certain aspects of the structural work which should be examined by the Committee.

Thank you.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Mr I. Mac-Eteli.

**Mr I. Mac-Eteli (Brass) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I think this Motion is quite straightforward. Though it is technical, it is straightforward in that we are to set up a Committee to look into the deterioration of the Ibadan-Lagos Expressway. When we came to this House in October there was cry about this road. Now the road has been repaired and it is bad again. That is the crux of the whole issue. We are now calling on this Committee to look into this matter and tell us why this is so.

Like the Engineers have described to us, we would like to know the details. Was there any feasibility survey? Were the correct materials used? Why is it bad at this time? Those are the issues. I do not think there is any need for us to debate much on it. I am, therefore, appealing to Mr Speaker and the hon. Members to commit this Motion to the appropriate Committee so that we can do something else. Thank you very much.

**Mr G. N. Ozugha (Anambra South) :** Mr Speaker, in supporting the Motion, I would like to point out that no Civil Engineer would quarrel with the geometrics of the Lagos-Ibadan Road. As far as I am concerned, the geometrics of that road comply with the Nigerian Highway Design Manual requirements. But, I am sure that what any Engineer would be disappointed about is the finish. The fact is that the road is suffering from what is called equipment distress due to poor finish.

I do not think this is the forum to go into engineering ramifications on this matter. So, I am still of the opinion that this particular matter should be referred to the Committee on Public Works to thrash out the relevant engineering details.

Mr Speaker, Sir, if you will allow Engineers to be talking on this very topic, we will turn this place into an Engineering School. So, Mr Speaker, in supporting this Motion, I would like it to be referred to the Committee on Public Works. Thank you very much.

**Mr M. C. Okoye (Njikoka) :** Mr Speaker Sir, in supporting this Motion I want to see if the Motion will include some other structures, to give the Committee the scope of working on some of the other structures as they deem necessary. Most of the rigid pavements which are designed should at least last for twenty-five years for a particular project but most of them are failing. The basis for adding some of the structures is to give the Committee wider scope of work. It is obvious to every person, irrespective of his profession, that the Expressway has failed. That is the point which the Committee is going to work upon. I am adding that other structures like the rigid pavements, the courses that have been erected everywhere in Lagos are really not necessary. There are places where flexible pavements should be constructed

but the Companies decided to construct rigid pavements which cost the country more. Flexible pavements are very easy to maintain.

Secondly, I should also like the Committee to include in the duties that they are going to carry out, that they should investigate why these Companies always have package-deals as hon. Member for Igbo-Ekiti (*Engineer Aka-Ogbobe*) has already specified. Package-deal contracts are never good contracts to be awarded more especially to foreign firms. Package-deals, to some of us, mean that the contractor becomes the designer, the one to carry out the job, and at the same time, the supervisor. This is what is called turn-key or all-in-all contract.

I would like the Committee to work and see why these projects cost more than the usual cost of the project when given to consultants and indigenous designers. Most of these jobs, when they are designed by foreign designers or foreign consultants *vis a vis* the indigenous designers and indigenous consultants. One would see that there is a disparity or gap in the price.

Finally, these contracts are given to those people who do not tender for them. They are just awarded the contract for their asking. One of the vital conditions why these foreign engineering firms are set up in the country is to help train Nigerians. But you will see that Nigerian Staff of these firms do not even get close to where the design and logistics are planned. I am craving the indulgence of the House to allow the Committee to get on this. Thank you.

**Mr G. N. Uwechue (Aniocha) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, distinguished hon. Members, I am not an Engineer, but I believe that those of us who are lawyers deal with clients who are engineers. I do not think that the fault is exclusively that of the contractors, or those who awarded the contracts of the Ibadan Expressway. I think the usage to which that road has been put has a good deal to do with it. Before the contract was awarded we had many roads in this country. Those of us who were going to Ibadan would either pass through Shagamu and straight to Ibadan or go through Ijebu-Ode to Ibadan, or through Abeokuta to Ibadan. Those of us who were going to the other States in the country like Bendel, Anambra, Imo, Rivers, Cross River, Benue, Plateau, and everywhere else pass through Lagos-Shagamu-Ijebu-Ode-Ore Road. Now, Ijebu-Ode-Ore Road has been closed. Everybody now has to do at least 60 kilometres extra to his journey. This is called circum-navigation because a man who is going to Ore has to go first to Ibadan, then to Ife, to Ondo, before he gets to Ore. I think that the Ibadan Expressway is carrying too much traffic.

**Several hon. Members :** No. !

**Mr Uwechue :** It is an Expressway, hon. Members. If a bridge is built and not used at all, that bridge may last for ever. If a road is designed and built well and not used it will also last for ever. But if a road is over-used, that road will not last.

(Interruptions)

Hon. Members, I am urging the Committee to look into the possibility of preparing the Shagamu-Ore Road so that people will not have to go through Ibadan to get to Bendel.

Several hon. Members : No ! No !

**Mr Uwechue :** There is no reason why they should not pay attention to the Shagamu—Ore road because this cuts my journey short by about 60 kilometre of what I have to do to get to my Constituency. Those who want to get to their Constituencies quickly and easily cannot get there now because Ibadan Expressway is being over-used. (Interruptions)

Hon. Members, I am sorry if I am getting emotional. The issue is a very serious one. It is because of the bad condition of these two roads that we all have to rush to the airport whenever we want to go back to our Constituencies. Those of us who are going to Bendel could easily have driven home if we had alternative routes. So, I am urging the Committee, while examining the issue of the Ibadan—Expressway to examine the possibility of doing a quick job on the Shagamu—Ore road as it was done in the damaged part of Ore—Benin road. Within two months Ore—Benin road was restored to a useable condition. If the Shagamu—Ore road is restored to a good condition, we can use that while the Ibadan—Expressway is being repaired.

Thank you Mr Speaker.

**Dr Gordon Idang (Etinan II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to support this particular Motion, but in doing so I would like the Committee on Public Works which would examine this particular case to regard it as a case-study. The Committee should clearly investigate this particular problem in all its ramifications.

I am speaking with the interest of the tax-payers of this country in my own heart. I think there is really no need talking about the causes of the deplorable condition of the Lagos/Ibadan Express Road without really thinking in terms of the conditions and the terms under which the major contracts for the construction of roads and bridges in this country had been awarded. I would like that particular Committee to look into this particular area. I should also talk in terms of the relative cost. If we are really thinking in terms of the materials used in constructing the roads, I think it is proper that we should look into the cost aspect in order to know whether the money allocated to that particular project was efficiently used by the contractors. We should also look into the terms under which the contracts were awarded.

My hon. Friend that first moved this Motion took pains to do what I consider to be a very good homework. He has provided us with the background information on this particular Motion. I do not think that we should regard what he said as being irrelevant to the matter. We have not come here to waste our time looking into minor details of why a road should more or less become bad after a few months of its construction. There are many issues involved. We should look into who awarded the contract, under what terms, at what price, *et cetera*. Without investigating these points, we would not be able to know exactly why this road should become bad just a few months after its completion.

I would also like to add that I regard this issue as a case-study. I would wish that the findings of the Committee on Public Works, with regard to this particular road, should also be applied to all other construction works in this country. Once we know the terms and we can find the defects and loop-holes somewhere, somehow, we should be able to use this to determine the awards of contracts to other construction companies in this country.

I would also like this particular Committee to look into the very important issue of why we should continue to use these expatriate Companies. I think we should really know if it is still necessary to use these expatriate engineers after so many years of our Independence and after so much tax-payers' money has been used to train engineers in this country. I find that there are quite a number of engineers in this House. Do they come to this House because they do not have construction work to keep them busy outside ? Or, is it because the expatriate engineers have taken over what they should be going ? Or, is it in the best interest of the tax-payers of this country that our engineers should turn law-makers ? I think these are some of the basic issues we should look into. Why should we need expatriate construction engineers at this particular time ? Is it a fact that our own engineers are very efficient in theories rather than in practice ? Can they not deliver the goods ? These are all the points that must be investigated. We would then use our findings to determine whether we should continue to patronise foreign engineering construction companies, or we should give opportunity to indigeneous construction companies.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I would like to support the Motion.

**Alhaji Sidi H. Ali (Dambatta) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, in supporting this Motion, I would like to call the attention of the Committee on Public Works to the fact that there was an investigation similar in nature to the matter under discussion which was set up in 1974, and which led to the removal of the then Director of the Federal Ministry of Works for awarding a contract of nine million naira to Julius Berger without authority. The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Works at that time, Mr Williams, was suspended but unfortunately he was later appointed a Commissioner by the last Administration.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, if we are to go into this case, we have to ask first for that report on which the Director was dismissed. The Permanent Secretary who claimed that he was not aware that such a contract was given, and possibly the then Federal Commissioner for Works, Alhaji Femi Okunnu, should be invited to testify on this matter before the Committee on Public Works.

Mr Speaker, the question of Julius Berger is a very serious issue in this country. There are two Julius Bergers, one is Julius Berger (Nigeria) Limited while the other is called Julius Berger International. The latter, Julius Berger International, is almost a secret society. It received a contract of ₦500 million unannounced, and without informing anybody. Mr Speaker, I think this is a very serious issue in terms of our economy. It is something we should

[ALHAJI ALI]

not throw away with a wave of the hand. Therefore, the Committee investigating this matter should invite some of us to come and testify with relevant documents in order to give the names of the people concerned. By so doing, the proper facts would be known.

What has taken place in respect of our bridges and roads, especially this Ibadan Expressway which cost us about ₦178 million, is very serious. I think if I am given three million naira I can build the same road! (*Interruptions*). This, I think, should not be allowed to be treated lightly because we owe this country the responsibility and the obligation to do everything possible to save the economy of the nation. We can never justify our election into this House if we go on ignoring certain issues just because we feel they are too hot to be touched.

Mr Speaker, Julius Berger has already built houses for some top people in Germany and other places. This is what I think the Committee should investigate. With these few remarks, I would like to sit down. Thank you.

**Alhaji Muhammed Mustapha (Ringim Gado)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion largely because this Ibadan Expressway has been described as the gate-way to the North, and at the end of this road at Ibadan, you will see it clearly marked—Ogbomosho to the North. Therefore, it stands to reason that we should describe it as a very important road.

I have particular interest that this road should be maintained, and that it should be of the highest standard as specified when the contract was first awarded to Julius Berger. I use this road very frequently. I agree with the Mover of this Motion that this road has fallen below the expectation of this country.

I support that the Committee should investigate both the engineering aspect which has been ably elucidated to this House by our engineering Colleagues, as well as the economics of it, that is to say, the cost of the contracts and the reasons for its rapid deterioration. This is a road which has been acclaimed as one of the best engineering designs by Julius Berger, Dumez, *et cetera*. We feel they should be thoroughly investigated in the light of what has been said in this House.

With this, Mr Speaker, I beg to support this Motion.

**Mr Funsho Akinyosoye (Ondo)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, it is my considered opinion that there is merit in this Motion and I equally believe that it is the consensus of the opinion of this honourable House that the problem that arose after the completion of Ibadan-Lagos Expressway had given concern to a large body of the members of the public. However, I believe that this is such a sensitive issue which I think this honourable House has to handle with care.

After I listened to the facts elucidated by the Mover of this Motion, it is my view that certain aspect of the points he ought to make were missing and I wish to draw the attention of this honourable

House to these points. In the first place, I wish to state that to the best of my knowledge, the contracts for Ibadan-Lagos Expressway were awarded to three major international Companies, namely, Julius Berger, Dumez and Strabag. The Contracts were awarded to these three major companies in sets, and subject to the opinion of other experts in this House or outside this House, it is my view that Ibadan-Lagos Expressway has very beautiful design which in my humble opinion meets world standard.

However, after the execution of these contracts, the major problem arose at the last thirty-five kilometres from Ibadan towards Lagos because of bad surfacing. Yesterday, I travelled on this road and quite apart from this fact I do not think one can see any major complaint about this road. In conclusion of this first point, I believe that this honourable House has a duty, when we speak here, to lead the public aright and be very mindful about the reputation of other innocent companies that are involved in a particular job.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the next point I want to make is this. I do share to some extent the opinion of my learned Friend and Colleague in this honourable House (*Mr George Uwechue*) that when people sign a contract with a Government as contractors and they complete their job and obtain certificate of completion, it is not going to be an easy thing, no matter whatever investigation we conduct in this honourable House, to call on these contractors either to disgorge or refund some of the money Government has already paid to them. This is possible if we can come forward with conclusive evidence that there are certain retained fees which these contractors have not obtained that we can lay our hands on.

The third point I want to make Mr Speaker, Sir, is that in this country we are still faced with a very major problem. As I stated earlier that I travelled on this road yesterday. I did travel on this road very often, especially in pursuit of my professional duties before I came to this House. Mr Speaker, Sir, the Nigerian public in general, are still to blame for certain aspects of these finished contracts. Anyone who has travelled widely abroad would know the way the members of the public should use Express ways. When this road was completed the Federal Ministry of Works put out serious and strong warnings that properties should not be allowed to be developed along the sides of this road, but if anyone drives through this road now, he will see that various commercial factories and residences have been built there with the result that some of the access roads which are not supposed to be used by public transport are now being used and they are passing from one side of the road to the other. This is another aspect which I believe the Investigating Committee should go into with care and caution.

Mr Speaker, Sir, as I stated earlier, there is merit in this Motion and I support it. I believe that we should approach this issue with every sense of responsibility and conduct the investigation with a very neat mind and with clarity. Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr Gbadebo Adeyemi Adewumi** (Oshogbo) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I am whole-heartedly in support of this Motion because it is a Motion that touches every home in Nigeria. But I want to quote and I want us to examine ourselves because when we are speaking in this House we are speaking for and on behalf of the whole nation. It was Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe who said about twenty years ago that : *Men are born critics and things would go on well with the world if criticisms are constructive. Destructive criticism, he said, deter progress and lead to chaos.* And Shakespeare also says : *The fault is not in us but in our stars that we are born underlings.*

Let us examine the curriculum vitae of Julius Berger for what it is. From what is known about Julius Berger, it has never performed any job successfully in Europe. That was the curriculum vitae of Julius Berger and this is a Company that Nigeria, having seen all this, still accepts and quotes as one of the major International Contractors (Bridge Builders). This is why I am saying that we should examine ourselves. Our Engineers would believe, and they do believe (why they are here is a different thing because they ought to be in the fields) that the duty of a Consultant (and in this respect, the Consultant I would say is the Ministry of Works) is to supervise and examine the materials being used as prescribed in the Bills of Quantities. We ought to search our minds. Is our Ministry of Works (by that I mean the people there) doing its jobs ?

**Some hon. Members** : No!

**Mr Speaker** : There is a point of Order.

**Mr Aka Ogbobe** (Igbo-Etiti) : The Consultants are not in the Ministry of Works. The Consultants are Scot Wilson, Kirk Patrick and Partners, not the Ministry of Works.

**Mr G. A. Adewumi** (Oshogbo South) : All right, thank you very much. In any case what we are talking about is the quality of the job. I shall quote, again, Nnamdi Azikiwe Street in Lagos. That street today is guaranteed for 20 years. Somebody was referring to the volume or quantity of vehicles plying over the Expressway. Well, what about Nnamdi Azikiwe Street here ? Millions of cars ply that street every day and yet it is good because of the guarantee of 20 years. Another road is the Marina. Marina has been there since I was born. It is because of the quality of the job. I do not want to convince anyone here that millions of cars do ply Marina everyday, yet Marina is still solid.

Mr Speaker, Sir, what is wrong is ourselves, our own patriotism, because of ten per cent—(Interruptions). Because of ten per cent we allow this country to be sold to foreigners. Please, it is our duty as legislators, in whatever venture we take to re-examine ourselves and apply a sort of patriotism to whatever we do. Whether the road is in Anambra State or Imo State, whether it is in Katsina or Borno States, whether it is in Oyo or Ondo States, it is my own road as a Nigerian. (Applause) Until you and I and the public realise the value of patriotism we shall get nowhere. It is not a question of witch-hunting. It is a question of bringing these firms, (we have it in our Constitution) to come and

face our engineers here and tell us what quality of materials they have used as contained in their Bills of Quantities that will make a road which is under 20 months become so wretched. I plied that road only yesterday and on every part of that road, no kilometre is without a fault. So I support this Motion and I support that these people should be brought both to this honourable House and the Senate and be asked questions.

**Mr Speaker** : Thank you.

**Mr D. Niyi Adelu** (Ibadan East) : Mr Speaker, I rise to support this Motion but I wish to bring to the notice of the House another aspect of the bad design of the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway. The Designers and in fact the Nigerian Supervisors or those who gave out the job had definitely ensured that the free movement of Nigerians on both sides of the Expressway is hamstrung. On both sides of the Expressway from Lagos to Ibadan, most especially in Ibadan Municipality, there are no service roads and this is very important, Mr Speaker. The design actually showed that service roads should exist on both sides of the Expressway but as the job went on the Engineers refused to build the service roads.

In 1977 I led a delegation of Community Leaders to Strabag office in Ibadan and I was told point blank that the Federal Ministry of Works had finally refused to build service roads on both sides of the Expressway. This is a very serious matter, Mr Speaker.

The non-inclusion of the service roads on both sides of the Expressway has led to the death of thousands of Nigerian citizens living in Ibadan. For instance the usual roads have already been taken over by the Expressway and the movements of people have been curtailed. When people want to use any unauthorised roads to get on to the Expressway, the usual thing is death.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I hope the Committee that will eventually go into these details with examine the non-inclusion of the service roads. I would press very fervently for the eventual building of service roads on both sides of the Express Roads. Thank you.

**Mr O. Ijaola** (Lagos North-East) : Mr Speaker, I rise to support the Motion and also to agree that it be sent to a Committee, but I want to streamline some of the meandering speeches of Members hereto made.

The Mover of the Motion gave us a background of Julius Berger, but he refused to give us that of Strabag and that of Dumez. Apart from that, he gave us a lot of facts about Julius Berger but he failed to tell us what portion of the road was built by Julius Berger, what portion of it was by Strabag and what portion of it was by Dumez. Later we now found out, as some people were saying, that the Ibadan end of the road is bad ; some were saying the middle of the road is bad and some were saying the whole length of the road. So, Mr Speaker, I want us to give details of what we really expect from the Works Committee.

MR IJAOLA

If you would allow me, Sir, I would like to suggest that since we are now talking about the finishing of the contract, they should let us know this. During the Motion for Adjournment some time ago I had stressed on the Floor of this House to know who and who were the Engineers who signed the job completion certificate. I think that is very essential. What and what were the facts behind the signing of that certificate of completion? During the signing of the completion certificate was there anything in the coffers of Government like retention fee which is normal on all contracts and for what period is that retention fee claimable by the contractors? With these, we would be able to see whether the retention fee could still be used as a guarantee for the good job or it might not be paid until the work is efficiently done.

Another point is the one some of our Engineers have raised. Why foreign contractors? As much as I would agree with them, I would like to mention this here that the Lagos/Abeokuta Road was given to Nigerian Contractors and as far as I know, up till today, that road is not even half-way done.

If we as Nigerians want to talk seriously about giving jobs to Nigerians who are our fellow men, equally we must also talk of efficiency, not only to talk of giving jobs to Nigerians because foreigners come in to dupe us. (*Applause*) If we go again to give jobs to Nigerian contractors, I think it will be worse.

Another point I want to raise is that there are some—(*Interruptions*). Your protection, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order ! Order !

**Mr Ijaola :** Some names have been mentioned which I think is a question of prejudging the case. We do not want to say here that it was the former Commissioner for Works or the former Permanent Secretary or the former Director of Works who was responsible. Since we are still going to find out, the Committee has the right to call on anybody to come to testify as to what he knows about the contracts. But I think before that time, we should not prejudice the issue.

Apart from this, Mr Speaker, I would like us to see that the Committee calls on financial consultants. The man who is the co-Mover of the Motion did speak of Bills of Quantities and I think it is very pertinent because in the Bills of Quantities, materials and job values are given. If these have not been properly used, the financial consultants would definitely see what amounts were used *vis-a-vis* what ought not to have been used.

With these few comments, Mr Speaker, I support the Motion to be passed to the Committee on Works.

(*The hon. Member for Tangale-Waja South, (Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo) stood up*)

**Mr Speaker :** The hon. Member for Tangale-Waja South (*Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo*), just one minute. He said there is a very important point.

**Mr Aremu B. Yahaya :** (Ilorin East) : I just want to ask whether we should consider co-opting engineers who are Members of this honourable House into that Committee.

**Mr Speaker :** No, leave it to the Committee. Yes, the Leader of the House.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, may I now ask that the Question be put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question, accordingly put and agreed to.*

**Resolved :** That this honourable House notes with regret, the deteriorating condition of the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway and calls on the Committee on Public Works to investigate the cause or causes of this deplorable situation just within a few months of the Expressway being opened for public use.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, I will seize this opportunity to announce again that Party Leaders and their Whips will meet in my office immediately after this sitting to discuss two very important matters. Yes, the Motion for Adjournment.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Alhaji Kaltungo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that this sitting stands adjourned till tomorrow morning at 10 O'clock.

**Mr Dagogo Princewill** (Degema I) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** The hon. Member for Ankpa South (*Alhaji Abubakar D. O. Abutu*) to speak.

**Alhaji Abubakar D. O. Abutu** (Ankpa South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, first of all, I have to thank the Speaker and the entire Members of this honourable House for a job well done. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** The hon. Member for Ankpa South (*Alhaji Abubakar D. O. Abutu*) just a minute.

Please hon. Members, I have said before that it does not speak well of this honourable House for the Chamber to be empty whenever we start the Motion for Adjournment. I have said it several times, but hon. Members can go out on very pressing issues.

#### Missing Money

**Alhaji Abutu :** While I am thanking the hon. Members, I want to say something. Before we went on the first recess, if you remember, we passed two Motions here, one on the extension of currency deadline and the second one was asking the Police to let us know of their investigation on certain amounts that were missing. For your brilliant job, participation and the love you have for this country, you have read in the newspapers of the disclosure of millions and billions of Naira that have now gone somewhere.

Therefore, I would like to appeal to hon. Members that we have accountants, engineers and people of all types of professions and endeavours that can make Nigeria great in this honourable House. We all should go into investigations by helping the Interpol and the Nigerian Police to disclose more about our missing money through the Central Bank and the Commercial Banks. More than ₦100 billion has gone in the past five years into wrong hands. Therefore, it is a serious

[ALHAJI ABUTU]

matter. We talk of qualitative education, we talk of free education, we talk of free medical education, we talk of all these things and all these cost money. (Interruptions)

Several hon. Members : Fire ! Fire !

Alhaji Abutu : We talk of agricultural green revolution. (Interruptions)

Mr Speaker : Order ! Order !

Alhaji Abutu : Now, for these things, where do we get the money ? Our oil boom is being taken away by crooks and careerists. Therefore, it is a serious matter. I am calling on the Committee on Banking and Currency to speed up their job and invite more people to give evidence on this issue. You can invite anybody in this country, even our Speaker, if you know he can help you, or the President of the Senate! If there is anybody you know who can help you to get the disclosures, please invite him because our money has gone so much into wrong hands. Thank you very much.

#### Assembly of an Aeroplane

Mr Olaiya Fagbamigbe (Akure) : Mr Speaker, Sir, on Motion for Adjournment, I want to call the attention of the Members of this honourable House to the achievements of a fellow citizen by name Mallam Mustapha Mohammed of Maiduguri in Borno State. This Nigerian, a barber by profession, somebody who cuts and dresses hair, has assembled an aeroplane that has the potentialities of taking off. (Interruptions)

I can see that some hon. Members may like to speak in under-tone that the aeroplane has not been able to take off, but what I am inviting the attention of hon. Members to take note of is the effort which this citizen has put forward. (Applause). This effort is worthy of the notice and the commendation of this honourable House. I want you to bear in mind that the technological achievements which formed the prototype of all what we are enjoying today were the results of the efforts of mere illiterate men of genius. The Wright Brothers who invented the prototype of the modern aeroplane some seventy years' ago were mere illiterates. They had no college or university education and nobody ever heard that they attended any Aeronautical School and yet they gave us what we know today as aeroplanes, and we are all beneficiaries of the effort which they made.

I therefore, request that this honourable House should take note of the effort of this great citizen and the Federal Government should give him maximum encouragement. This encouragement should take the form of protection from dubious experts who exist only to discourage the good efforts which the country can benefit from. There are so many experts in this country who are out to frustrate the efforts of people with talents. They are arm-chair politicians who can only criticise what others do. One would have been happier if their criticisms were constructive ones, but they are only out to discourage. So, the Committee on Civil Aviation should invite this citizen and try to interrogate him, find out from him the extent of his knowledge.

There is a lot to gain from well-guided intuition. Many of the achievements of today came, from mere intuitions. So, the Federal Government should in addition to protecting citizen Mustapha Mohammed from experts, give him encouragement. Instead of saying that his aeroplane cannot fly, this citizen should be encouraged to tour some Civil Aviation installations in other parts of the world. He should be given facilities to study what is happening in some countries that have advanced in their aeroplane technology. He should be given time to travel and then come back to re-examine or re-appraise his achievements. I commend this citizen to the notice and attention of this honourable House. I suggest that the Committee on Civil Aviation should give him all the help and assistance that he deserves. Thank you very much.

#### Letter of Appreciation to the President

Mr K. R. Obioha (Ideato) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of this House, last Thursday the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Alhaji Shehu Shagari invited us to a cocktail party. I think it is pertinent for the hon. Members of this House to use the office of the Speaker to convey our appreciation for the invitation and also to give thanks. We shall also use the opportunity to inform the President that we appreciated that gesture and request that such meetings, not necessarily on a cocktail basis, should be held in order to get more together. I noticed that on Thursday evening there was not much acrimony amongst us ; rather there was harmony and all that. I think in an atmosphere like that, the tension in this House may be reduced from time to time.

#### Erosion Problem in Eastern States

I would also use this Motion for Adjournment to pin-point a very minor item that is a little bit parochial because it concerns my local Government Area. It is the question of the erosion threat. It has actually become a disaster situation now in Ideato. Over 25,000 people have been displaced. The reason why I do not bring this in form of Motion is because I believe it is parochial. Since I can raise this point during this Motion for Adjournment, I wish that the people who are in-charge, who have given so much fund for fighting desert encroachment, could do something about the erosion problem in the Eastern provinces of Nigeria.

Mr Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity

#### The Plight of the People of the Abak Local Government Area

Mr A. Ukpanah (Ukanafun II) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I want to use this opportunity of the Motion for Adjournment to bring to the notice of the Ministries of Works and Defence through the hon. Mr Speaker over the plight of some citizens of this country. The return to barracks of the Military men has caused a great hardship to certain communities where barracks have been built



[MR UKPANAH]

In Abak Local Government Area up to five villages covering nearly 700 hectares of land have been evacuated. These barracks have been completely built up within the last two years but no compensation has been paid to the inhabitants of these five villages. These people have got to find alternative accommodation for themselves, and worst still, this is the planting season in the Cross River State as it is in other parts of Nigeria. These people have not even had an alternative land, neither have they been paid any compensation in form of money. They have not been paid at all. Three weeks' ago, the General Officer Commanding the 3rd Infantry Division met the Governor of the Cross River State, Dr Isong in Calabar. The Governor also raised this issue but from reports reaching us, it does not even appear that the General Officer Commanding the 3rd Infantry Division under whose command these barracks have been built has known anything about the payment. He only asked the Governor to refer the matter to the Ministry of Defence.

I take this opportunity, Sir, to call on the Ministry of Defence to settle payments without any further delay. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

#### Non-display of the President's Portrait

**Mr A. Gapsuk** (Shendam East): Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to speak on this Motion for Adjournment. It is the issue which concerns the general security of this country that I would like to speak upon. It is situation that calls for the immediate attention of this honourable House and requires a substantive Motion.

This morning my hon. Colleague, the hon. Member for Degema I (*Mr Dagogo Princewill*) touched upon the issue of UPN controlled States refusing to display the Portrait of the President. It is also clear that very recently the Governor of Bendel State had the audacity to invite Chief Awolowo to go and address the State House of Assembly.

**Mr Speaker**: Hold on. There is a point of order.

**Dr E. J. Sowho** (Ethiopia North): Mr Speaker, Sir, I refer to Order 28 (2). The hon. Member for Ekiti West (*Prof. O. Ola*) is disturbing.

**Mr Gapsuk**: We should avoid any situation that will invite chaos and bad feeling in this country. I do not know in what capacity Chief Awolowo was invited to address the Bendel State House of Assembly. Consequently there was a walk-out by minority members. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker**: Order! Order!

**Mr Gapsuk**: I would also like to crave the indulgence of my UPN Colleagues to say that we are all together in the struggle for the stability of this country. It is therefore necessary that the caucus of your parliamentary council should discuss and make suggestions to your leaders.

I would like to point out that there is another very serious situation that is inviting chaos in Bornu State. The Governor of Bornu State who is Alhaji Goni has been complaining bitterly on the newspapers

and television about the sabotage of some people who lost election in the State where he won. I want to tell the UPN leaders that we too in the NPN are leaders of peace. (*Interruptions*).

It is clear from my investigation that a gentleman in Bornu is responsible for the confusion in Bornu State. Therefore we are going gradually into a situation whereby a person who is expected to keep peace will instigate others to disobey. I think this is very bad. Mr Speaker, Sir, I would very much want to but I do not want to disclose names because if the UPN will refuse to display the portrait of the President, they can as well sponsor one gentleman in Bornu State to sabotage the efforts of Governor Goni in the administration of Bornu. This is sad because we are all representing the Federation and must not take sides in any of these things. Please let us take note.

#### Investigation into the delay in Paying Government Contractors

**Mr Inua Ali** (Jos North): I want to draw the attention of the House Committee on Works to which we assigned last week to investigate the delay of payment to some contractors not to restrict their investigation into the contracts awarded by the Ministry of Works alone. But they should extend their investigations into other Ministries because it is not only the Ministry of Works that awards contracts. There are Ministries like Defence, Communications, Education and so on that award contracts. All of these Ministries award very heavy contracts and there are a lot of dubious dealings within these Ministries which I want the Works Committee to continue to investigate. Therefore, Mr Speaker, Sir, I am appealing to the Works Committee to extend their investigation into these Ministries.

#### Senate/House relationship

**Dr Junaidu Muhammed** (West Ward): Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to address the House on only two points. One point is the question of the relationship between this honourable House and the Senate in view of two episodes. The first episode had to do with the Motion passed on the Floor of this House extending the old Currency Notes period to a certain date which was later passed by the Senate, but had to be dropped by the Leader of the Senate. Mr Speaker, Sir, I would not have mentioned this very episode because we dealt with it at length if you can remember in your Chambers. I would not like to disclose details here but I am forced to refer to it in view of the utterances of the Leader of the Senate to a national newspaper last week. Again it has to do with a Motion passed on the Floor of this House which was not referred to the Senate but which the Leader of the Senate felt he could comment upon.

Now, I know that every citizen has the right to comment on a Motion passed in this House but when a Member of the other Chamber takes it upon himself to ridicule this House for passing a Motion which judging from the evidence before and after passing the Motion, was both correct,

I think it calls for grave concern. It needs to be clearly stated through the Leader of this House and the Speaker to the hon. Senators and indeed their Leader in the Senate, that these two Chambers have equal, I mean absolutely equal constitutional legislative powers. The Leader of the Senate is not the Leader of the House of Representatives and if the NTV insist on referring to this House as the Lower House, they should be told in clear terms that they are living in the hangover of the former Parliamentary System. We are not the Lower House.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I think it was most improper for the Leader of the Senate to go and have a chat with the Managing Director of the NNPC at the very time when a Motion on the NNPC was being discussed on the Floor of this House and after the Motion was passed to summon one newspaper and give an exclusive interview saying that in his own view an investigation into the affairs of the NNPC would be against the national interest. Of course, cleverly enough, Dr Saraki did not bother to define what he meant by national interest and whose national interest would be jeopardised.

Mr Speaker, Sir, you remember on that day I insisted on calling the attention of this House to the enormous intrigues which we were up against by saying that we were going to investigate the NNPC and I was proved right. Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to lay before you that it must be made clear to our distinguished Senator and their Leaders that this House will not tolerate interference from the Senate, this House will not tolerate the kind of the outbursts and high-handed way of dealing with issues which we have heard from the Leader of the Senate. The Leader of the House has spoken to him and I have also spoken to him but I do not think that is enough. I think it should be made absolutely clear (even if it should be in writing) in no uncertain terms that this House would not tolerate this kind of interference.

#### Non-display of the President's Portrait

The second topic I would like to raise has already been raised by two distinguished Members of this House. One was Mr Princewill and the other one, was Mr Gapsuk. It has to do with the display of the portrait of the President. It is unfortunate, Sir, that certain State Governments have decided to simply look the other way in matters of this nature. I do not belong to the Party of the President. In fact, I am in politics precisely to see that he does not become the President again and I fought to see that he did not become the President. But the fact of the matter is this, Mr Speaker, Sir, whether I like it or not, whether my Colleagues in the UPN controlled States like it or not, this man is the President today and we must give him his constitutional rights. (Applause) We are not talking of an individual ; we are talking of an institution and we are the pioneers in building this new Institution. I think it is an act of outrage for three or four States in this country to blatantly and flagrantly refuse to accord and to recognise what is obvious both constitutionally and otherwise. I think this is shameful and I think

this House should register with these States our utmost displeasure at this naked and irresponsible behaviour. Thank you. (Applause)

#### Equal Powers of the Houses

Mr Speaker : Hon. Members, I would seize this opportunity to say that this House and the Senate form the National Assembly, that this House is equal to the Senate in all Constitutional aspects, and that in no way should Members of the Press or any media refer to this House as the Lower House and the other House as the Upper House. That terminology was only applicable in the Parliamentary System of Government. So this House has co-ordinate and equal powers legislatively speaking with the Senate and there will be no question of one House, in all respects, being superior to the other. (Applause)

#### African Cup of Nations Cup

Mr F. C. Adigwe (Awka) : Hon. Members, please, let us talk sports. Let us deviate slightly from controversial issues.

Brothers and Sisters, you will agree with me that this year, 1980, is a very big year for this country. In two months' time, Nigeria will be hosting the Cup of Nations Competitions, that is, Nigeria will be hosting a Football tournament for the whole of Africa. Up till this time it is ridiculous that such a tournament is not yet made known in this country. We only hear about this tournament in the newspapers without much interest.

Take for instance, there was a promotional programme to raise funds for this very tournament and up till this time no single individual or company or group of individuals have been able to donate towards this very sporting activity. Well I am not calling on Members to donate ; however in all civilised countries, it is the duty of the commercial institutions to help to promote sports especially when the country is hosting it. It is ridiculous that a company like the UAC cannot help the Ministry of Sports and Culture on this very issue. You have to realise that to be a big nation—

Mr Speaker : Round up.

Mr Adigwe : Mr Speaker, give me chance because this concerns the integrity of this country. (Interruptions) Please, I would like the Committee on Sports and Culture to get in touch with the Ministry of Sports, Youth and Culture to at least stimulate their interest. It is very important. Up-till this time not even the President has seen our Football Team, the Green Eagles. These chaps have been to Brazil but we do not even know of their activities and the extent to which they have practised. Indeed, in two months' time, we are expecting other African teams in Lagos and Ibadan. We do not know about this very event. I feel strongly that the President should do his utmost best to involve this nation and involve the generality of the people in this task.

[MR. ADIGWE]  
 I will once more remind this honourable House that this year is the year of Olympics in Moscow and up-till this time, we are not doing anything about this very issue. It is the duty of the Committee responsible to make sure that things are put right because we cannot say that we are the leaders of Africa while smaller nations with a population of about five to ten million would come here and beat us on our own soil. Yet we claim to be the leader of Africa. If we should be the leader of Africa, we should be in all respects. What makes Nigeria great today, you will agree with me, is purely oil which accounts for 90 per cent of our economy and 10 per cent—

**Mr Speaker :** It is time !

Yes, Alhaji Kaltungo put the question.

**Alhaji Yunsusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) :**  
 Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That this House do now adjourn till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 12.25 p.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Tuesday, 22nd January, 1980

The house met at 10.10 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Votes and Proceedings

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members I have seen the Votes and Proceedings of yesterday which I have approved.

I understand that the air-conditioners are being serviced. That is why the doors are left open and as soon as they finish, we will have a comfortable stay.

Misconduct of an hon. Member

Hon. Members, we have dealt with the case of a Member who mis-conducted himself the day we had a party with the Head of State. That matter had been handled by the Party Leaders and the hon. Member in question was called in to explain his conduct. He sincerely apologised for what he believed was a conduct which he could not himself control. He sincerely apologised and assured us that there would never be a repeat performance. So, we have warned him very sternly that that type of conduct must not be repeated in future and that if by any means we receive a report of any mis-conduct on his part which is derogatory to the dignity of this House, that this House is definitely going to resolve and deal with him in a manner that is appropriate to that type of misbehaviour. I have also been mandated to meet the Head of State and apologise on the hon. Member's behalf. So, the matter has now been closed.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Admission of Students into Federal  
Institutions

**Mr Speaker :** We have two Motions on the Order Paper for today. The first deals with the admission of students into the Federal Institutions. The Motion stands in the name of hon. Member for Bida North. (Alhaji M. B. Mustapha)

Yes, Alhaji Mustapha.

**Alhaji M. B. Mustapha (Bida North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move the Motion standing in my name—

That this Honourable House views with great concern, the failure of Federal Government's 'Students' Admission exercises into the various Federal Institutions (i) to reflect the 'Federal character';

(ii) to bridge the educational gap among the States and between the various ethnic groups;

(iii) generally to reflect the needs of the country, and therefore directs the House Standing Committee on Education to investigate and submit within 30 days the admissions policy suitable for promoting the unity and stability of this great nation.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker :** Anybody to second the Motion? Yes, Mr Giadom.

**Mr Kemte Giadom (Bori II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

**Alhaji Mustapha :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, briefly before I continue, I would like to appeal to Members to have an open mind on this Motion. There is no motive behind this Motion. It is not against any individual or any tribe or a collection of our people. Its intention is in search of what can promote the unity and stability of this country. So, I would like all of you to give humanitarian consideration to this Motion.

Now, Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, educationally in terms of siting institutions throughout the Federation, I think no area in this Federation is at a disadvantage. The problem facing the nation is of a sort of discriminatory approach to admission of students throughout the Federation.

I would start with post-primary Colleges. In each State today, Mr Speaker, there is a Federal Government College either Girls' College or Boys' College, and the handling of admission of students to those Colleges by the Federal Ministry of Education is deplorable. Then in each State you stand the chance of having either one or two Schools of Basic Studies with the admission of students into these institutions similarly not in order. You have Advanced Teachers' Colleges geographically located throughout the Federation. If you study the manner in which the admission of students is being handled into all these institutions, you would not be satisfied.

The Federal Government Polytechnics are geographically located throughout the Federation, and still yet the admission of students there does not reflect the Federal character. The Universities are similarly geographically located and spread as far as possible and today the concern of this nation, that is, unity and stability, is being threatened by admission exercises.

Now, Mr Speaker, hon. Members, you would soon sympathise with the students concerned through no fault of theirs. When a student is seeking for admission he has to mobilise all resources within his reach to get admission into institutions. But the authorities concerned ought to know or to take into consideration the promotion of unity since these institutions are Federal-controlled. Mr Speaker, today there is a great imbalance in the admission of students into the Federal institutions. Institutions owned and controlled by the States appear more accommodating to students in various parts of the Federation.

[ALHAJI MUSTAPHA]

As I said, this matter is going before the Committee on Education which will give every Member an opportunity to contribute his quota towards establishing admission formula which will be acceptable throughout the Federation. The idea of no qualified candidates ought to be ruled out. If any area or town is given any institution today, (we are educationally advanced) it can provide the students to fill it. The Committee on Education should be able to summon University representatives, JAMB and all the Rectors or officials of higher institutions in search of suitable methods so as to solve the imbalance in the admission of our students. This is very serious, Mr Speaker, and I must warn that the stability, and unity of this country rest on education.

Educational imbalance generally is one of the serious obstacles to unity and stability. To this end, I would expect, and I hope that we shall team up and come up with ideas acceptable to all Nigerians. In other words, I would like to see the Committee come out, after a vigorous study of the matter, with the information that not less than fifty per cent of the students should come from the geographical catchment-area where the institution is located, and the remaining fifty per cent could be distributed among all the remaining States in the Federation. Mr Speaker, Sir, each area has got its own Federal Institution, and if this is done you will see that students will be equally admitted from all the States throughout the Federation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, another important thing is that the obstacles to educational imbalance in terms of admission is not something that we can just laugh at. It is so serious that the unity of this country rests on this admission exercise. (Interruptions)

Mr Speaker : Order ! Order !

Alhaji Mustapha : Mr Speaker, Sir, this is not something to make noise about. Take for example, Mr Speaker, a School of Basic Studies was established in my own State, and attached to the University of Ife. The University cannot admit at least five per cent of the students passing out of the School of Basic Studies. Mr Speaker, Sir, while I believe that we should have additional Universities I do not believe that each State should have its own University. The problem is that we have no alternative, and we are pushed to the wall. If you are pushed to the wall, the only way open to you is to seek to establish a University of your own but this is going to have an adverse effect on the quality of education. The removal of admission exercise from JAMB, and giving each University power to admit its own students under the guidelines of the Federal Ministry of Education will be the most acceptable method of admission exercise.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have gone round most higher institutions to collect useful information which I would present to the Committee purely in good faith. Mr Speaker, Sir, I also had a chat with some of the dominant students in some of the Institutions, and they agreed that their number is not justifiable. This is not their fault.

In order to allow other Members to contribute, I must warn that if there is no change in the admission exercise, I would do everything possible and I would go to the extent—

An hon. Member : To cause war ?

Mr Speaker : Hon. Member, you are going too far. You will not do everything possible, but everything lawful.

Alhaji Mustapha : I will do everything possible to see that the Motion is successful in the interest of peace, stability and progress.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

Mr Nuhu Poloma (Tangale-Waja North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion.

In supporting the Motion, I will have to say here that the admission policy of Federal Government into higher institutions of learning in this country is a serious issue. A lot of controversies had taken place from one State to the other with respect to admission into various Higher Institutions of learning. Recently we had a very serious situation in Bauchi State. A Federal Government Polytechnic was established in Bauchi and last year there was an admission of about 500 students, out of which the ten Northern States had only 26 students.

Several hon. Members : Why ?

Mr Nuhu Poloma : Hon. Members, the situation was so serious that we decided not to keep quiet. We took the matter up very seriously going up and down, writing articles in the papers with students of various institutions of learning in Bauchi State carrying placards all over the street, and wanting to mob the Principal but we had to come to his rescue. Another admission exercise took place and the ten Northern States were able to get 100. But for the fighting of the common men and the students, we would never have got this.

Another serious situation is right now in Kaduna State. There is a Federal Advanced Teachers' College in Dutsema in Kaduna. Last year only two candidates were admitted from Kaduna State. Hon. Members, what happened was that the Principal of this College is a non-indigene of that area. What he succeeded in doing was to establish a College of his own and was using it as a conduit pipe to bring students into this Advanced Teachers' College. Right now this matter has gone before the State House of Assembly, and I am afraid that Principal might be removed.

Hon. Members, another case in mind is the serious situation in Keffi School for Basic Studies. We all know Keffi that it has been the best for education for many centuries now. Benue State established a School for Basic Studies and allied it to Nsukka University. What happened? For two years running now, not a single student from that school was admitted into Nsukka University. (Interruptions)

Hon. Members, I am now wondering how we are going to bridge the educational gap in this country. If we say we are going to have free education at all levels, what will happen? Are we going to close down the colleges in the UPN-controlled States at the expense of all the other States? If that is the case, then we have not yet got any solution. If we have 400 colleges in the Western States and 20 colleges in the Northern States, and we give all the students in these colleges free education, then we have not done anything. (Interruptions)

So, hon. Members, what we are saying here is that if a college is established in one of the Northern States, let us encourage the students of that area to gain admission into that college at a higher percentage. If the college is established in Ogun State, we should encourage the students of Ogun State to gain admission into that college at a higher capacity. It is then that we shall be getting somewhere. I do not believe in the idea of having a polytechnic in Ibadan and filling it with candidates from that area; then having the same college in Bauchi and filling it with candidates from Ibadan area; also having the same college in Bida and filling it with—*(Interruptions)*.

We have always said that all activities of the nation are to be done taking into consideration the federal character of Nigeria. Now, if the federal character of Nigeria means 90 per cent admission of Ibadan people into a polytechnic in Ibadan, and another polytechnic in Bauchi filled with 90 per cent admission of Ibadan people, and yet another polytechnic in Warri also filled with 90 per cent admission of people then, I can understand what federal character that is.

Hon. Members, with these few remarks I beg to really support this Motion and say that this Committee does a justifiable work.

Thank you very much.

**Alhaji M. G. Shamaki** (Katagun) : Mr Speaker, Sir, this Motion has brought something which is of great importance to all the States in the Federation. In fact, my Colleague, hon. Nuhu Poloma, has touched on a little bit of what happened in Bauchi State during the 1979-80 admission exercise into the Federal Polytechnic there. In reality, I have got the facts and figures of what took place during that exercise.

In the *Nigerian Standard* newspaper of Tuesday, 6th November 1979, pages 12 and 13 therein were published the figures of the students who were admitted into the Polytechnic during that admission exercise. Candidates from the ten Northern States were given only 23 admissions; Anambra and Imo were given 114 admissions : *(Interruptions)*

**Mr Speaker** : Order! Order! There is a point of explanation.

**Mr David Okwoche Agi** (Oju) : Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of explanation is to the effect that our UPN Members here should be reminded that this House does not belong to them alone. *(Interruptions)* I would like our UPN Colleagues on the other Side of the House to realise that in a Presidential System of Government, we do not have Opposition. Therefore, our UPN Members of this House should not be behaving as Members of Opposition in this House. Thank you, Sir.

**Mr M. G. Shamaki** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, Cross River and Rivers States were given 58 places. Oyo, Ogun—

**An hon. Member** : Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, there is a point of Order

**Mr Ogwe Kalu Ogwe** (Bende) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, my point of Order is based on Order 13, Rule 10, and if you permit me, Sir, I will read it.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes.

**Mr O. K. Ogwe** : A Member must make himself responsible for any facts stated in his question. It is out of Order to base a question on a newspaper report. *(Applause)*

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Member for Katagun (*Mr M. G. Shamaki*) please go on.

**Mr M. G. Shamaki** : Mr Speaker, Sir, thank you very much indeed for protecting me. With reference to the hon. Member who has just spoken, if he wants to find more information, he may come directly and I can give him—

**Several hon. Members** : Go on.

**Mr M. G. Shamaki** : Thank you Mr Speaker and hon. Members, Oyo, Ogun, Lagos and Bendel States were given 107 places. *(Interruptions)*

**Mr Speaker** : Order! Order! Please allow the hon. Member for Katagun (*Mr M. G. Shamaki*) to go on.

**Mr M. G. Shamaki** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members the actual number of students admitted during that exercise was 302 throughout the Federation and afterwards there was a complaint especially from the Bauchi State students' Union. After the complaint had been lodged all over, then there was a sort of compromise between the Ministry of Education and the Bauchi State Government and 100 students were admitted into a sort of introductory course.

Mr Speaker, Sir, this is the sort of thing which is happening throughout the Federation.

On the other hand, most of these Principals when they are just being appointed as Principals, go and admit only the students from their States in particular. If we are ready to share the national cake, if any Federal Institution is being built in any part of the country, let the indigene of that State be the Principal. It is not only the students that matter. Let us talk about the staff and the other people who are working in the institution. Only one night watchman was taken as a member of staff from all the ten Northern States. All the staff, including the driver were from somewhere else.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these few comments I beg to support the Motion. Thank you very much.

**Alhaji Abubakar Abutu** (Ankpa South) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, before I comment on this important issue I want to make a passionate appeal through the Speaker to all hon. Members. At the Public Gallery students are looking at us. I said yesterday in this House—

**An hon. Member** : Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order against the hon. Member for Anka South. (*Alhaji A. Abutu*).

**Prince A. U. Awa-Ekpo (Eket II) :** Mr Speaker, my point of Order is 26 (2). I think the hon. Member is resorting to irrelevancy.

**Mr Speaker :** He has not even said anything.

**Alhaji Abutu :** Mr Speaker, thank you for protecting me.

**Mr Speaker :** Let us hear the appeal. If it is relevant to the Motion, then we will rule on it, provided you are speaking on the Motion.

**Alhaji Abutu :** Yes, I am speaking on the Motion. As I said yesterday we are dignified and respected Members. Since the history of politics in Nigeria this is the first time we have men of ability and respectability in this House. Therefore, let us keep to that respect.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member for Anka South (*Alhaji A. Abutu*), you are out of Order.

**Alhaji Abutu :** I am talking on the Motion. I obtained your permission to make my appeal.

**Mr Speaker :** Please leave it until next time.

**Mr Ogwe Kalu Ogwe (Bende) :** Mr Speaker, thank you very much.

Hon. Members, this Motion is a very important one. It is important in the sense that the existence of the Federal Government Colleges and the admission system are totally in contravention of various Sections of the Constitution. In the first place the admission system whereby some students are allowed to enter the institution by having a minimum pass mark of 75 per cent and whereas others have a minimum of 50 per cent, is an anathema. In the second place, the admission does not make for unity and this conflicts with Section 14, Subsection 4, of the Constitution with respect to having a feeling of belonging. If you will allow me to read, if it is necessary—

**Several hon. Members : No !**

**Mr Ogwe :** Okay. Then I go to the staffing where I think the Federal character as enunciated by my friend and entrenched in the Constitution is quite relevant. If you have ever gone round the various Colleges you will find that most of the people who manage the affairs there are foreigners. Foreigners are not included in the Federal character of the country in appointment, and so on and so forth. You will see that they are each a breeder where Pakistanis, Indians and what have you, rest and feed at the expense of the masses there. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order !

**Mr Ogwe :** My other point, hon. Members as I said earlier, is that the existence of Federal Government Colleges itself is an anathema. If you go to Section 22 of the Constitution where patriotism is supposed to be mature, you will see that the admission system conflicts with this Section. If we are to bring up our children to love this country—(*Power failure*)

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, please just one minute.

**Alhaji Y. Kaltungo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, in view of this power failure I suggest that we suspend sitting till 3 o'clock this afternoon.

*Sitting suspended : 10.53 a.m.*

*Sitting resumed : 3.15 p.m.*

(*The Deputy Speaker in the Chair*)

### Study Tour of the United States

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, I would just like to make an announcement. This is in connection with the arrangements for the proposed Study Tour of the United States.

The Clerk of the National Assembly and the Clerk of the House of Representatives, Mr Olinmah, have been liaising with the officials of the American Embassy. According to the present programme, Members of the delegation are expected to leave Lagos for the United States on the 9th of February, 1980. The Staff of the American Embassy have handed over to the Clerk of the House of Representatives two forms which would be completed by all Members who would be travelling to the United States. One is the Biographic Data Form and the other is the Form for Visa.

To facilitate early completion of the arrangements for the trip, Party Leaders are requested to hand over to the Clerk of the House this afternoon or tomorrow morning the names of their Party Members who have been nominated to undertake the Study Tour. The nominated Members would then collect the necessary forms from the office of the Clerk for completion and return them to him. The Biographic Data Forms should be completed as a matter of priority as they are expected to be returned to the American Embassy not later than Friday this week. The co-operation of all concerned in this matter will be appreciated.

I believe the Party Leaders are still carrying out the exercise of the nomination of Members to undertake this trip. In actual fact, hon. Members should not think that there is plenty of time. There is not much time at all particularly considering that some of you may be applying for your basic travelling allowance if you want any additional money to take away, and this takes time. So, it is absolutely important that those travelling should have valid passports and not to start applying for them now.

Now, we were on the debates in the morning. I do not know what Members intend to do but it seems to me that if we start the debates now somebody is going to point us to Order because I know that people are fond of calling for quorum.

**An hon. Member :** Point of explanation.

**The Deputy Speaker :** What are you explaining? It is either we sit down in the heat and it is left to the Leader of the House—(Prolonged Interruptions) Anybody to act for the Leader of the House?

Mr Afolabi, are you making any point of explanation?

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr O. Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I think that it is very hot here and I am

moving that this House stands adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

**Mr Yusuf A. Amoka (Okene) :** I beg to second.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That this House do now adjourn till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 3.21 p.m.*



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Wednesday, 23rd January, 1980

The House met at 10.10 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Proposed Tour of the United States

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, the Leaders of the Parties are reminded to submit the names of their Party Members who would join the delegation to the United States. Also, the Party Leaders would meet in my office immediately after this sitting to discuss other matters. The hon. Members concerned should remember that we will visit Victoria Island Flats this afternoon on inspection.

**An hon. Member :** Is it the entire Members that will go there ?

**Mr Speaker :** No, not the entire Members. Those concerned already know.

Personal Explanation

**Mr Kemte Giadom (Bori II) :** I just want to make a point on this delegation to the United States. I hope that the Party Leaders would take into consideration in this delegation the image as well as the prestige of the country. This is going to be the first delegation that is leaving this country and this honourable House for a country like the United States. I would not be a party to any decision that would be parochial, sentimental and emotional that because this man is from my State or is from my tribe then we should choose him to go and represent Nigeria in a country like the United States. I would like the Leaders to take into consideration the quality of the Members that would go to represent us so that they can project—

**Several hon. Members :** No !

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member for Bori II (*Mr Giadom*) you can see that the whole House is against you. Please, you may resume your seat. Do not worry ; we will look after that one.

**Mr E. N. D. Uwandu (Mbaitoli) :** Mr Speaker, I have an explanation to make.

**Mr Speaker :** I hope it has nothing to do with the United States.

Omission of Parliamentary Privilege in  
the Constitution

**Mr Uwandu :** No. It is only for those who are not going to the United States.

**Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, on 21st January, 1980, the hon. Member for Ibadan North (*Mr Debo Akande*) told the House that the clause on**

Parliamentary Privilege is missing in the Constitution. I would like to bring it to the notice of the House that under the Constitution, it is not missing. We have been given powers under the Constitution to make our privileges, to make laws about the powers we have and to make laws about immunities.

I wish to refer the House first of all to Section 4 (2) of the Constitution, and that Section takes you to the Exclusive List. If you look at page 98, paragraph 45, it says—

*Powers of the National Assembly, and the privileges and immunities of its members.*

And Section 4 (2) states—

*The National Assembly shall have power to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Federation or any part thereof with respect to any matter included in the Exclusive Legislative List set out in Part 1 of the Second Schedule to this Constitution.*

That refers us to paragraph 45. So, I do not want the public to go away with the understanding that there is nothing about privileges, immunities and powers. We are given powers under the Constitution. What remains is for us to make the laws regarding the powers, the privileges and the immunities that we have. Thank you, very much.

ORDER OF THE DAY

Adjourned Debate on Question

(22nd January, 1980)

Admission of Students into Federal Institutions

*Motion moved and Question again proposed, That this honourable House views with great concern, the failure of Federal Governments' 'Students' Admission exercises into the various Federal institutions (i) to reflect the 'Federal character' ; (ii) to bridge the educational gap among the States and between the various ethnic groups ; (iii) generally to reflect the needs of the country, and therefore directs the House Standing Committee on Education to investigate and submit within 30 days the admissions policy suitable or promoting the unity and stability of this great nation.*

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, yesterday, we did not finish the debate on the Admission of Students into Federal Institutions. So, let us have more debates on it.

Hon. Member for Bende (*Mr Ogwe*) you spoke yesterday.

**Mr Ogwe K. Ogwe (Bende) :** No.

**Mr Speaker :** Oh, you did not conclude your debate. Please round up.

**Mr Ogwe :** I have not even started.

**Mr Speaker :** It is rounding up from yesterday.

**Mr Ogwe :** I did not say much yesterday. Mr Speaker, thank you for allowing me to continue from where I stopped yesterday before NEPA interrupted my political vociferation. (*Interruptions*)

Hon. Members, as I said yesterday, the system which is operated in some of the colleges or in all of them breeds discrimination. Any system that breeds discrimination breaches Section 22 and other areas of the Constitution which make for oneness and promotion of patriotism and nationalism.

So, that Members may understand, I will elaborate a bit. In some of the Federal Government Colleges, the admission requirement in certain areas or States is 75 per cent, that is, 300 over 400 before you can be called for an interview. That interview may not favour you as it has done in most cases, that is, 300 over 400 for boys and 287 over 400 for girls in some States. In some other States, 50 per cent is a sure banker, and less than that for girls could still be tolerable. If that system is allowed to continue it will jeopardise unity, and unity is one of the things so much emphasised in Chapter 2 of the Constitution.

In addition my very good friend, the hon. Member for Bida North (*Alhaji M. B. Mustapha*) has talked about bridging of educational gap among the States. This is quite good but it reminds me of the infant industry argument in economics. If I may refresh the memory of those who read some sections of economics, it is a little industry, and it is happening in the country now. That is why there is ban on this and that good in order to allow the young industry in our country to grow. When an industry is over-pampered and the government continues to subsidize and help it, it will never stand on its own and this is why there is a ban. The same thing is applicable to the educational industry which is what this Motion is all about. If we continue to bridge a gap which by the natural way of procreation can never be bridged totally, we will be encouraging this young industry not to stand on its own, with particular reference to certain areas as advocated by my very good Friend.

I am saying that if education should be meaningful to us here and should be likened to education in other areas—what I mean by areas are those other countries of the world because we are competing with the whole world—we should not pamper certain students who are actually not efficient. Compelling somebody to read means you are pampering him to do what he ought not to do by nature. There are some other areas of our economy where somebody who cannot feature very well in academics can find his feet. If one cannot find one's feet in academics there is no point pushing that person to the point of death because academics itself is not an easy thing. I am suggesting that the idea of pampering or trying to close an ever yawning gap may not help us in the real sense of the word.

Again, if you go to Schedule six on page 120 of the Constitution where Oath of Allegiance was taken by these Members, you will see that Chapter two was clearly emphasised to preserve the Fundamental Objectives. In the Fundamental Objectives, you will see that some of the Sections cited which this Motion intends to violate are clearly stated.

**Some hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Ogwe :** There is no question of no. I am entitled to continue and if you like you can take up the Constitution and read it carefully. You will see that even Section 14, Subsection 3, which the first leg of the Motion intends to incorporate is not actually here. That Section is talking about when you have completed your education, that is, the question of employment or question of having anything to do by helping the economic growth of the country. It says that everything should be taken into account to reflect the Federal Character and not that if you are not able to pass an examination, you must be forced to enter a University contrary to the requirement of that admission. That is one.

**Some hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order !

**Mr Ogwe :** In view of the facts I mentioned yesterday and if you check the Constitution carefully, you will agree with me that any reasonable person who had taken that Oath of Office on the 9th October, 1979, and who supports this Motion will actually be running counter to the spirit of the Constitution. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order !

**Mr Ogwe :** This Motion was moved by my very good friend, Alhaji M. B. Mustapha.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Mr Ogwe :** If the Motion were not to have anything to do with the Constitution, that is, to be at variance with the provisions of the various Sections of the Constitution that I have quoted and the illustrations I have given, I would have given it my support. In view of the fact that the Motion in itself runs counter to the spirit of the Constitution, I vehemently oppose it and I will ask other hon. Members to support this opposition.

**Mr David Atta (Okpokwu East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members I am appealing to all of you not to polarise this discussion along the historical North/South basis. This is a very important Motion that touches on the lives of all of us and the foundation of our beloved country. We have all admitted, albeit, tacitly that education is an important agent of social change. For that reason our attitude and approach to the discussion should show some element of objectivity and detachment. It is true that this educational imbalance is a factor of instability in our body politic. We all talk about national unity, yet in our attitude to issues and when the opportunity comes for us to demonstrate this desire, we have often acted differently. I think it is important for us to think through this problem to a point of solution.

We have admitted that there is a gap that needs to be bridged and somebody is saying that it is unconstitutional. I find it very difficult to comprehend this approach to the discussion. I believe that every institution can generate its own students and I am inviting all our institutions in the country to seek a positive encounter in its immediate locality. I say this because when the Faculty of Medicine

[Mr ATTA]

was going to be started in the Ahmadu Bello University, there was a hue and cry about the quality of its products. It was felt then that the University was only going to turn out community doctors and nurses but today we are all living witnesses that that Faculty is one of the best in the country. (*Applause*)

Somebody is saying that it is even the best and I agree with him. I am very serious about this. In the past, the explanation was that there were not sufficient students from the Northern part of the country to fill the university places and also fill places in our other institutions of higher learning. But today the situation is radically different and some of our secondary school products are finding it very, very difficult to get into the institutions of higher learning. You all know that examination leakage is not a popular phenomenon in that part of the country.

**Several hon. Members :** Hear ! Hear !

**Mr Atta :** We all know too that examination is not the true test of knowledge. We have all been to school, we have all competed with our Colleagues from the other parts of the country some of whom got Aggregate 8 in their West African School Certificate results, but later in life when they were called upon to demonstrate this competence, they were found wanting. This was because there was no more opportunity for some of them to be funny, to rig and pass examinations at the level of their educational career. But this point is neither here nor there.

I believe that this problem of educational imbalance is mutual. It is a challenge to all of us here. It is for us to do something about it. Even if we cannot find an immediate solution, we should think ahead. My suggestion—

**An hon. Member :** Objection please.

**Mr Atta :** You do not have to pre-empt me. I have to develop my argument. I am speaking to Mr Speaker, if you will cease interrupting me. (*Interruptions*) All right, we should not split hairs on this issue.

**Mr Speaker :** Go on.

**Mr Atta :** My suggestion and impression, first of all, is that we should encourage these fellows who are educationally disadvantaged. We know the educationally disadvantaged areas of the country and if we are feigning ignorance, it is too bad. We should trace these areas. If Bendel State qualifies by this criterion, it should be considered ; if it is Cross River State, it should be considered, but we should do a critical analysis to be able to identify these areas. We know what the statistics are in all our institutions of higher learning.

We know that education has a purpose. We go to school primarily to prepare us for adult life. We cannot contribute effectively to social development if individuals and citizens of the country cannot be developed educationally, if their innate abilities and potentials cannot be developed. So we should know how to approach this issue squarely and objectively. It is not an attempt to work out an arrangement to share our proverbial national cake. This is a different situation altogether. The educational imbalance, as I said earlier, is a factor of instability and if we

want all Nigerians to make effective contribution to the national development and social advancement in all our endeavours, it is only fair that we should react to the challenge of these factors that are hitting us in the face realistically.

My other suggestion too is that each institution should be given the autonomy and freedom to admit and generate its own students. (*Applause*) It is possible our experts can work out the details.

Secondly, I am contending that a special concession should be granted to the educationally disadvantaged areas of the country. I dare say that even, if need be, a crash programme should be embarked upon and special subsidy should be provided to promote education in these areas. Mr Speaker, thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you. Yes, the Chief Whip of the NPP.

**Mr D. D. Dafuan (Shendam West) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion. In supporting it, we all know that education is a prime factor for national progress. We also know that education is a prime factor for national stability and unity. It can also be a destroyer of all these if it is wrongly given. It happens that we all realise the importance of education and that was why political parties during the electioneering campaigns used education as a major factor in their campaigns. Some were trying to convince or confuse the electorate with the free education policy.

**Several hon. Members :** Fire ! Fire !

**Mr Dafuan :** Some were also going round with the qualitative education programme.

**Several hon. Members :** Fire ! Fire !

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order !

**Mr Dafuan :** There was one thing in common—they all agreed that education, whether qualitative or free, is meant for all the people of this country. It so happened, Mr Speaker, that, whether this is by design or by omission, we grew to find ourselves in Nigeria divided into two—the educationally advantaged areas and educationally disadvantaged areas. This was caused by either our background or our colonial masters. Mr Speaker, obviously those from educationally advantaged areas have now reached a stage that they would like us to use merit as the criterion for admission into our higher institutions. But as expected, those on the other side would like to take their national share in education. The problem here is this, Mr Speaker. If we go in for merit, then obviously the educationally disadvantaged areas will remain disadvantaged for ever. If we go—(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order !

**Mr Dafuan :** If we go by the suggestion of the educationally disadvantaged areas which is probably the quota system, obviously the standard will have to fall. The point here, Mr Speaker, is that we have to marry the two to satisfy—(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order ! Please listen to the hon. Member.

**Mr Dafuan :** The issue at stake is that we have to marry the two, try as much as possible not only to get to the standard required but to maintain that standard, and as much as possible we should not leave one side of this country out of education. I believe it is in this respect, Mr Speaker, that the Federal Government accepted a recommendation of a Committee on National Policy on Education in 1979 and if you allow me, Mr Speaker, I will read. I think every Member was given this copy. Page 37 reads thus :

*Accepted : Universities Admissions process. We take adequate notice of measures like the Schools of Basic Studies and other remedial programmes which the Government has designed to facilitate entry into University courses of students from educationally disadvantaged areas. Candidates from these programmes who satisfy the prescribed conditions of the special programmes would be admitted into the Universities as anticipated when the programme was established.*

The question is this.

**An hon. Member :** What paper is that ?

**Mr Dafuan :** It is the Government White Paper, please.

The question is this. Since these remedial courses and basic studies were meant for the educationally disadvantaged areas, are admissions into these very institutions given to these educationally disadvantaged areas ? The answer as argued yesterday is no. They were actually meant for the educationally disadvantaged areas but they, as we now know, are not given this facility.

The second question, Mr Speaker, is that these basic studies and remedial courses are conducted and their examinations prescribed and marked by the Universities in this country. The successful students from these institutions, Mr Speaker, sadly do not get admission into Universities after passing these prescribed examinations. This is the most painful part of this thing. So, I would suggest—  
(Interruptions)

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order !

**Mr Dafaun :** So, I would suggest and embrace the stand of the Federal Government that we continue with these remedial programmes for the educationally disadvantaged States, make sure that they are actually meant for them and that they utilise this facility given to them so that they can also get their positions in our universities. It so happens that some people who, I would say, are the enemies of unity in this country, get themselves appointed as principals of these institutions and bring in people from their places to replace people who are supposed to utilise these institutions.

So, Mr Speaker, this is my advice and I beg to support this Motion. (Applause)

**Mr Speaker :** GNPP.

**Alhaji Mohammed A. Yelwa (Yauri) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, my first impression of this Motion was that every Member of this House would support it unconditionally, but I was surprised to find somebody voicing an opposition to it. However, as far as the Motion is concerned, and to my understanding, three pillars have already been established.

Firstly, we have all expressed the failure of JAMB as a body. The second pillar is that we have also accepted and passed a Resolution in this House on the provision of Section 14 (3) and Section 157 (5) of the Constitution. We agreed with that second point. The third point which we also agreed upon in general is that there is no justification in the present admission and that is that admissions are not even. They do not portray the structure of the country. So, if we agree on these three points, we know for a start that this Motion has a very good foundation.

Also, coming to the Motion itself, it clearly states that this matter be referred to the Committee on Education to find out ways and means of stabilising this unevenness. It does not ask for anything more than that. It should be referred to the Committee and the Committee should find out whether there is no justification and what method should be applied so that in the long run an even solution could be obtained. If that is the case, then, there is no controversy.

The next point also is that we all agree that Nigeria should continue as a Federation and in order that the Federation should stay and progress, there must be unity, stability and communal national loyalty. To achieve this, certain things have been entrenched in our Constitution and those Sections are Section 14 (3) and Section 157 (5). If we are to continue as a Federation, we must see that that Federal character is shown in everything and the best way of showing this Federal character is from the schools. If these schools are able to absorb students from all States, then we would have achieved something and that is the beginning of success. We cannot have Federal character in the civil Service if our schools are not evenly utilized and the moment we lay foundations in our schools for the admission of students, then a big success has been achieved. Ultimately in the end we will see the Federal character especially if every State has a certain number of students in the schools. I do not say that the number should be absolutely even ; it cannot be because the States are not equal but it should be proportional all right. If these students are trained from the beginning proportionally up to University level, and they join the Civil Service, ultimately without anybody saying so, or enforcing it in the House, you will find the Federal character in our Civil Service or whatever it is. Every institution will show the Federal character in its set-up.

So, this experiment which we are asking for is not a new thing at all. If we can go back, a few years ago, such a practice happened in the whole Northern Nigeria Government when the present ten Northern States were together. The first example started from the old Kaduna College where everyone of the thirteen provinces of the North sent a candidate to the College. These students grew up together

[ALHAJI YELWA]

and they understood each other. That is why there is much understanding among the ten Northern States because these people started their training together.

The same thing also happened in all the Northern Training Colleges. There were thirteen provinces and each province was allocated a certain place not necessarily on equal basis. The first proportion was based on need and also on equality. Each province sent in students. These students understood each other, they learnt together and they understood the problems of one another and in that way, they grew up together and that also helps. So, this experiment which we are asking is not a new thing. I think the main principle here would be that whatever method of admission is adopted, the Federal character should be clearly shown and this could be based on three criteria.

The first one is equality of States. At least, in every institution of the Federal Government, there should be a student from each State. A certain percentage of their admission should go to every State so that every State will have a student in the class. (Applause) If I may explain further if the admission into a class is one hundred, 50 per cent can go on State basis and a certain percentage can go on need. We know that some States need more than the others. The rest can go to the locality where the institution is located. So, with these remarks, Mr Speaker, I beg to supporting it.

Mr Speaker : Yes, can we hear from PRP ?

Alhaji Sarki Adamu (Dawakin-Kudu) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion. It is a very important Motion and I think everybody in this House should support it. I have my special reasons for supporting this Motion.

In the first place, I believe that there is only one Nigeria. I believe that the unity of Nigerians is foremost. We should always try to concentrate on whatever would bring more of this unity. If we like peace and stability and to live happily and comfortably in this country, we must stop kidding ourselves. We must stop doubting the intelligence of one another. We must bring ourselves to the level of everybody within the society. We must stop trying to cheat one another. I have got two suggestions to make on this Motion, Mr Speaker.

My first suggestion is to say that the admission of Students into Nigerian Institutions should reflect the Federal character by distributing this allocation proportionately according to the size of States.

Secondly, as was suggested by an hon. Member last week, I would like to see universities being established in every State of the Federation and the autonomy for admission should be given to each of these Universities so that every university could choose, select and admit the type of students it wants without any intervention from the centre.

Mr Speaker, these are my two suggestions and if they could be carefully examined, I am sure they would contribute in solving the problem. That is all I have to say. Thank you, very much.

Mr Dauda A. Ibrahim (Irewole West) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me the first opportunity to speak in this House. I support the Motion whole-heartedly. In supporting it, there should be some caution.

Normally, education is the only source of unity in this country and without it there would be no unity at all. Some people think that we cry wolf where there is none. We are thinking like a certain person who was crying for food and when food was given to him, he would not take it, but still he continued to cry, *I want food, I am hungry*.

During the electioneering campaigns, many promises were made like free education at all levels, qualitative education, quantitative education and all sorts of things, whereas it is only something that we put down that we can modify. Without putting something forward, we cannot modify it to give it quality. If we are not to deceive ourselves by shouting on the Floor of this House—

Mr Speaker : Hon. Member for Irewole West (Mr Dauda A. Ibrahim) we do not shout here.

Mr Dauda Ibrahim : If we are not to deceive ourselves in this House and if we are prepared to think about the welfare of our people, then we must know what we are going to do to help them.

I do sympathise with the Mover of this Motion that the admission into our Federal-owned Institutions should reflect Federal character ; but we must take precaution because some people have certain objective in mind. After achieving it, it would be unfair to ask such people to stay or wait for those people who were sleeping while others were running and labouring day-in-day-out. (Interruptions)

Mr Speaker : Yes, go on.

Mr Dauda Ibrahim : Mr Speaker, Sir, I thank you for the protection. The only solution if we are not to deceive ourselves and the generality of the people of this country is to have free education at all levels. Eighty per cent of our people are poor. It is only the rich that have the means of educating their people. We cannot just say because we want the admission into our Institutions to reflect the Federal character, then we should, therefore, set aside the criterion laid down for the admission of these Students into our Universities and Institutions and bring in people who do not have the requisite qualifications. Hon. Members, the only way of bridging the gap between the educationally advantaged and the disadvantaged States is not by stopping the people that are already moving forward but to encourage that section of the community who are not interested in educating their people. All that they are interested in is to talk on the television and radio that they want qualitative education whereas they are not making any effort.

Now, I am seizing this opportunity through the Floor of this House to appeal to the President of this nation to implement immediately Section 18 of our Constitution so that everybody will claim the right that is enshrined in the Constitution. Thank you, very much.

Mr Speaker : Let us hear from the Professor and then conclude the debate. (Interruptions)

Order ! Order !

**Prof. O. Ola** (Ekiti West) : Mr Speaker, hon. Ladies and Gentlemen, I rise to make my contribution to this Motion on education in this country. I rise because, as you all know, education is very important and as a former educator and also presently educator, I think I shall be failing in my duty if I do not make a contribution. It is in this respect that I pay my tribute to the Speaker for allowing me to make a contribution.

I would like to say that in my judgment this Motion is one of the most important and one of the most serious ever brought before the Floor of this House. The reason being that it deals with a very important subject, namely education, which is very important not only for political development in Nigeria, but also for economic development. If therefore, on this Motion the House spent the whole of yesterday and today we are not wasting time. I know for sure that this kind of Motion and similar things are coming back to this House not only for deliberation but to find solutions to the acute problems of transformation facing our great country.

Now, to those who want to know my position on the Motion, I will make it point clear. I would like to state my stand and state my own credo that in spirit, because the spirit is based on the Constitution, because the spirit is based on the fundamental laws of the land, I would like to support it. (*Applause*) But I would like to state clearly my position : (*Prolonged interruptions*).

Hon. Members, Ladies and Gentlemen, in rising to speak I want to speak with all frankness and all candour and that is what I should say before an august honourable House. If I tell you that I support it one hundred *per cent* and all the way that will be a deliberate lie and a propaganda which I will not do going by my background and experience. On this basis I would like to say that apart from its Constitutional spirit I support it. Beyond that I do not support it merely because of the political propaganda involved, the prejudice involved, the misinterpretation of the Constitution, the deliberate attempt of misinformation of the Nigerian public and finally because—(*Interruptions*).

Also because, Mr Speaker—(*Interruption*).

**Mr Speaker** : Hold on Professor. There is a point of Order.

**Dr Onwuka O. Oreh** (Arochukwu) : My point of order, Mr Speaker, is Standing Order 26 subsection (6) which says :

*No Member shall impute improper motives to any other Members.*

**Professor Ola** : Mr Speaker, and honourable Ladies and Gentlemen, the main point I would like to make is that we are debating this Motion in order to find solutions to acute problems facing Nigeria. If we do not face our problems frankly and candidly, objectively and scientifically, nothing will ever be solved. That is why I say that the Motion is good in the Constitutional spirit, but in its direction and substance, it is either to be thrown out or be sent to the Committee for proper re-orientation and better homework.

Now to make my contribution further, Mr Speaker,—(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker** : Order ! Order !

**Professor Ola** : Talking about the good and the constructive part of the Motion, as I said before, we all know the importance of education. For the individual it is the source of knowledge, for the nation, it is not only the source of knowledge, it is also the source of man-power, the source of development and in short, it is the source of civilisation and transformation. Therefore, if that is the main importance of education, we should support it not only in terms of reflecting the federal character in all these institutions in Nigeria. We do support it on this side of the House, and I believe on that side also, that every Nigerian should have free access and equal opportunity for education in this country. (*Applause*) Everybody, male and female, should have access to education. Rich and poor, christians or muslims, north and south, and east and west, we all support it. It is a beautiful thing that we all have equal access to education because simply put, it is not only the source of bridging the gap of disunity. It is also the main source of uplifting ourselves by self-transformation. Therefore, you will see the reason why I do support it in its constitutional spirit and, Mr Speaker, I would go further.

Every honest and intelligent person who is following the logical debate will see my reason as I go along. The reasons why I want to disagree with it in its substance and its re-orientation are on the following grounds :—

It is because the Motion has problems not only by its conceptual definitions, but also its assumptions, theories and the facts and information given us are totally incorrect. I will tell you one by one. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker** : Go on please.

**Professor Ola** : Now, the following things raise basic problems about the Motion, and Mr Speaker, hon. Ladies and Gentlemen, when you listen to me you will know. There is a talk of the Federal character in practice and in the Constitution, and many of you are lawyers. So, I put this question to you. What exactly is the meaning of the Federal character that is written in the Constitution ? (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker** : Order ! Order !

**Professor Ola** : They are interrupting me because they know I have got the stuff.

Now, what exactly is meant by the Federal character in the Constitution ? Does it mean the sacrifice of merit in favour of mediocrity ? Does it mean— (*Interruptions*).

**Mr Speaker** : Order ! Order ! (*Several hon. Members got up*). Please hon. Members, take your seats. Hold on, we will enjoy this debate if everybody is given an opportunity to air his views on any matter on the floor of the House however distasteful the views may be. Please let us do as much as possible to accommodate ourselves. We will have the right

[Mr SPEAKER]

to vote at the end of the debate and those in favour will always carry it. Please, let us give him the opportunity to develop his argument.

Professor Ola, you have about ten minutes more.

**Prof. Ola :** Hon. Ladies and Gentlemen, we have to solve the problem of what exactly we mean by Federal character. Does it mean hundred per cent allocation of seats and places in all the institutions or does it mean seventy-five per cent, fifty per cent, twenty-five per cent or ten per cent? This constitutional interpretation has to be quantified in practical terms before it can have any meaning. But I do know in my mind that Federal Character cannot mean hundred per cent all the way.

In places like India where we have Federal Character, it is always a mixture of merit and quota, in the sense that you properly give a certain percentage to merit and also a certain percentage to allocation and quota.

If I move on we will see that in order to solve this problem that is facing us either in the Civil Service or in education, the practical and constitutional meaning of Federal Character has to be solved in operational and practical terms. Otherwise, we will just be arguing circumlocutiously, we will just be arguing in a vacuum.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to make another submission which I think will be very reasonable to Lawyers and Scientists and everybody who thinks reasonably. The hon. Mover of the Motion is making us to understand that there is imbalance and lack of Federal Character in admission in Federal Institutions. That is a theory, it is a hypothesis, it is a submission, but it needs—(Interruptions). Mr Speaker, Sir, we know that the Mover of this Motion is entitled to make that submission but it is not sufficient to make submission because anybody can make any submission. For any submission to be valid and acceptable, it has to be submitted and supported by facts and figures, and statistics. Mr Speaker, Sir, we have not been given—

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of Order.

**Mr Godwin Wodi (Port Harcourt II) :** My point of order, Mr Speaker, is Order 26.

The hon. Member should realise that he is not lecturing his fellow Professors. He is talking to Members of this House. His language should therefore be reduced to the level of understanding of each and everyone of us here.

**Professor Ola :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I would say that we need a comprehensive body of data, a comprehensive body of facts and figures, to either support or diminish the argument. That is that.

As far as the problem is concerned, I will also mention one thing: We agree that there is educational imbalance in this country but what is the basic cause of this? Nobody has ever mentioned that the gap is created by the historic imbalance since the colonial days. This is a very important variable.

The fact is that since 1900 or since the last eighty years, there has been a gradual and historic and yawning gap between the various sections of this country and that very historic imbalance itself is a predetermination of another imbalance. If this is not taken into consideration we are merely arguing without any logical or scientific foundation and we are deceiving ourselves. That is the point. (Interruptions) I will move on to say—

**Mr Speaker :** Please round up.

**Professor Ola :** Before I wind up, I would like to say briefly what I know as an Educator, for the benefit of the House.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of Order.

**Alhaji Muhammed Ali Kaita (Kaita) :** My point of order is Order 26 (6) and it reads thus :

*No Member shall impute improper motives to any other Members.*

**Several hon. Members :** No !

**Professor Ola :** Mr Speaker, Sir, briefly I would like to give my own experience which is subject to verification. I know that in the Universities of Lagos, Ibadan and Ife which I have been associated with for the last fifteen years, there is no deliberate policy of discrimination in terms of admission. (Interruptions)

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order !

**Professor Ola :** Mr Speaker, Sir, what I do know now from my twelve years in the University of Lagos is that very often, not sufficient candidates present themselves from the Northern States. This is a fact. (Interruptions)

**Mr Speaker :** Professor, please that last statement is provocative. Please say from a certain part of the country, and do not mention any specific area.

**Professor Ola :** I agree, Mr Speaker.

**Alhaji A. Abutu (Ankpa South) :** Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker :** What is your point of Order ?

**Alhaji Abutu :** My point of Order is 26 (1). The Professor is reading.

**Several hon. Members :** (Interruptions)

**Professor Ola :** I think, very briefly, in terms of Secondary Schools which are Federal Institutions, you can send a delegation to King's College, or to the Federal Schools of Arts and Science to find out about their policy and practice of admission. You will find that very often they have to shop around in order to get students from certain sections of the country.

Finally, Mr Speaker, to wind up, this much I would say—(Interruptions)

**Dr Onwuka O. Oreh (Arochukwu) :** Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, what is your point of Order ?

**Dr Oreh :** Mr Speaker, my point of order is Order No. 32 (1). It reads thus :

*Subject to paragraph (2) of this order and subject to the provisions of paragraph (2) of Standing Order 63 (Appropriation Bill), no Member shall be entitled to address the House or a committee of the whole House for more than thirty minutes on any subject.*

I submit, Sir, that the speaker on the Floor has spoken for exactly thirty-seven minutes. I think he has spoken more than enough.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes you, are right.

Prof. Ola, please, it is time for you to wind up.

**Prof. Ola :** All right, Mr Speaker. Finally in winding up, I want to make suggestions and solutions. That is the most important thing now. (*Interruptions*)

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Speaker :** Prof. Ola, it is time now. Please, sit down. (*Interruptions*) Order ! Order !

Yes, Mr Afolabi ?

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, having listened to Prof. Ola theorising and professing, I respectfully move that the Question be now put. (*Interruptions*)

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That this Honourable House views with great concern, the failure of Federal Governments' 'Students' Admission exercises into the various Federal Institutions; (i) to reflect the 'Federal character' ; (ii) to bridge the educational gap among the States and between the various ethnic groups ; (iii) generally to reflect the needs of the country, and therefore directs the House Standing Committee on Education to investigate and submit within 30 days the admissions policy suitable for promoting the unity and stability of this great nation.

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order ! (*Interruptions*) Please, hon. Members, take your seats. Yes, Mr Afolabi ?

### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, I think the House is getting hotter and hotter and, with the consensus of the House, I respectfully move that the House do now adjourn till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

**Mr Damiga Jimoh (Okehi Adavbi) :** I beg to second.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That this House do now adjourn till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 11.30 a.m.*



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Thursday, 24th January, 1980

The House met at 10.30 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Distinguished Visitor

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members we have with us this morning a very distinguished Nigerian, His Excellency, the Governor of Benue State, Mr Aper Aku (*Applause*). His Excellency has graciously called to pay us a courtesy call and on behalf of the Members of the House of Representatives, we thank His Excellency very sincerely for this kind, patriotic and wonderful gesture. (*Applause*)

Votes of Proceedings

Hon. Members, I have gone through the Votes and Proceedings of yesterday and they have been approved.

Meeting with the President

I wish to inform Members that I had a meeting with the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency, Alhaji Shehu Shagari on Wednesday, 23rd January, 1980. During the meeting a number of issues of national interest were discussed. Some of the matters discussed concerned the welfare of Members of the National Assembly and the President indicated his willingness to help in solving some of the problems currently facing Members. Necessary machinery has been set in motion to see to it that some of the proposed measures are implemented through the normal administrative channels.

Selection of Members for the study tour of the United States

During my meeting with the President we also discussed briefly the proposed study tour of the United States by some Members of this House and the importance of the tour. I am sure that all Members of this Honourable House will agree with me that the forthcoming tour which will be the first official tour to be undertaken outside this country by Members of the National Assembly is a very important one and we must do everything possible to ensure that the prestige and image of the National Assembly in particular and the nation at large are enhanced by the performance of those who will undertake the tour.

In this regard I consider it essential that the composition of Members who should be on the delegation should be properly scrutinised. We have therefore been obliged to review the nominations

previously submitted by the various parties. Accordingly, I have, as your humble Speaker, decided after consulting the Party Leaders, that the following twelve Members should be on the delegation—

PRP .. ..	Alhaji M. Mustapha
GNPP .. ..	Alhaji Sanda Konduga
NPN .. ..	Alhaji Y. Kaltungo
	Mr Aliyu M. Rabah
	Dr E. J. Sowho
	Mr P. O. Awuna
	Mr A. Ukpanah
UPN .. ..	Mr B. M. Mabrama Jen
	Mr T. Egbuwoku
	Mr L. O. Adesina
NPP .. ..	Lt. Col. P. C. Amadi
	Mr D. D. Dafuan

May I assure you all that I took the above decision with the greatest sense of responsibility and with the interest of the House and the nation uppermost in my mind. It is regretted that a few Members who had earlier been intimated by their Party Leaders that they would be in the delegation have been left out of the final list which I have just read out. But I would like to emphasise one point—the forthcoming trip is the first of a series that Members of this House will have to undertake to different parts of the world during the next four years. So, those who are unable to travel on this occasion will be able to do so in future. Thank you.

Committee Meetings

Members should take note of the meetings of the various Committees scheduled to take place today as reflected in the Order Paper. Members of the Standing Orders Committee are specifically reminded to make it a point of duty to attend the meeting of the Committee taking place at the Senate Committee Room at 12 noon today.

Personal Explanation

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I want to make a personal explanation on an issue which is very fundamental and which touches on an aspect of the Nigerian constitution.

When we resumed here on the 14th of this month, Mr Speaker, we received a circular letter dated 10th January, 1980, from the Deputy Speaker of this honourable House and the circular letter, Sir, said something about the welfare of the Members of this House. This morning I have also got another letter from the Deputy Speaker asking Members who are interested in the purchase of Peugeot cars—

Several hon. Members : No ! (*Interruptions*)

## NOTICES OF MOTIONS

## Federal Capital Territory—Progress

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, we have to move on to today's Notices of Motions. The first one is the Federal Capital Territory—Progress. The Motion stands in the name of Mr M. A. Tudun Wada.

**Mr Muhammadu Aliu Tudun Wada (Waje) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I stand to move the Motion standing in my name on the Order Paper—

That this House directs the Committee on Federal Capital Development to carry out an on the spot assessment of development in the execution of projects at Abuja, the new Federal Capital, as soon as practicable, and to report its findings to the House.

I beg to move, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker :** Is anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Muhammadu Shu'aibu Kaugama (Aliyo/ Kaugama) :** Mr Speaker, I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Tudun Wada :** Mr Speaker, Sir, as far as I am concerned, this is a very straight-forward Motion and I would begin my contribution by first of all congratulating His Excellency, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, for the interest he showed and the priority he gave to the development of the projects being executed at Abuja when he assumed office. It was, in fact, reported to this House that a trip was organised by the President and his entourage which consisted of the Hon. Speaker of this House, his Deputy and the five Party Leaders in the House.

However, Mr Speaker, I thought, after reflecting on the issue of the trip, that there were so many aspects that touched on that trip and which for purposes of records and for the sake of posterity need to be put right. So, Mr Speaker, I think it is uppermost to bring a Motion in this form so that we can set the records right.

**Mr Speaker,** the issues of the projects at Abuja are issues that involve expenditure from the Federal fund and I believe I would not be in any contradictory situation if I say this House has authority to legislate on any matter which involves Federal expenditure. It is therefore in that light, Mr Speaker, that I was of the opinion right from the beginning that we should have developed a similar interest to the interest shown by His Excellency, the President and to have actually gone ourselves to see the development at first hand at Abuja so as to arrive at our own separate conclusion without necessarily going under the umbrella of the Executive.

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1979, clearly specifies that the three arms of Government—the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary—are separate entities and are co-equals. They exist side by side and are supposed to contribute and be seen to be involved effectively in the act of governing the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

It is therefore in that light, Mr Speaker, that I think, in order that we do not put the wrong foot forward, this House directs its Committee on Federal Capital as a matter of urgency, to go and see at first hand what is happening at Abuja because already a programme has been outlined by the Executive that the first batch of workers that would move to Abuja would do so in 1983 or so. It is therefore important that since we are going to be involved with regard to legislation and other matters that touch very closely on everything that is happening at Abuja, we know what is happening at first hand. That is important because I think we should not allow ourselves to be drawn into a situation whereby we would lay a dirty precedent for whatever we are building today.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I would like to implore all hon. Members to give this Motion the support it deserves. Thank you very much.

**Mr Mohammed Lawal Na-Rogo (Karaye) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion and in doing so, I would equally like to implore this honourable House to support issues that touch the bottom of our hearts.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is unfortunate that this honourable House normally runs away from its legislative functions and duties delegated to it by the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. We always allow the Executive to be undertaking the responsibilities of the legislature. It is quite unfortunate, Mr Speaker, if such a thing could be happening. It is, of course, our legislative rights, Mr Speaker, to enquire so as to know. As the hon. Member for Waje (*Mr Mohammed Tudun Wada*) rightly said, whenever any amount of the Federal fund is going to be spent anywhere, we ought to know and we ought to be concerned seriously about the manner that vote is going to be spent.

Mr Speaker, Sir, similarly, the issue of going to America came up, and on this issue we allowed the Executive to dictate who is to go and who is not to go. This is quite unfortunate. Mr Speaker, Sir, by our very right, the Federal House of Representatives—

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of Order.

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II) :** My point of Order is 26 (2). The hon. Member should restrict himself to the issue of the Order Paper.

**Mr Speaker :** Please confine yourself to the issue on the Order Paper.

**Mr M. L. Na-Rogo :** Yes, Sir, I am only citing an incident but we cannot accept any dictation from anybody whoever he might be. We of the PRP firmly believe that anybody we appoint, must be accepted or else would withdraw our representation. It is our firm belief, Mr Speaker, that whatever might be the case we cannot accept that. We are people of integrity. Therefore we cannot allow somebody to come and involve himself in our private affairs or in the affairs of this nation. If you can allow it, well, by four years—

*Interruptions*

**Mr Speaker :** Please restrict yourself to the substance of the Motion. Yes UPN.

**Mr Akintunde Rotimi (Ekiti North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion.

In supporting the Motion, I would like to clarify certain aspects of the policy affecting the Abuja issue. In the first place, it would appear right from the time of electioneering campaign that a lot of people misunderstood the policy of my party and that of my Leader on this very issue. There is no question that the issue of Abuja as the new Federal Capital receives consensus views of all Nigerians and we whole-heartedly support the idea of moving the Federal Capital to Abuja. Also my Party Leader has never at any time and at any stage gone against this policy of transferring the Federal Capital to Abuja. What has always been at stake is the issue of priority. Now, my reservations about the issue of Abuja are as follows :

First of all, all along, it appears the Executive has not disclosed a lot of facts to the Nigerian people over the issue of Abuja. The designers of Abuja originally scheduled the project to last for fifteen to twenty years. Now as a political gimmick the Executive has decided that what should last for 15 to 20 years should be rushed over within four years. Mr Speaker, Sir, reading through the policy statement of the Minister in charge of Federal Capital some time last week, it was disclosed that the project would cost the nation the sum of almost ₦10 billion between now and 1983. To me, this is a colossal amount of money. In other words, it means that within the next four years all the resources of the nation would be diverted to Abuja as a priority.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No ! (*Interruptions*).

**Mr Speaker :** Gentlemen, Order ! Order !

**Mr Rotimi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I think this is one of the reasons why this Motion is quite relevant in the sense that the National Assembly which is the legislative body of the country has not been involved in the Abuja Projects. If a country like ours would commit itself to a sum of ₦10 billion naira at a stroke, I think we deserve the right as a legislative body representing the entire people of this country to have a say and to know the progress of this project.

Now, in analysing some of the issues involved, I think there are other facts which the National Assembly would like to know before the issue of Abuja is concluded. First of all, the question of environmental diseases which was being raised earlier on during the implementation of the Project has not been resolved.

**Dr Junaidu Muhammed (Kano City West Ward) :** Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of Order.

**Dr Muhammed :** Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of Order has to do with information as a professional. I would like to inform my hon. Colleague who was speaking and the honourable House—(*Interruptions*). I need your protection, Mr Speaker, Sir. I said point of information, Sir.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Dr Muhammed :** Mr Speaker, Sir, there is no disease in Abuja. Dr Lambo himself who started the news denied it.

**Mr Speaker :** It is all right.

**Mr Rotimi :** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. When I am speaking, I want all the hon. Members to have the belief that we all have the interest of Nigeria at heart. There is no question of Party interest or sectional interest as far as Abuja is concerned. If at any stage we all move to Abuja, the life in Abuja will affect every section of the country and that is one of the reasons why I am asking the Executive to give us more information, particularly on the issue of river blindness which is still—

**Mr Sule Lamido (Birnin Kudu) :** Point of order.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order or have you finished ?

**Mr Rotimi :** I have not finished, Sir. I want to conclude but they are raising a point of order.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Mr Rotimi :** I am ready to accept the point of Order.

**Mr Lamido :** Mr Speaker, Sir, we are not debating the merit of going to Abuja here. (*Interruptions*) That is not what we are debating. Somebody promised free education, others thought it was not feasible. If he said it would be four years and you think it is not possible, it is not the merit of going or not going. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order ! Hon. Members, it is not proper, it is most unparliamentary for anybody to be interrupted when he is exercising his constitutional rights. Please, as much as possible, if somebody is about to derail allow me to control the debate, and if there is a point of order, please point it out in the most parliamentary manner.

**Mr Rotimi :** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I think when we consider this Motion critically, we should be realistic to accept the fact that all these issues I am raising are quite relevant to the project in Abuja. What the hon. Member who moved this Motion is up to, if I may interpret quite rightly, is that he wants this honourable House to make an on-the-spot assessment of the situation in Abuja. I do not know how you can assess the situation in Abuja without taking into account environmental problems. If in the long run we consider here that the Abuja project is viable and that the environment is conducive to human habitation, there is no problem in going to Abuja.

**Mr Speaker :** Round up.

**Mr Rotimi :** So, Mr Speaker, Sir, I support this Motion.

**Mr S. O. Olowu (Ikale) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, it is my opinion, Sir, that we have no powers at all to undertake this inspection as contemplated by this Motion because to undertake an assessment of a project like this is an executive function.

**Mr Tubo O. Bob-Manuel** (Degema II) : Point of order.

**Mr Speaker** : There is a point of order.

**Mr Bob-Manuel** : My point of Order is on Section 82 of the Constitution.

**Several Hon. Members** : Read it.

**Mr Bob-Manuel** : Section 82 says : *Power to conduct investigations.*

*Subject to the provisions of this Constitution each House of the National Assembly shall have power by resolution published in its journal or in the Official Gazette of the Government of the Federation to direct or cause to be directed an investigation into—*

*(b) the conduct of affairs of any person, authority, ministry or government department charged, or intended to be charged, with the duty of or responsibility for—*

**Mr Speaker** : You are all right.

**Several hon. Members** : We want a ruling.

**Mr Speaker** : The hon. Member for Degema II (Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel) is perfectly in order but the hon. Member for Ikale (Mr Olowu) is equally entitled to express an opinion.

**Mr Olowu** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I did not contravene any of the Standing Orders ; I was expressing my opinion. For a work to be assessed and report on that work to be submitted, all these constitute executive business and it is the duty of the Minister in charge and the functionaries under him as representing the Executive Arm of the Government to perform this type of function. *(Interruptions)*

**Mr Speaker** : Have you finished ?

**Mr Olowu** : In particular the constitution which we are operating and which we have sworn to uphold does not give us this power at all.

**Mr Speaker** : No ! No ! You are entitled to express your views and I know you are a lawyer.

**Mr Olowu** : Yes, I am a lawyer.

**Several hon. Members** : He is not a lawyer. *(Interruptions)*

**Mr Speaker** : Order ! Order ! As you know it is one of the rules, in fact it is one of the conventions, that Parliaments have unlimited powers of legislation. Our powers are absolutely unlimited.

**Mr Olowu** : Mr Speaker, Sir, my stand remains as valid as ever. What this Motion contemplates—

**Dr O. O. Oreh** (Arochukwu) : Point of order.

**Mr Speaker** : There is a point of order.

**Dr Oreh** : Order Number 35—*Decision of the Chair is final.* I do not see why he is challenging the Speaker's decision in this manner.

**Mr Speaker** : No, he is not challenging my ruling. *(Interruptions)* As I said, what the hon. Member for Degema II (Mr Tubo O. Bob-Manuel) said is quite correct but at the same time, he is

entitled to express his views on anything. What I am saying is that this honourable House has absolute power to legislate on anything we can think of.

**Mr Olowu** : At any time and every time we meet here, we have power to legislate. My contention is that if it were aimed at legislation it could have been a different matter. In complying with Section 82 of the Constitution, we should go by the provision of that Section. What we need is—

**Mr Speaker** : If you have finished, let us hear what the hon. Member for Ifesowopo (Mr Akinbisehin) has to say on this matter.

**Mr Olowu** : I have not landed, Sir.

**Mr Speaker** : Please concentrate on the Motion. Go straight and talk on the merits of the Motion and leave the Constitutional aspect of it.

**Mr Olowu** : Mr Speaker, even if my opinion is wrong I am expressing it for record purposes. *(Interruptions)*

**Mr Speaker** : Even where you are wrong ?

**Mr Olowu** : Mr Speaker, that is where you conclude that I am wrong. I am not saying I am wrong because we are all here to guide the House.

**Mr Speaker** : It is not your job to guide the House. Please sit down. How can you say what is wrong and you say you want it for record purposes ? Yes, Mr Akinbisehin.

**Mr Bayo Akinbisehin** (Ifesowopo) : In contributing to this Motion, I have the following to say.

The Motion, I believe, is well intended. I also believe that the Mover of the Motion had something in his mind before he brought it. I want to express the idea and the policy of our Party as enumerated by a former speaker from our Party in the person of—*(Interruptions)*.

**Mr Speaker** : There is a point of Order.

**Mr Ogwe Kalu Ogwe** (Bende) : My point of Order Sir, is based on Order 28, Rule 5. If you permit me I will read it out. It reads :

*Members shall not make unseemly interruptions while any Member is speaking.*

A senior Lawyer is speaking and nobody should interrupt him. *(Laughter)*

**Mr Speaker** : Order ! Order !

**Mr Akinbisehin** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I am grateful for what my learned Friend has done. I woke up very well this morning.

Now on a serious note, I wish to say that the question of going to Abuja was looked into as soon as the President of this country took office. He went to Abuja along with Party Leaders and the Speaker of this House. They came back and gave us a brief report. We still expect them when the time comes to let us know more. The President of this country said earlier that he has just started, he is taking his time and when the time for budgeting comes up it is at that time that we would be able to know whether we are facing our problems in the right perspective. I would say that bringing this Motion at this time is unnecessary. I believe that we should face other better things.

**Several hon. Members :** What are the better things ?

**Mr Akinbisehin :** I would let you know what are very urgent. I would let you know that free education, free medical treatment and full employment are urgent. What we want and I believe everyone of us has said it is that we want an industry in every State and in every local government area.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member for Ifesowopo (*Mr Akinbisehin*) please, go to the substance of the Motion.

**Mr Akinbisehin :** The question of going to Abuja at the moment is overflogged and I believe that we should allow the President to have his Budget and submit his figures. If he puts his figure at 9.3 billion naira for the next five years, then we would go and assess whether we are really spending the money in the right way.

With these few remarks I take my seat.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you.

**Mr Jimoh Damisa (Okehi Adavbi) :** I rise to support this Motion. The Motion is timely because very soon we would probably be discussing the Budget and we want to know what is happening at Abuja. We would also like to know why the President would want to spend X Naira or Y Naira.

The President said that probably by 1982 people might settle there. This House may even recommend to His Excellency to make the settlement quicker or leave it. So we have the right to know what is happening. It is necessary that this Motion should be given the full support of this House. We feel that this House should have a report on what is happening at Abuja now. There was a time the country as a whole or even the Continent of Africa was regarded as a malaria area but the Continent is now free of Yellow Fever. Hon. Members, do not be afraid of what is happening in Abuja. We have Doctors around us ; they will take care of us. Even seeing what we are facing here in Lagos, I think it is very important we allow this House to send a Committee there and make a comprehensive report on the progress so far made. We may recommend that we want this or that. I think this House is entitled to receive such a report.

**Dr Emmanuel Y. Atanu (Ida South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, in contributing to this Motion and in support of it, one wants to say that the question of infestation in Abuja is not the matter at stake because we have already determined through the Constitution that we will go to Abuja. Therefore whether it has all diseases in this world we will go there. (*Applause*)

Secondly, Mr Speaker, Sir, I think it is important that this Committee goes to see what is happening in Abuja because there is a standing Committee. Therefore they will from time to time be called upon to act on Bills and requests by the appropriate Ministry or the appropriate Department of Government with regard to the movement to Abuja or the Federal Capital Territory. Therefore, it is important that they should know ahead of time what it is like. Visiting Abuja is the most essential thing to do. I am a teacher, at least recently I was a teacher, and we feel seeing

a thing as the adage goes is believing. It costs you more to believe the situation than when you imagine it. It is not proper for you to sit here and imagine what is happening in Abuja. We should go there and see it.

Mr Speaker, Sir, even though the President had gone to Abuja and had seen it with the eyes of the Executive, we need to see Abuja with the eyes of the Legislature. The Committee are the representatives of this Legislature and I think they should go there and see it and report back to us.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not think we should waste too much time passing this Motion. It is very essential.

**Mr Salisu M. Kanya (Babura) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion. This is a simple and straightforward Motion which does not need much argument in this House. It is a question of national duty and we are all here to represent the entire country. Unless we know exactly what is going on in Abuja, we will not be able to approve or disapprove of the Bills which will soon come to this House on what the nation is going to spend in Abuja in the 1980-81 financial year. So if we allow the Committee to go there and assess, and we ask the Executive to give us the exact assessment of what has been spent, that will help the entire House to know exactly how much we can allow to be spent and what we can disallow to be spent in Abuja.

The question of going to Abuja is of vital importance. If we look round in Lagos the amount of money being spent in it is twice or thrice that which is going to be spent in building a New Town. (*Interruptions*) Therefore, any peace loving Nigerian will support this Motion whole-heartedly so that we can build this New Town. If we hasten the transfer of the Federal Territory from Lagos to Abuja, it will reduce the unnecessary hardship people are being subjected to in Lagos. The transfer of the Federal Capital to Abuja does not mean that Lagos is going to be killed. (*Interruptions*) Take it easy please. We are only modernising the Capital of the country so that anybody coming to Nigeria will feel free to come because he knows he is going to stay in a safe place where he will not be afraid of anything. Therefore, I appeal to this honourable House to give its whole heart support to this very excellent Motion. I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr Stephen I. Alete (Ikwerre-Etche 1) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I stand to oppose this Motion as very irrelevant. It is true that the Speaker has said we are empowered to legislate on anything. Yes, legislation is legislation and in that case if we are exercising our legislative power, on reading this Motion, I do not see anything legislative in it.

**Some hon. Members :** Good point, Fire ! Fire !

**Mr Alete :** On the other hand, if we are exercising our investigatory powers, I will then examine this Motion as to whether there is any necessity for investigation. You cannot say there is a necessity for investigation without having proper details or information as to what you are going to investigate.

**Some hon. Members :** Fire ! Fire !

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order !

**Mr Alete :** So that if this motion was only for us to refer it to the Committee on Federal Capital development to do anything, I should have thought that the Business Committee would have referred this to the Committee without wasting our time here.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Sir, I am saying that we should not waste our time talking of things that are not going to give us any benefit at all. What are we going to investigate ? When we go to Abuja, as Members of this House, what are we going to do ? Are we going to take our own engineers to go there and assess what is going on ?

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Alete :** So, Mr Speaker, Sir, we have no detail as to whether the project is being delayed ; we have no information to that effect. Also I have heard some Members talking about supervising the spending of the amount of money we have put in there. We have no information as to whether any Federal money has been misapplied or has been applied at all. Therefore, I do not see any necessity and if we are to debate this Motion we must have information on which to rest our Motion. So, I am saying that this Motion is irrelevant and I do not support it.

**Mr J. C. Ojukwu (Idemili) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I stand up to support this Motion. (*Applause*)

My reasons are as follows : It is vital and necessary that this august House has a preview of what is going on not only in Abuja but also in any areas where we are expecting a gargantuan sum of billions of naira to be spent. It is not necessary that we wait until the Budget is presented. If the Committee or any group of Members visit Abuja and they have a view of what is happening there—they ask questions, they go round to look at drawings, take consultancy reports and what have you—they will be in a better position to assess whatever budgetary demands the President will be making on us. If we wait until that time comes then we will find ourselves either being steam-rolled or being back-beaten or being cajoled into taking actions which may not be in the best interest.

Another reason why it is necessary to go to Abuja is that whilst I am not imputing any improper motives or sinister intentions on any functionaries, it is necessary to check what one could describe as possible areas of allowing maybe a hippopotamus passing through the eye of a needle. This is because right now as you may well be aware, reports have been submitted, drawings have been made and contracts have been awarded, but if the operators at Abuja know that there is a body eager to check on what is happening there, the chances of mismanagement and perhaps possible misappropriation will be reduced.

Finally, as it has been said, we are the nation's watch-dogs. I do not agree with the last Speaker that we cannot look into any matter. While not belabouring the question on Section 82 of the Constitution though we are not legislating, the Section says we can look into anything over which we have the legislative competence. That is the important thing and we certainly have the legislative competence in these matters.

Having said this, Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to support the Motion. Thank you.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Dr Obihara.

**Dr Chikwe H. Obihara (Owerri South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion. (*Applause*)

I think that in spite of all arguments to the contrary, it is really necessary that we do everything possible in this House to hasten this project and make sure that it is properly carried out. We should not forget here the reasons why it is necessary to move to Abuja in the first instance. Millions of naira lost everyday in Lagos because of incongenial conditions of work and living are very well known. We find that the congestion in Lagos, the difficult traffic conditions and the difficulty of expansion because of limited space make it very difficult for people to get to work and, to do things. It makes living conditions so difficult that productivity is very low. It is, therefore, necessary for this House in fact to do everything possible to move as soon as possible to Abuja.

Now, it is true that work is going on in Abuja but this House does not know how much work is going on. It is, therefore, essential that a group from here goes to Abuja and see what is happening there. The Budget is coming very soon in March and it is very necessary that before that Budget comes out, this House should have a fairly good idea of what is happening there and of the needs of the project.

It is a very big project costing billions of naira. So, when the project does come up, we will be in a position to comment on it and be able to make proposals to improve on it. We will be able to make proposals on how it can be improved upon and hastened and how it can be properly implemented.

For these reasons, Mr Speaker, Sir, I support the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** GNPP. Dr Idang.

**Dr Gordon J. Idang (Etinan II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of this House, I stand to support this Motion. In doing this I would like to crave the indulgence of every Member of this House to put aside party politics and support what I think is within our own competence. We cannot really dissociate ourselves from what has been specifically mentioned in the Constitution. Those of us who have lived in Lagos for the past one hundred and something days know the need to move to Abuja as soon as practicable.

[DR IDANG]

Secondly, as most of my Colleagues have already mentioned, during the next few months we would be called upon to debate the President's Budget. I am quite sure that a considerable part of this Budget will be allocated to the Federal Capital Project. What the hon. Member, the Mover of this Motion is telling us to do is not to lead the delegation of this House, rather, it is only the Members of the Committee on the Federal Capital Development that he wants to go there. Even though a Motion like this Committee has come to the Floor of this House, I think that has the right even to go and look at the Federal Capital to be able to know and to direct this House when things pertaining to this particular project are discussed in this House. So, I think it is very straight forward and needs no serious elaboration.

Mr Speaker, Sir, without wasting too much time, I would like to support this Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Alhaji Kaltungo.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, may I now call for the Question to be put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That this House directs the Committee on Federal Capital Development to carry out an on the spot assessment of development in the execution of projects at Abuja, the new Federal Capital, as soon as practicable, and to report its findings to the House.

### Fight Against Corruption

**Mr Speaker :** Fight against corruption is Motion No. 2. (*Interruptions*)

Hon. Members, it is entirely your own decision whether we are staying on or not. Will the Whips canvass the views and let me know whether we are continuing or not.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Speaker :** Please hon. Members, sit down. I understand that they have finished repairing the airconditioner but there is no water. It is expected that in thirty minutes' time they will be able to get water and pour it in. So, we may suspend sitting and come back at three o'clock.

### ADJOURNMENT

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, in view of the unbearable condition in this House for the Members to continue sitting, I move that this House do adjourn till 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That this House do now adjourn till 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 11.37 a.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Friday, 25th January, 1980

The House met at 9.15 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr Speaker : Yes.

Nigerian Television

Mr Sani Danbare Kalgo (Bunza-Kalgo) : Mr Speaker, Sir, Members of the House of Representatives, my point of explanation is that yesterday during the National news at 9 p.m., it was announced that we passed a Bill on Science and Technology to the Senate for approval. Anything we pass here, we pass it as House of Representatives. We do not pass any Bill or Motion to the Senate for approval. We have the same right as the Senate. It is only when the Houses of Senate and the Representatives are in Joint Session that we call it National Assembly. That Bill was passed by the National Assembly and not by the Senate alone. We have never passed any Bill or Motion to the Senators for approval.

I would like to draw the attention of the mass media to this. Thank you, Sir.

Mr Speaker : Thank you very much.

Mr J. C. Ojukwu (Idemili) : Mr Speaker, I have a point of explanation to make and it relates to what the hon. Member for Bunza-Kalgo (Mr Sani Danbare Kalgo) has just said.

I would like to explain to this House and also to the mass media that the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides for a National Assembly at the Centre and Section 43 spells that out. There is no such thing as the Upper House or the Lower House. We find this to be rather a derogatory remark. We hope the Press will take note of this that there is no such thing as the Lower House.

In furtherance of this explanation, Mr Speaker, if one read the newspaper account of the signing of the Bill of Science and Technology yesterday, one would note a slant given to this often made mistake. The President of the Senate was given such publicity that people had the impression that he had to be by the side of the President of the Nation to make sure that the Bill from the Senate must be signed. There was no mention of the Speaker of this honourable House and this is the type of slant they keep giving.

Further more, Sir, I would like you to have it explained that it is a wrong notion ; it may be corrected in a sense. I consider it wrong for the NTA network to refer to us often as Assemblymen. True enough, we are Members of the National

Assembly and could be called Assemblymen. When they report proceedings from the Senate they refer to Members as Senator A or B but when they want to refer to the Members of the House of Representatives, they would say Assemblyman this or that. If they want to refer to all Members of the National Assembly as Assemblymen that could be understood but to differentiate us by referring to people in the Senate as Senators and those in the House of Representatives as Assemblymen cannot be understood. We do not know whether they are State Assemblymen or National Assemblymen. It would be better to refer to us as Representative A or B or even Congressmen as the case may be. I hope that the mass media would take note of this explanation. There is no such thing as the Upper or the Lower House in this country.

Mr Speaker : Yes. Thank you very much.

Nigerian Press

Alhaji A. Abutu (Ankpa South) : Mr Speaker, my point of explanation is that I would like to appeal to the press through the Speaker that since we are practising the American type of Constitution it would be better if we were referred to as Congressmen. In America Members of the Congress are referred to as Congressmen. (Interruptions). We do not want to be referred to as Assemblymen. Personally, I would want to be referred to as Congressman Alhaji Abubakar Abutu.

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

Alhaji Sidi Hamed Ali (Danbatta) : It is true that this mistake has been discovered. I am sure this was not given to the press by the Senate or by anybody in an attempt to ridicule us or play us down. The whole thing was that there was a natural mistake from the press themselves. Already, Mr Speaker and some Leaders of the National Assembly have had discussion with the press to enlighten them about the new system which all of us are learning. So, I know this is a very serious matter but I am sure that necessary care is being taken to make sure that everybody understands the true position.

Mr Speaker : Yes, Mr Adesina.

Mr L. Onaolapo Adesina (Ibadan South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, this is a very serious matter and I do not want us to take it as a play thing. I believe that Members of the Nigerian Press are enlightened enough to read the Constitution very well to know that there is nothing like the Upper House or the Lower House. This is a mistake of the heart and not of the head because since the beginning of this Assembly the members of the press have been addressing us as the Lower House and the Senate as Upper House. So we have to make this clear to them.

I want to recommend to this House that the Clerk of the National Assembly should distribute hand-outs to members of the press so as to explain things to them. We have two Houses of the National Assembly, that is, the House of Representatives and the Senate. Both of them have equal powers. The mere fact that the Senate has the power to approve nominees as Ministers does not mean that the Senate has more powers than the House of Representatives.



[MR ADESINA]

Secondly, it has become the practice in Nigeria today that whenever anybody wants a State to be created, first of all they would go to the Senate and say they have come with a demand for the creation of State. They are just giving more importance to the Senate than to the House of Representatives. I do not say that the Senate is not important. I think this should be corrected. We cannot wait a day longer to correct this thing. I am appealing to this House to direct the Clerk of the National Assembly to distribute hand-outs to members of the press so as to educate them properly on this thing. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker:** Hon. Members, I think that is enough. Let me explain what happened yesterday.

What happened was that they said a decision to sign the Bill was taken late about two days ago. By then, we had already closed. At 8 o'clock yesterday morning, my own invitation was brought here to the National Assembly and the address of my residence was written at the back of the envelope. So, they took it to the Clerk of the National Assembly who told them that I would not be around until about 9 a.m. He advised them to go and find out where I live. Meanwhile, I did not hear about it until I arrived here at about 9 a.m. On my arrival, I was told about it. I drove straight to the State House. There at the State House, I discovered that they had been waiting for me for about one hour. So, just as I was entering, they were going into the Cabinet Office. I told the Head of State immediately that I did not know anything about it until about 9 o'clock in the morning when I came to the National Assembly.

Then, the President called his officials immediately and asked them why I was not informed. They said they did not know my residence and that they contacted the Clerk of the National Assembly who told them that he did not know my residence. The letter which they brought with them bore my residential address. They could not trace out my residence at Ikoyi for that matter. I was there when the function started and when it closed. The problem, as Mallam Sidi Ali rightly pointed out is that we are lacking in effective public relations, and we are trying now to bridge that gap.

I had held a meeting with all the Party Leaders, and we are going to hold a meeting again. We have been authorised to appoint a Public Relations Officer to handle our public relation matters. So I have asked Members who are Journalists here, particularly hon. Members like David Atta, Sidi Ali, and Ojukwu, to look round for suitable persons who can work as our Public Relations Officers. I have seen the pay and it is good too. That is the position.

We have said it over and over again that this House is exactly the same in terms of responsibility and jurisdiction with the Senate. So, it is completely erroneous to refer to us as Lower Chamber, and the Senate as the Upper Chamber. It is only an act of ignorance on the part of those who are making the reference. It is either that they do not understand the Constitution or that they have not taken trouble at all to read it. I think as soon as we get our Public Relations Office set up things will improve.

Hon. Members we have only one Motion today. Yes, Alhaji Konduga.

#### Leader of the House in Borno State House of Assembly

**Alhaji Sanda Konduga (Konduga):** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I have some information to make to this honourable House this morning. Before the President and all of us here took office we all took Oath of Allegiance to respect and maintain the Constitution, and also the integrity of this Nation.

At the time we were on recess, if I can recall the President invited all the Leaders of the five Political Parties for a meeting to discuss about peace in this country. They met and discussed at length, and we are all aware of this. Hon. Members, I have to bring this incident to your notice here this morning.

Yesterday morning, in Maiduguri the Leader of the House in the State Assembly was taken to an unknown destination. He was taken away by people known to have come from the Immigration Department. According to the information, the Leader of the House was taken to the Immigration Department Office and shown a letter that was sent from Lagos saying that he was going to be repatriated back to his home place in Chad Republic, because he is not a native of Borno. He asked them if they would allow him to go back to his House to take some money along with him to wherever they were taking him. They refused. He asked them again whether he could contact one of his Assemblymen, and they allowed him to do so. The Assemblyman went there and the Leader of the House asked him to go to his house and get him some money. As the Assemblyman left for his house for the money, they just took the Leader away. When the Assemblyman came back with the money they had already left the office. As the Assemblyman was aware that the Leader was being taken to Chad, so he chased them and met them at the Border at Gambaru. He gave the money to him. At the same time, some members of the Party caucus became aware of what happened. They too chased them and met them at the border. The Party Leaders and Party supporters in that locality also gathered there. The Leader of the House then called all the Party Leaders and supporters and told them that they should not be worried and that it was on authority that he should be repatriated because they had shown him a letter from Lagos to the effect. He told them that they should all go back to their houses. He also told them that he was being taken to an Authority and he was not going to be executed or jailed. They should all therefore go back to their businesses and that the Authority in Chad would get in touch with the Authority in Lagos who has asked that he be repatriated.

Hon. Members, the mother of this man is from my own Constituency and even from my home town. He is forty nine years' old. He was born and brought up in Maiduguri.

[MR KONDUKA]

If we go back to history in Nigeria—because of our political leaning we start to repatriate people anyhow.—Then we will discover that all Kanuris, the Fulanis, the Yorubas, the Ibos, *et cetera* are not Nigerians. If we are to follow what we learned in history, about eighty per cent of Nigerian are not Nigerians. We all emigrated by one way or the other and found ourselves in Nigeria. We cannot dispute this. Therefore, we should all be guided by the Constitution in whatever we do.

I therefore, implore this honourable House to look into this matter. Some people are now preaching political victimization; they feel that they must rule at all costs. When they fail, they refuse to believe that they have failed and that they must still rule. At the same time, there are some people on top who are not in favour of Civilian Government because they cannot get what they want. So, they are trying to cause chaos and confusion in this country. They try to create an atmosphere which is not conducive to the unity and stability of this country and perhaps, cause military intervention or total failure of our present government. We do not pray for this.

Therefore, as the President has already made moves to settle issues like political victimization and so on, we have clearly seen that there are areas where the Government is being held by a Party that is not in power.

With this explanation, I think this honourable House will take note of this and take appropriate action to correct this situation.

#### Hon. S. U. Bassey's Burial

**Alhaji Yusuf Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I took the Floor merely to formally inform this House about the delegation which we sent to Cross River State.

We were delegated by this honourable House to go to Eket in Cross River State to honour the late Mr S. U. Bassey by taking part in the funeral ceremony. This we did. I wish to inform Members also that there were some other Members who travelled with us at their own expense to take part in this funeral ceremony.

Members of the family of late S. U. Bassey have asked me to extend their sincere appreciation for all that the House of Representatives has done in honour of the late S. U. Bassey.

We accordingly handed to the family the money collected by this Assembly which was to the tune of ₦1,462.00. The family is very grateful for this. Thank you.

#### NOTICE OF MOTION

##### Small-scale Industries

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, we have only one Motion today, and that is on Small-scale Industries. The Motion stands in the names of Mr A. Ukpanah and Mr A. Olukoya.

**Mr A. Ukpanah (Ukanafun II) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name and that of my hon. Colleague, Mr M. A. Olukoya.

That this House, realising the importance of small-scale industries in creating employment opportunities for village and small town dwellers; in mobilising local resources, and in mitigating rural-urban migration, calls upon the President of the Federal Republic to site Federal Industrial Development Centres in all State Capitals and to increase the present amount of Industrial Credit Schemes of ₦120,000 to ₦150,000 so that they can play their role in the economic development of the Nation.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, is there anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Okon A. Eddy (Ikot Ekpene I) :** Mr Speaker, I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr A. Ukpanah :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, this Motion is quite clear and distinct. I intend it to be a Motion of the eighties. I intend it to be a Motion whereby this House sets upon itself to carry on a cardinal programme along with other cardinal programmes, particularly the Green Revolution enunciated by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

I shall give a brief background of the small-scale industries so that hon. Members can also appreciate the aspect of siting industrial development centres in each of the States of the Federation. Briefly put, a small-scale industry is defined as an industry that has a capital of ₦150,000 on machinery alone. In order to make it a small-scale industry, emphasis is also placed on the fact that electricity must be used for the manufacture of relatively consumer items.

The programme is designed to afford or to provide employment to the people in the rural areas. By the very nature of its small size, the intention is that it should be allocated in the rural and suburban centres. We agree that in most of the rural areas, there is no electricity supply; the emphasis is that in order to make an industry a small-scale one, electricity must be used. By siting small-scale industries in the rural areas, the intention is development at grass-roots, it is also to check rural and suburban migration to urban centres, and I think this is exactly what this House concerns itself about.

The coverage of small-scale industries at the moment is about 45,000 in the country, employing no less than 160,000 persons. This also covers over 276 projects, that is to say, over 276 projects are classified as small-scale industries. These include agro-based industries, live-stock based industries, mineral-based industries and others. In the field of agro-based industries, we took pains to link the agro-based industries with the Green Revolution. Agro-based industries that are covered by small-scale industries alone are over sixty. If I may, with

[MR UKPANAH]

your kind permission, refer to the address of the President of the Republic of Nigeria to the National Assembly which reads thus :

*Commercial production of food and raw-materials is our goal. Emphasis would be placed on modern technique of farming, storage, distribution and processing.*

For the Green Revolution to succeed, food produced must be processed, preserved and stored. This would be achieved only through the medium of small-scale industries and not through the multi-giant industries. For instance, we know that most of our food-stuffs in this country are seasonal. At certain periods we may have oranges in abundance, whilst at certain other periods of the year, one orange may be selling for more than 30k. If these fruits are preserved during the periods we have them in abundance, then Nigeria would be able to feed itself and, if possible, export these fruits, which is what the President of the Republic of Nigeria enunciated. Even in the Third National Development Plan of 1975-80 which is about to run out, emphasis is placed on Operation Feed the Nation, and the new Administration also places emphasis on Green Revolution. Therefore, food processing and preservation become *sine qua non*.

The basic problem has always been with the small size industries in this country. Small scale-industries have a weak capital base. Small scale industries are confronted with absolute lack of capital and absolute lack of credit facilities.

The small-scale industrialist in this country has no *locus standi* in the banks as at the moment. The banks as they are operating in this country appear to exist for the multi-national corporations. The small-scale industrialist should possess machinery that totals up to ₦150,000 and this is not the end of it. He has to acquire land, particularly in the rural areas and even in the urban centres, he has to acquire accommodation, he has to get adequate staff and he has to have the working capital. So, after he has spent his outlay on providing the basic infrastructures like land, accommodation and working capital, he is unable to purchase the machinery. And come to think of it, in the rural areas where we have no electricity, previously ₦80,000 was approved for these small-scale industries. But you find that the small-scale industrialist has to spend quite a substantive amount of money to buy electric generator and run it and we also know the cost of running these electric generators. They eat into his finances.

Therefore, with the weak financial base the banks do not honour any credit which the small-scale industrialist might wish to make and the Federal Government policy as operated at the moment, is that the Federal Government initiates a policy in the Ministry of Industry whereby they want each State to grant these loans to the small-scale industrialist. Then they introduce a system they call a matching grant which, in effect, means that if a State loans out ₦10,000 to a small-scale industrialist the Federal Government would pay the State ₦10,000. These loans have been managed by a small committee in the State called State Loans Management Committee.

Recently, we heard about defaulters and the rest of them. Therefore, I want this honourable House to resolve, having regard to the fact that the small-scale industrialist already spends over ₦200,000 of his private money acquiring infrastructures and accommodation as base, that this sum of ₦150,000 which this Motion seeks should go further to an extent of helping him procure machinery and equipment.

The local entrepreneurs as they are already known, are in a very precarious situation. In order not to frighten the Government (because already what obtains in the States is that people think that when they go to the State Governments to get this money they are taking their part of the national cake), we suggest in this Motion that the Federal Government should put all it wants to invest in the Nigerian Bank for Commerce and Industry. I want to tell the hon. Members that there is already a move in this direction. The Government of the United States of America has already agreed to pay through the World Bank \$25,000,000 to the Nigerian Bank for Commerce and Industry as aid to small-scale industries and the Federal Government has also agreed to subscribe ₦25,000,000 to the Bank for Commerce and Industry.

Our own suggestion is that whoever wants this loan should go to the Bank for Commerce and Industry. The procedures for recovering the loans should be stringent but the interests should be reasonable. They should not be too high and, of course, they should not be too low. They should just be reasonable because if they are too low most of these big entrepreneurs will find an indirect way of getting into it. Also, we suggest that the Federal Government makes it mandatory upon itself and upon the State Governments to make budgetary provisions annually to be paid into the Nigerian Bank for Commerce and Industry for loans to small-scale industries.

As we have already known, a lot of items have been banned in this country; even travel goods like brief cases that we hold perhaps for one reason or another. There is an existing industry and perhaps it is the only industry making travel goods in this country, and we know how inflationary the prices of these things have been. A ban has been placed on lipsticks. A pencil factory is being established somewhere in the country and it would not be surprising that perhaps in a short time there might be ban on pencils too. So, the idea is that this loan should be granted to small-scale industrialists and there should be enough small-scale industries in the country.

In a place like India with over eight hundred million people, it is amazing to find that India is so completely self-sufficient in matters of small-scale industries, travel goods and even gift items. Mr Speaker, Sir, we also advocate for the establishment of agencies whereby products manufactured by these small-scale industrialists can be promoted. All these factors taken into account will boost the industry and because these industries should be spread as much as possible, a branch of the Bank

[MR UKPANA]

for Commerce and Industry should be sited at least one in each State to make it possible for these small-scale industrialists to make use of it. This, therefore, takes us to the need for Industrial Development Centres.

In fact there would not be much argument on the Industrial Development Centres because the Third National Development Plan having seen the problems incurred by small-scale industrialists, has already made provisions in 1975-80 for the establishment of Industrial Development Centres, one in each State. But this has not taken off and it is the duty of this House to resolve that this be taken up immediately. At the moment only three Industrial Development Centres are located in the country and they are located thus: one at Owerri to take care of Imo, Anambra, Cross River and Rivers States; another one at Zaria to take care of Sokoto, Kaduna, Gongola, Kano, Bauchi, Plateau and Niger States; and the other one at Oshogbo to take care of Ogun, Ondo, Bendel, Kwara and Lagos States.

**An hon. Member:** What of Benue State?

**Mr A. Ukpanah:** The one at Zaria also takes care of Benue State.

So, we find that at the moment the centres are not sufficient to boost the small-scale industry. Therefore, Sir, I recommend the siting of these industries in each of these locations because it is in these centres actually that the loan appraisals and applications are made and also even, research for the benefit of small-scale industries. These Development Centres also act as data banks for small-scale industries.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker:** Thank you.

**Mr Speaker:** Yes, the co-Mover, hon. Member for Ijebu-Ode (*Mr Olukoya*)

**Mr M. A. Olukoya (Ijebu-Ode):** Mr Speaker, hon. Members of this august Assembly, this in my view is a straightforward Motion. It is not controversial and if I may add, it needs the support of everyone of us especially those of us who come from the rural areas. It is a Motion that caters for the good of our people, especially those from rural areas and towns.

Mr Speaker, Sir, what we are calling the honourable House to do in this particular Motion is simply to endorse one of the cornerstones of this present Constitution and that is Section 16 (2) of the present Constitution. If I may read, Sir, paragraph (c) says—

*That the economic system is not operated in such a manner as to permit the concentration of wealth or the means of production and exchange in the hands of few individuals or of a group;*

Mr Speaker, Sir, we have discussed in extenso Section 14 (3) of the present Constitution. Now this particular Motion falls squarely on the economic objective of the present Constitution. The need to ensure that the country is industrialised and the basis for achieving this particular objective is by giving necessary financial aid and incentive to small-scale industries which as you all know, and

according to the analysis of the co-mover, spread across the large geographical areas in the country. My co-mover has really analysed what are the objectives of this particular Motion and what this House or the nation as a whole will achieve by giving unanimous support to this particular Motion. There is no doubt that there is a drift from the rural areas to the urban areas.

I would say, if for example, I have got an industry or a means of being employed in my local government areas. I will not need to travel all the way to Lagos to find employment. That is what this particular Motion is seeking and by staying in my rural areas, there will be an opportunity of improving the lot of the people in that area and the prevention of over-population of the urban areas.

Hon. Members we have listened to the arguments in support of this Motion and the efforts which the government has made to assist the small-scale industries. It is our view that the efforts being made by the government are grossly inadequate in the sense that the three industrial centres which we have at the moment cannot cater for all the small-scale industries we have in the country.

We have talked of the Federal characters which is Section 14 (3) of the present Constitution. If the Federal Industrial Training Centres is to be more effective and to serve the need of the group interest for which it is established, it is just right that there should be a branch in each of the States in the Federation to make the centres closer to the people whose interest they are supposed to serve. In addition the present sum being granted to small-scale industries is grossly inadequate. It is inadequate and you have listened to what the co-mover has said that the sum is only limited to fixed capital. What do we find when an entrepreneur intending to set up a small-scale industry exhausts the sum of ₦120,000.00 on the infrastructure and the purchase of machinery? Then there is a difficulty of generating sufficient fund to run the particular company. That is why we are asking for an increase in this particular amount.

Mr Speaker and hon. Members, as I say, this is a Motion that requires the support of this honourable House. We all know what the disadvantages of the concentration of industries in big towns are. There is disparity in the national income *per capita* where for example in some capital towns the national income *per capita* is ₦1,000, in some areas it is ₦350, while in the remotest heart of rural areas it is about ₦150. This is a situation which we should not allow to continue. The only way by which we can arrest this particular situation is for the present Administration and the National Assembly to start the balancing of the inequality in the national wealth through financial incentive to small-scale industries.

Hon. Members, I will suggest that the Administration, apart from increasing the amount of ₦120,000.00 to ₦150,000.00 and siting of Federal Industrial Centre in all the nineteen States, should abolish the use of Form M which hits hardest on small-scale industries.

[MR OLUKOYA]

As I have said, their capital is very limited and the little amount they have, as soon as they pay it to the Central Bank on Letter of Credit, it becomes difficult for them to continue to run the company. I would suggest that the 100 per cent deposit which the Central Bank demands as cost of L.C. in the case of the small-scale industries and for raw materials, should be reduced to 10 per cent. In case of assembly of components it should be reduced to 15 per cent and if it is luxury goods, it should be reduced to 30 per cent. The demand by the Federal Industrial Development Centre for Collateral security, I feel is too much and does not give many small-scale industries the opportunity to apply for the loan because they lack the necessary collateral security.

In addition the Government should direct financial houses that they should grant not less than 50 per cent of the amount of loan granted to small-scale industries in form of fixed capital as running capital. Further, the tax allowance and tariff concession which is granted to foreign-owned Companies and other Companies should be extended to the small-scale industries because as I have said, the small-scale industries are the foundation for this country to become an industrialised nation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, there is one big thing which the small-scale industries lack and that is technical know-how or managerial ability. I would suggest that the Federal Government should set up a Small Business Promotion Board to look after the interest of the small-scale industries. It should also give them technical information and hold them to train the employees of the small-scale industries.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I now call on the hon. Members to give a unanimous support for this particular Motion and by doing this, we are just upholding the provisions of Section 16 of the Constitution.

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion. In doing so I would first quote Section 16, Subsection 2 (a) and (b) :

(a) *the promotion of a planned and balanced economic development ;*

(b) *that the material resources of the community are harnessed and distributed as best as possible to serve the common good ;*

Why I am referring to this Section is because the Federal Industrial Training Centres are situated in only about four areas and if we want to harness the resources of our local areas backed up by the Presidential System that provides a three-tier Government, we have to establish these centres in all the 19 States in order that they will harness the resources. For instance in the Delta areas of Rivers and Bendel States, we have the mangrove fruits. Their barks are fed with enough liquid to give us enough dye for our textile industries. If we have the Federal Industries Training Centres up to at Owerri they would never come towards that area to conduct a research into what is happening in the Delta areas. For that reason, the siting of the Federal Industrial Training Centres in all the 19 States is a very good idea and with that view I support the Motion.

The second one is our Fishing Ponds and other things in the small industrial areas. If industrial centres are established in these areas, they would be able to conduct research and know that within that locality there are required materials so that we can harness the ponds. Again, if you carry out enough feasibility surveys in all our Constituencies you will see that in a Constituency you can get clay and in another place you have granites. All these feasibility surveys when conducted, will show you exactly that at a particular place there is a particular raw material that can be harnessed to industrialise this nation thereby reducing the influx of population to the centres and making our people live happily at home instead of surging into the cities.

With these few remarks, I support the Motion and I hope hon. Members will support it too.

**Mr Edet U. U. Inyang (Ikono)** : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, the Movers of the Motion have already emphasised the importance of Small-Scale Industries in this country.

Just as we talk about agricultural revolution, the importance of seeing that the rural areas should be industrialised cannot be over-emphasised. We are trying to see that we have enough to feed our people. We are also trying to see that we do not leave the few urban areas to be over-pressurised with population in transportation, in accommodation and other things and to over-strain the family relationship which would have existed if people were able to work in their own rural areas. We will be saving and making maximum and proper use of our resources if we concentrate on rural development.

Mr Speaker, a point I would like to add is that the question of Industrial Centres in each of the States is quite obvious already from what the Movers have said. There is no reason why such centres should not play the role now being played by Agricultural Development Extension Scheme. They should be able to go around in the Local Government Areas to offer advice when it is necessary, to assist in staff recruitment and so on, especially to bail out these small-scale industries at moments when they require money from financial houses. But because they are not so well placed as the big ones, they are denied. If they are around they will be able to study their problems and possibly assist them to talk to the financial houses that this money is not going to be wasted but will be properly used so that they are not left to die when in fact they should exist.

Mr Speaker, the centres are very important but many things will have to be considered for the proper use of the centres so that success can be achieved in development.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr T. C. Amasiatu (Oru)** : Thank you, Mr Speaker.

In contributing to the Motion calling for the establishment of small-scale industries in the communities from where we come, I want to say that the call is quite adequate and time and the reasons already enumerated by the Movers are compelling

[MR AMASIATU]

appreciable and good. The establishment of small-scale industries in local community and the results and benefits which they will derive from them and from such establishment cannot be over-emphasised. There are a lot of benefits we have from rural areas.

We have a lot of people who come out of schools, from training colleges, from secondary and from commercial schools. We have a lot of people from these areas who train themselves in many fields of endeavour. As a matter of fact, the nauseating thing that comes along with all these things is that at the beginning of each year, in January preferably, you see lots and lots of these young boys and girls troop out to big cities in search of work. The reason for this is because there is no industry of any size at all in the localities from where they come. It could be said, and it is evidently true that the establishment of an industry of a small-scale as we are saying brings along in its wake, a lot of developments like water, roads and electricity. It brings in its wake again a coherent organisation of that area. If there is an industry of that size in any area where the government has a share and the commercial banks have some share, there is the tendency, and a compelling one for that matter, for the government to have interest in the development of that area.

I do not know if what happens in my area does happen in other places. In December or thereabout of every year, in my area east of the Niger, over the radio networks there and in the newspapers that are published around there, you would read and hear news of the launching of this and the launching of that with the result that people get worried and are afraid to go home during Christmas. What is the reason for this? The reason is because there is no water, there is no road and there is no electricity. In fact, there is nothing that gives life.

If you want to listen to your radio, you have to put a very long stick, a bamboo and mount an aerial on top of trees in order to get the news. If there is an industry of any size there, in the first place, there would be roads for evacuation and movement. In the second place, the government would bring in water. In the third place, there would be electricity. In the fourth place, there would be a feeling of life, there would be a different orientation, and the people who live in the villages would feel like human beings and they would thank their God that they belong to this world of the twentieth century after all. I am saying and I am supporting this Motion that the present Administration should, as a matter of necessity and urgency, grant enough loans and instruct the commercial banks and different State Governments to make sure the entrepreneurs are helped towards this goal.

Another thing, I would like to talk about in this respect, like one of the co-Movers of the Motion mentioned, is the abolition of Form M and the abolition of the very high rate of interest on the capital. Also the abolition of very high demand for security on these loans.

Mr Speaker : Please round up.

**Mr Amasiatu :** If an entrepreneur in a small-scale industry is going in for a business of say about ₦100,000 and then you want him to give you a security that is almost ₦50,000. I do not think that if he goes through that hell he would have even a small surplus and the energy to go into business. Therefore, I would solicit on behalf of the people who want to go into small-scale business that the government abrogates these three things.

Mr Speaker : Thank you.

**Mr M. A. Oje (Ohaozara West) :** I can say before this honourable House that this is one of the best Motions so far.

This Motion involves the whole Nation because it deals with one of the wishes of the people who sent us here to represent them. Many of the Local Government Areas are generally idle because of lack of industries. If we look into this Motion very carefully, we will see that the Movers of this Motion are nationalists. (*Applause*) This Motion is the best weapon to wipe away highway robbery. Let me illustrate. The percentage of people who come into Lagos is about 100 per cent whereas those who go out of Lagos is about 5 per cent. What is the reason for this? It is because somebody can come to Lagos and stay with a friend or a relation who promised to find him a job, and he may spend two to three weeks without getting the job. As life in Lagos is very difficult, this friend may be unable to maintain the man before he gets him a job. What happens is that the man may be asked to leave his house, and this man may not want to go back to the rural area. A lot of these people sleep under the bridges. In the next six weeks, you may find somebody who went underworld riding a Mercedes Benz or a Volvo. As a young chap he wants to be like others. If there was an industry in his rural area, that man could not have come to Lagos because the atmosphere in the rural area is hundred per cent better than what we have here. This is true.

I want this House to support this Motion wholeheartedly because this is the Motion that the people want. (*Applause*) Thank you very much.

**Mr T. N. Ochiama (Ikeduru) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am supporting this Motion in its totality.

My support is based on the fact that small-scale industries are in fact very viable. Their viability is that they help to save the economy of the nation because the influx of people from the rural areas to the urban centres would be reduced. As my hon. Colleagues have said, you would find out that if small-scale industries are established in almost all the Local Government Areas in the country it would minimise the rate of unemployment in this country and it would also minimise the wave of armed robbery. When some people are pushed to the wall and they find out that there is no means of livelihood, they resort to robbing with violence. So, if we can establish small-scale industries in almost all the Local Government Areas (because it may not be possible to establish small-scale industries in all the Local Government Areas in this country), you will find out that people who are

[MR OCHIAMA]

from these areas will have things to lay hands on. One might not get such pay as one would get in the urban centres. One will prefer that because one will be given the opportunity to look after one's old parents at home. Also with our Nigerian and African custom of extended family, that will give one the opportunity and privilege of looking after them. If we say that everything should be centralised in the urban centres, then the tendency is that everybody will also go to that place where the cake will be found.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am supporting this Motion because it is very substantive. I am saying that it does not require long comments since favourable comments have already been made about the viability of the establishment of small-scale industries in all the Local Government Areas and with that also the appeal to increase the fund from ₦120,000 to ₦150,000. I am also soliciting that it should be given a green-light.

With these few remarks, I beg to sit.

**Mr D. A. Zubairu (Jamai North)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion as much as I can. This is a very important Motion of the year and it is like the other Motion on Integrated Rural Development of the other day.

You will find that in the developed areas of this country, green revolution has gone side by side with industrial revolution ; none of them can take off and leave the other. This Motion actually will not only help our foreign exchange but will also help so many other things. It will help even the local productivity. It will give incentive to entrepreneurship. You will find that Nigeria has so many entrepreneurs who would like to establish many industries but most of these industries require capital intensive equipment which would cost a huge amount of money. You will also find that some of these people do not have managerial skill.

Many people have spoken so well on this Motion, in fact they have already said what I had in mind. I will only add that the siting of these small-scale industries should be in respect of the Federal Constituency seats. This is because on many occasions top businessmen in Nigeria have always colluded with the NIDB officials and have always got the loan to the disadvantage of those for whom it is intended. Secondly, I will call on the Federal Government to ensure that most of these small-scale industries team up in groups of ten and twenty before loan is granted. As I have already said, you will find a few individuals who have influence and money getting this loan and manipulating this programme solely for themselves. So if you allow ten people to have hands in this business, nobody will say this is my business, because it belongs to the entire locality.

In contributing to this debate, I call on every Member of this House to note that this is a very serious Motion that has something to do with our locality as we have got so many untapped resources. For example, today you may have a lot of tomatoes in a particular locality and they are untapped because the local people cannot buy the tomatoes. But if you have things like the tomato industry and the

food canning industry in these areas, they will be of great importance. This will not only generate employment, as I have already said, but it will generate local productivity and entrepreneurship. So, I call on this honourable House to support this Motion overwhelmingly. Thank you.

**Alhaji Iliyasu Hong (Hong)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, in supporting this Motion I will say it has come to this House at an appropriate time and we should all give it an overwhelming support. This Motion is in the interest of all of us and that of the people who elected us. I support the idea that small-scale industries should be established in all rural areas to prevent rural people drifting into the cities and urban areas ; and also to aid employment for the people in the rural areas.

With these few remarks, I beg to support this Motion. Thank you.

**Mr Umaru Sadiq (Kumbotso)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, a lot has been said on this Motion and, of course, everybody in this House is giving it his whole heart support. My contribution will be based on our industrial set up.

It is high time that we changed the system of setting up industries within urban areas. If you go to these so-called developed countries whose type of development we have been trying to copy, you will find that their industrial set up is within the rural areas. But here in Nigeria it is most unfortunate that up till now we have been concentrating industrial projects within the urban areas. So, it is high time that we started to set up industries in our rural areas as it is within these rural areas that we get most of our raw materials which we take to the urban centres.

Moreover, Mr Speaker, Sir, we have the materials in this country but we do not give incentive to our people who are setting up these small-scale industries. We make it difficult for some people to set up these industries. As a result, you find that our raw materials are abandoned.

With this little contribution, I beg to support this Motion.

**Chief Olusola Omonira (Ilaje/Eseodo)** : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I rise to make my contribution to this Motion. I would have loved to give my unqualified support to it but the Motion as it stands merely calls on the President to assist in respect of two areas, that is, increasing the Capital of the Industrial Credit Schemes from ₦120,000 to ₦150,000 and increasing the Industrial Credit Centres from three to nineteen.

There are many other areas in which assistance is required from the Government by the small-scale industries. One of the most important assistance is the preparation of feasibility studies. My experience proved when I was at the Ahmadu Bello University that these Industrial Training Centres could not prepare a worthwhile feasibility study. They are merely training industrial officers from the Civil Service. They are not particularly trained in production. When you look at it really, the salary

structure there cannot allow a Chartered Accountant or a Chartered Engineer or an Agricultural Economist to move in there and head the Industrial Training Centre. He would not be able to go there. It would not be attractive enough for him and if it is attractive to him, you find that he will soon leave the place because when he prepares the first feasibility study and the second, and he monitors the performances, he will discover that since he could do all that, why could he not establish a similar thing for himself. Of course, he will move away.

Now, we need the Universities to establish small business centres where the Lecturers can be able to make use of their theoretical knowledge. I say this because that was my experience when I was a Lecturer in a Polytechnic in Britain. I was attached to a small business centre of a Polytechnic and we did a lot of good job. We have thirteen universities now and they all have Faculty of Business Administration. Why can we not establish in each of these universities small business centres to cater for these feasibility studies and monitor performances?

The other area which I think we have to look into very seriously is Government Inspectors. I constantly refer to my personal experience. I had a small business when I was in the private sector in Kano. (Interruptions) Constantly, the Government Inspectors came there to harrass my staff about Employees' Compensation Insurance, Statistics, Tax, Excise Duties and so on so forth. I would have thought that these Government Inspectors would be more helpful suggesting ways by which the small business could progress. So, I think it requires the President to intervene in this respect to ensure that the Government Inspectors are helpers and not people who are harrassing the centres.

Again, if the big businesses get tax holidays why is it that the small businesses cannot get tax relief? As a result of the Pioneer Act, a big industry can have tax relief for three to five years but you do not have similar things for small businesses. I think we have to do something in this line.

I can still give you more and more of these but I can see that the Speaker wants me to stop. In this respect, thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members may I ask that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

**Resolved :** That this House, realising the importance of small-scale industries in creating employment opportunities for village and small town dwellers; in mobilising local resources, and in mitigating rural-urban migration, calls upon the President of the Federal Republic to site Federal Industrial Development Centres in all State Capitals and to increase the present amount of Industrial Credit Schemes of ₦120,000 to ₦150,000 so that they can play their role in the economic development of the Nation.

## ADJOURNMENT

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I move that this House stands adjourned until Monday at 10 o'clock in the morning.

**Mr Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion? Yes, Mr Gapsuk.

**Mr A. N. Gapsuk (Shendam East) :** I rise to second the Motion and in seconding this Motion—(Interruptions)

**Mr Speaker :** You are to second the Motion.

**Alhaji Ibrahim Garba Bakwai (Sabon Birni) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, on the Motion for Adjournment, I would like to associate myself with the Motion which had been passed.

**Mr Speaker :** Just go on and say some other thing. Leave that one.

**Alhaji Bakwai :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, on the Motion for Adjournment, I would like to say something on the establishment of industries.

**Mr Speaker :** Order! Order! Please, Gentlemen sit down. I know it is too hot but let us finish and then we will all go at the same time. Leave the Motion we have just dealt with. Talk about any other thing.

**Alhaji Bakwai :** It concerns the establishment of Tobacco Industry in Sokoto State.

**Mr Speaker :** Tobacco Industry?

**Alhaji Bakwai :** Yes.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, go on.

### Establishment of Tobacco Industry in Sokoto State

**Alhaji I. G. Bakwai :** Mr Speaker, Sir, on the Motion for Adjournment, I would like to call on the President to set up a Tobacco Industry in Sokoto State because Sokoto State is producing about eighty per cent of the tobacco leaves used by tobacco companies in this country. So, in essence of this, I would like to call on the President to expedite the establishment of a Tobacco Industry in Sokoto State so that the inhabitants of the area who are making efforts to produce tobacco leaves could make use of the industry.

So with this, I beg to sit down.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you. Alhaji Yelwa and Mr Aremu are not here. Yes, Mr Kalgo.

### Sokoto International Airport

**Mr Sani Dandare Kalgo (Bunza-Kalgo) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members on the Motion for Adjournment, I would like to appeal to this honourable House and in particular the Committee on Aviation.



My appeal is that I would like this Committee to take a trip to Sokoto State to see for itself the progress of the work being done on the Sokoto International Airport. The work on this International Airport started long ago but up till now we do not know what is happening there and we do not know the work that is being done there. I think that if this Committee can take a trip to the place to see things for itself this will help this House to know more about the situation of the International Airport in Sokoto State.

#### Extension of Railway Line to Sokoto State

The second point I would like to make is to appeal to His Excellency the President of this Federation, Alhaji Shehu Shagari, and also the entire Members of this honourable House to see to it that Railway line is extended to Sokoto State. Some people here may be surprised that up till now we have no railway station in Sokoto which is the capital of the State. Sokoto is an historical place, but up till now, we have no railway station. If you want to go by train to anywhere you will either go to Kaduna or Kauranamoda.

The Motion on this issue will soon come to this honourable House. So, I am appealing to Members that whenever this Motion is brought to this House that Members should support it, and the President of the Federation should also look at this issue immediately.

With this little contribution, Mr Speaker, I beg to sit down.

**Mr Edet A. Ekpo (Uyo III)** : I thank you very much Mr Speaker for catching my eye to speak this morning on the Motion for Adjournment. Before I go on with any contribution that I may have to make, I would first of all apply to Mr Speaker to change my seat because from all indications, it does appear that the Speaker's eye has not been able to catch mine. With due respect Mr Speaker, I think I should be allowed to change my seat.

Another point that I would like to make in contributing to the Motion for Adjournment is a situation that has arisen in my Constituency which is Uyo III.

Mr Speaker, Sir, quite unfortunately, something very serious took place there on the 9th of this month but no mention has been made in any of the national newspapers. It is difficult to say why, but perhaps it is one of those things, that we are from an area that is not recognised or very far away from the centre of interest. So many things happen there. The people of the area are enthusiasts of newspapers. They read newspapers.

**An hon. member** : Please go straight to the point.

#### Fire disaster at Uyo Market

**Mr Ekpo** : I was trying to say that something happened on the 9th of this month. Some Members might think about it as a local thing but this is something that affects the lives of the people. Before we all came to this House we made promises to the

people that we would try everything in our power to ensure that the living standards of our various people were looked into.

Mr Speaker, Sir, on the 9th of this month, a very big market which was built about roughly twelve to fifteen years ago was burnt down. The market, I understood will cost about twenty million naira if it is going to be built now. The market was burnt down and the value of properties destroyed was estimated at roughly ten million naira.

Mr Speaker, Sir, that is the situation in that area, and I am almost certain that the Members here are not conversant with this incident neither is the President. My intention of bringing it to this House is that through you Mr Speaker, the President will be informed particularly now that the Revenue Allocation Commission is at work. It would be a bit difficult for one State to bear the expenses or the cost of compensating or helping the people who lost their properties in that disaster. It is also going to be very expensive for one State or one Council to bear the cost of building that market. That is why I am reporting this matter so that this House could convey it to the President that in Uyo, a long standing market, which is near Aba, whose people are mainly traders, has been burnt down and the people are now helpless. One local newspaper has reported the incident but I am not quite sure that the President has seen it.

Mr Speaker, Sir, my appeal is that this incident be drawn to the attention of the President and that this place requires aid. Thank you Mr Speaker.

#### Owerri Passport Office

**Mr P. O. Eleke (Obowo)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I am raising an important point on an issue which is disturbing the minds of everybody in Imo State. The issue is on the state of affairs at the Passport Office in Owerri, the capital of Imo State.

Official activities came to a standstill there as from the 10th of December, 1979. Right from that day, Mr Speaker, no transaction of business has taken place in that Passport Office. Members of the public and Government Officials who have been going to that Passport Office have not been able to transact their business. The Passport Officer could not be seen anywhere, and there is no explanation or information of his whereabouts. There is also no information whatsoever as to the cause of his desertion. We do not know what is happening in this Passport Office.

At this juncture, Mr Speaker, it appears that the purpose for which the Passport Office was established is being defeated. I understand that representations have been made to the Ministry of Internal Affairs on whose port folio the Passport Office is. Up to this time there is no comment made by the Minister of Internal Affairs, and no reply has been received so as to know the reason why, and what is to be done in order to alleviate the sufferings of members of the public who have been going to the Passport Office everyday.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I kindly appeal to the Minister through you to make it possible for the Minister to tell us the cause of this and if possible, help us to alleviate the sufferings of the people who want to travel out of Imo State to other places.

Thank you, very much, Mr Speaker.

### Peace in the Country

**Mr Mohammed A. Yelwa (Yauri) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, what I would like to speak on, on the Motion for Adjournment is peace. I would like to appeal solemnly to every Member of this House and to the people of this country to kindly help in bringing peace to this country. The President has already said that he is prepared to co-operate with other legislators in bringing peace to the country. The President alone cannot bring peace without us.

We are the representatives of the people. We are supposed to enlighten our supporters that the era of party squabbles is over, and that what we want in the country now is peace. The President is no longer an NPN man. He is the father of every Nigerian irrespective of all political leanings. When we went into the battle, we knew very well that only one party would ultimately succeed. By the Grace of God, the success went to none other than Alhaji Shehu Shagari of the NPN. We have no choice but to accept him as such. In doing so, the NPN should not regard him as theirs alone. He is the father of every Nigerian and therefore any assistance we give to him no matter from which party, is for the progress of the country and not for the progress of NPN. There should, therefore, be a distinction between his role as the present father of the Nation and his part in the NPN. This being the case, minor political squabbles should not go to him. We should only refer things that concern the nation or the welfare and interest of the people to him. This is the only way we can enlighten our supporters that the President is the father of everyone and not that of the NPN. If we do this, we have done a great service to this country. That is my first point.

My second point is that we should try to show our supporters that the Federal Government is not for one party alone. If there is any cause for alarm in any section of the country, it is not that section alone that would suffer. Ultimately, it would affect the whole country. So, if there is something wrong with one section or State, let us all feel as if it were from our own state. Let us not say it does not concern us or it does not come under the control of our party. We are not doing this to help only the President but our own sons and daughters. So, we should enlighten our people and make them realise that the Federal Government or the Executive President has the power over everybody. He is not to care for the victimised people of the NPN alone but for all Nigerians who are victimised. Every Nigerian has the right to appeal to him as enshrined in our Constitution. If we do all this, we would be doing ourselves and the Community a service.

With these remarks, I would like to re-emphasise that the President is there for the interest of all Nigerians and not for political parties alone. Thank you. (*Applause*)

### Beer Parlours along the Highways

**Mr Umaru Sule Garo (Shanono) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, in my contribution to the debate on Motion for Adjournment, I would like to talk about something which is very important and which we seem to neglect and forget. This is about Beer Parlours along our highways.

I cannot think of any government which has got a reasonable sense of direction and which tells drivers to stop drinking when they are driving, but, at the same time, that same government gives licences for the establishment of beer parlours along the highways. Please, let us forget about our religious bias and sentiment and do what we think is good for our country. I am appealing to the Federal and State Governments to treat this matter as of paramount importance. Thank you very much.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, really, I had no intention of saying anything on the Motion for Adjournment but in view of the fact that one of the speakers made some very important and vital contribution about the President's relationship vis-a-vis the party men and so on, I am prompted to take the Floor and support what he has said.

### The Federal Character of the President

I want to make further explanation to Members of this House that I believe that from the day the President was elected and sworn in, he became the President of Nigeria and not the President of the NPN as has rightly said. I would like to ensure the Member who made this statement that contrary to his views, today, those who are lobbying round the President are not Members of the NPN. The Members of the NPN are not even the nearest people to the President. If the hon. Member doubts this, he can go and find out himself. I would also like to impress upon him that no Member of the NPN either inside this House or outside regards the President as the President of the NPN. No, not at all. We in the NPN regard him as the father of the Nation and the President of all. I believe when you go near him, you will find that all sorts of people with different political leanings are around him. This is how he actually demonstrates that he is the President of this country. You will hardly find NPN people there.

I would, therefore, appeal to the Members of this House to regard him as the President of the country and nothing else. I would not like anybody to have any doubts in his or her mind about the genuine intention of our President to regard the people of this country as one.

Thank you, Mr Speaker and hon. Members I believe the situation of the House has become hotter and hotter as it has been for the past three days. Since we have been suffering for some time now, I would move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved: That this House do now adjourn till 10 o'clock on Monday morning.*

*The House adjourned accordingly at 11.05 a.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Monday, 28th January, 1980

The House met at 10.15 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, I would like to make the following announcements :

Immediately after this morning sitting, at about 1.00 p.m. I would like the Leaders of all the Political Parties to meet me in my office for a very important matter. I would also like to see the Chairman of the Business Committee.

At about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, I would like all Members of the Committee of Selection to meet me in my office.

Also at about 2.30 p.m., all Members that have been selected to serve on the Special Committee for the investigation of the activities of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation should meet me in my office.

Votes and Proceedings

Hon. Members, I have gone through the Votes and Proceedings for Friday, 25th January, 1980, and found that they contained what was discussed here on that day. I have, therefore, approved them.

**Mr J. C. Ojukwu (Idemili) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I have a point of explanation to make.

**The Deputy Speaker :** What is the point of explanation ?

**Mr J. C. Ojukwu :** The point of explanation is on a news item which occurred in the edition of one of the national newspapers this morning.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Can this not be discussed outside this Hall in the interest of all of us ?

**Mr Ojukwu :** It is in our interest that the matter be mentioned now. It is a thing of falsehood and if it is not cleared now, a wrong impression could be disseminated further.

**The Deputy Speaker :** This is why I have issued a circular letter to all Members to the effect that if they have any issue on false information or any newspaper publication, it is better to discuss the issue with the Speaker before knowing what line of action to take.

**Dr Eze O. A. Nwala (Ikwere/Etche II) :** Point of explanation.

**The Deputy Speaker :** What is your point of explanation ? Is it on any newspaper publication ?

**Dr Nwala :** No, it is on a Constitutional issue which needs some explanation.

**The Deputy Speaker :** You mean the issue affects any particular section of the Constitution ?

**Dr Nwala :** Yes, perhaps if I am allowed to make my point, it would be apparent that it is a Constitutional issue.

**The Deputy Speaker :** What section of the Constitution are you referring us to ?

**Dr Nwala :** Perhaps that would be apparent in my presentation of the matter.

**An hon. Member :** Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The speaker on the Floor has not spoken yet ; so, you cannot point him to order.

Yes, Dr Nwala, you were talking on a point of explanation as regards something that affects the Constitution. Can you refer us to the particular section of the Constitution ?

**Dr Nwala :** I want to talk about the powers of the Legislative Houses vis-a-vis the powers of the Executive arm of the Government.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Do you not think that this issue can best be discussed on Motion for Adjournment ? Do you think it is better to bring in a debate on this issue now ?

**Dr Nwala :** It is a point of explanation and this is allowed.

**The Deputy Speaker :** All right, we want to know what the explanation is about, hon. Gentleman.

Usurpation of Legislative Powers by the Executive

**Dr Nwala :** The explanation is on the usurpation of the Legislative powers by the Executive arm of the Government. It has to do with some of the pronouncements by the Executive branch so far during our short stay here.

The powers of the Executive branch and the powers of the Legislative arm of the Government are well spelt out in the Constitution. We have been told by the Chief Executive, the President of Nigeria, that the economy of this country is in shambles. For that matter, this House has called for detailed information on the state of the economy.

During the Presidential briefing to the World Press, we were told that the economy of this country was not effectively handled. Since that period, we have been treated to a series of newspaper items by the Ministers appointed by the Executive arm of the Government—

**The Deputy Speaker :** Dr Nwala, I think you had better bring this point up on a Motion for Adjournment.

**Dr Nwala :** All right, I would reserve it for Motion for Adjournment, but I think that it is important that mention should be made of it now.

**Alhaji Hamman Dikko (Maiha) :** Point of information.

**The Deputy Speaker :** What is your point of information ?

**Alhaji Dikko :** My point of information is in respect of the welfare of Members living in the Legislative Flats at Badagry Road. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Not here. (*Interruptions*)

**Alhaji Dikko :** There is no water in our flats ; there was no electricity supply for about twelve hours—(*Interruptions*)

*Mr Olaiya Fagbamigbe rose.*

**The Deputy Speaker :** Mr Fagbamigbe, I have received your request to speak on a point of explanation. It was to this effect that I had announced that I would hold a meeting with the Leaders of all the Political Parties. By that I mean that the meeting is in connection with this point of explanation which you submitted to me.

**Mr Olaiya Fagbamigbe (Akure) :** Can I attend the meeting then ?

**The Deputy Speaker :** You would be entitled to attend the meeting only if you are able to displace one of the Leaders of the Political Parties. However, the party which is involved in this issue has already made its intentions known, and has accepted to be at the meeting which I shall hold with Party Leaders before they could bring in any Motion on the issue. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker :**

Are Members in agreement that the question of welfare be discussed here ?

**Several hon. Members :** No !

**The Deputy Speaker :** So, Alhaji Hamman you can bring your complaint after the end of this meeting.

We go to the Order Paper. The first item is the request for the creation of a new State. It is an adjourned Debate on 18th December, 1979, and the Movers of the Motion are Mr Ekok Ojogu and Chief Okon Ikpeme.

#### ORDER OF THE DAY

##### Request for the Creation of a New State

##### Adjourned Debate on Question

(18th December 1979)

*Motion moved and Question again proposed,* That in accordance with Section 8 (1) (a) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1979, the representatives of the people of Calabar and Ogoja Senatorial Districts pray the House of Representatives to receive the request for the creation of a new State from the present Cross River State to be known as the New Cross River State comprising the following Local Government Areas :

1. Calabar Municipality
2. Odukpani
3. Akamkpa
4. Obubra

5. Ikom

6. Ogoja

7. Obudu,

and accordingly request this House to expedite action on Section 8 (1) (b), (c) and (d) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1979.

**Mr Ekok Ojogu (Ikom) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to Move the Motion standing in my name—

That in accordance with Section 8 (1) (a) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1979, the representatives of the people of Calabar and Ogoja Senatorial Districts pray the House of Representatives to receive the request for the creation of a new State from the present Cross River State to be known as the New Cross River State comprising the following Local Government Areas :

1. Calabar Municipality
2. Odukpani
3. Akamkpa
4. Obubra
5. Ikom
6. Ogoja
7. Obudu,

and accordingly request this House to expedite action on Section 8 (1) (b), (c) and (d) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1979.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to Move.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Any seconder of the Motion ?

**Mr J. U. Uyeh (Vandeikya East) :** I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Ekok Ojogu :** Mr Speaker, Sir, as you all well know this is an adjourned Debate. This Motion came up on the 18th of December, 1979, and at the end of it I was directed to make copies of the signed request available to Members so that they could deliberate on it. I have done so and Members have copies of the signed request by the representatives of the people of Calabar and Ogoja Senatorial Districts. The request is lying before the House and what is left for us to do is to look at the signatures and take appropriate action. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, Chief Okon Ikpeme.

**Chief Okon Ikpeme (Akanikpa) :** Mr Speaker, Sir,—

**An hon. Member :** Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** An hon. Member is raising a point of order. Could you please take your seat ? What is the Order number please ?

**Mr Dele Fayemi (Badagry) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member is not properly dressed.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Your point of order is well taken.

**An hon. Member :** Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** There is another point of order.

**Dr E. Y. Atanu** (Idah South) : As long as no definition of dress here has so far been determined by this House, Mr Speaker, I believe that the hon. Member referred to is properly dressed.

**Some hon. Members** : Yes.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Hon. Gentlemen, so far three Members of this august Assembly have been affected by this point of order on dress and there will be no exception to anybody. (*Applause*)

Hon. Members, there are two Amendments to this Motion.

**Mr Mike Akpabio** (Uyo II) : Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker** : What is the number of the order ?

**Mr Mike Akpabio** : It is a constitutional point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker** : What Section of the Constitution ?

**Mr Mike Akpabio** : Section 8.

Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of order derives from Section 8 (1) (a) (i) of the Constitution examined against the purported request placed before the House. I submit that the request is not in accordance with the provisions of that particular Section and therefore is not properly before this House. May I, with due respect Sir, read Section 8 (1) :—

*An Act of the National Assembly for the purpose of creating a new State shall only be passed if—*

(a) a request, supported by at least two-thirds majority of members (representing the area demanding the creation of the new State) in each of the following, namely—

(i) the Senate and the House of Representatives

Mr Speaker Sir, there are two Senators from the area, that is, Calabar and Ogoja Senatorial Districts, have two Senators and two-thirds of two—(*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker** : Hon. Member for Uyo II (*Mr Mike Akpabio*) you do not have to go further. We have taken note of all requests for the creation of States. I would like to inform the hon. Members of this House that the only delegation that came to see the Speaker of the House of Representatives was from the Zaria Province of Kaduna State. In the past people requesting States had been directing such requests to the Senate. I want to make it abundantly clear that the National Assembly constitutes the Senate and House of Representatives and any such request that is not brought through the House of Representatives is regarded as a contempt of this House.

**Mr Akpabio** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I am much obliged.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Therefore, as we did on the request from Kaduna State, this matter is going to be referred to a Special Committee of this honourable House which is going to see whether the provisions of Section 8 of the Constitution have been complied with or not.

**Mr Akpabio** : I am very much obliged, Mr Speaker,

**The Deputy Speaker** : Thank you. So, we move to the Amendment by the hon. Member for Etinan II (*Dr Gordon J. Idang*).

**Dr Gordon J. Idang** (Etinan II) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Colleagues—(*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker** : Hon. Members, I am sure that with complete silence and patience we will be able to hear ourselves. The hon. Member for Etinan II (*Dr Gordon J. Idang*) please go ahead.

**Dr Idang** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Colleagues, the Amendment to this Motion was submitted just before we went for Christmas recess at a time it was strongly rumoured that the people of Calabar and Ogoja Senatorial Districts were presenting a Motion to this honourable House, asking for the creation of a Cross River State with Calabar as the Capital. During the Christmas recess, the leaders of thought from all over the Cross River State met several times to discuss this important topic and a 17-member Committee of which the speaker and one of the Movers of this Motion are Members, was set up to look into this issue. We were also given the mandate by the generality of the people from the Cross River State which is reflected in the Amendment by the hon. Member for Oron II (*Mr Edet Bassey Etienam*) and others.

I should also like to add that although it is not stated here, I am reliably told that the Capital for the proposed New Cross River State is going to be Ikom and on the basis of this explanation, Mr Speaker, I would like to voluntarily withdraw my Amendment. I will only crave your indulgence that when the time comes you will allow me to speak on this very important issue.

**The Deputy Speaker** : All right. Therefore, we now take it that the Amendment as moved by the hon. Member for Etinan II (*Dr Gordon J. Idang*) is hereby withdrawn.

*Amendment by leave withdrawn.*

We move to the Amendment as proposed by the hon. Member for Oron II (*Mr Edet Bassey Etienam*), the hon. Member for Abak (*Dr Mike B. Ukpong*) and the hon. Member for Uyo II (*Mr Micheal J. Akpabio*). I now call on the hon. Member for Oron II (*Mr Edet Bassey Etienam*) to move the Amendment.

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam** (Oron II) : Mr Speaker, Sir, there is a typographical error which I would like to correct in the Amendment before moving it.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Yes.

**Mr Etienam** : Please insert the name of the town known as Itu in between Etinan and Ikono in line 4 of the Amendment.

**The Deputy Speaker** : All right. Have hon. Members taken note of that ?

**Several hon. Members** : No !

**The Deputy Speaker** : In Line 4 of the Amendment to the Motion where you have the names of the areas which constitute the New State, that is, from

[THE DEPUTY SPEAKER]

Akamkpa, Oron, Eket, Ikot Abasi, Uyo up to Etinan, then you insert the town of Itu before you go on to Ikono, Ikot Ekpena, Abak and Ukanafun. Have hon. Members taken note of that ?

**Several hon. Members :** Yes.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The hon. Member for Oron II (*Mr Edet Bassey Etienam*) go on please.

**Prince T. O. Olusi** (Lagos South III) : Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, what order number ?

**Prince Olusi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am directing your attention to the provisions of Section 8 of the Constitution on the Creation of States. The matter before the honourable House is a request by some people of Calabar and Ogoja. In your earlier ruling, you did point out that this matter was to be referred to a Committee that would examine whether it met with the Constitutional requirements. The point I am raising now is that it is not proper for the hon. Member for Oron II (*Mr Edet Bassey Etienam*) to move an Amendment to that request at this stage. The request can be withdrawn and resubmitted but it is highly improper for any hon. Member to move an Amendment to a request submitted by the people of that area. (*Applause*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** I would like to make myself clear on this Section 8 of the Constitution. You have the hand-outs from those people requiring States. We are appointing a Special Committee to see whether or not the requirements of Section 8 are satisfied. There is nothing wrong for an Amendment to that effect being sent together with the original Motion to the Committee for examination. (*Applause*)

Yes, the hon. Member for Oron II (*Mr Edet Bassey Etienam*) you can continue.

**Mr Etienam :** Mr Speaker, Sir, distinguished Colleagues, I beg to move that the Amendment standing in my name and in the names of—

**Mr H. M. J. Wachukwu** (Ukwa) : Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Mr Wachukwu** (Ukwa) : Hon. Members, I am referring the House to Order 21 (1)—Relevancy of Amendment. If I may read Mr Speaker : (1) *Amendments proposed to any motion or Bill under consideration in the house or a committee thereof shall only be in order if they are relevant to the question or matter then under discussion.*

**Mr Etienam** (Oron II) : Yes, we are discussing States. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member, your point of Order is overruled.

**Mr Etienam :** Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir, distinguished Colleagues, I rise to move—

**Mr C. A. Adoga** (Ogoja) : Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Another point of order. What number ? (*Interruptions*) Is it a Constitutional point of order ?

**Mr Adoga :** It is a Constitutional point of order, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker :** What section ? Section 8 still ?

**Mr Adoga :** Yes, Mr Speaker, Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I simply want to refer to Section 8 of the Constitution just to reiterate a point which had earlier been mentioned in the debate of 18th of December, 1979. In this debate Members of this august House had wanted to know whether the request had been properly submitted and here, I would like to quote what the hon. Member for Gamawa (*Mr Tuggar*) said :

*Mr Speaker, Sir, we are very grateful for the explanation you have made regarding the procedure for receiving this request. I believe each and every hon. Member here is entitled to have a copy signed by those people making the request so that we can be sure that the request is in order before we accept it.*

*Mr Speaker : I agree with you, I think it is proper for all Members to have a copy of the request.*

*Mr Ojogu, I have got only a copy for myself. You can make signed copies available to all the Members so that they will know whether the request complies with the Provisions of the Constitution. I think it is proper. Would you now like to take a suspension to enable you comply with this ? This Mr Speaker, Sir, has been done.*

Furthermore coming to the Constitution itself, Section 8, reads thus :

*An Act of the National Assembly for the purpose of creating a new State shall only be passed if—*

(a) *a request, supported by at least two-thirds majority of members (representing the area demanding the creation of the new State).*

That is what should be examined.

(ii) *the House of Assembly in respect of the area,*

That also should be examined,

(iii) *the local government councils in respect of the area, is received by the National Assembly ;*

That should be examined.

I do not seem to agree to Amendments which are coming outside this area. Amendments coming outside this area do not reflect the wishes and aspirations of the people who actually tabled this Motion.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Adoga :** I like to add here, Sir, Mr Speaker, that like the devil quoting the Bible, it always quotes it upside down. The facts are so clear here, Mr Speaker, that we have actually submitted what is required of us by law. We are a very humble people from an area where we are always humiliated. What is going on here is very improper. The law has been made for us to follow and we have to follow it. The requirements have been met accordingly and therefore we have to follow the requirements.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, some Members are quoting Section 8 of the Constitution. Section 8 of the Constitution talks of an Act of the National Assembly. This is not an Act of the Nation

[THE DEPUTY SPEAKER]

Assembly but a Motion in the National Assembly. It is a request for the creation of a State and this request is going to be referred to this Special Committee for examination to see if those people requesting for States have fulfilled the requirements of Section 8 of the Constitution before reporting back to this august House. Is that point taken?

**Some hon. Members :** Yes, Sir. Thank you, Sir.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Order please! I do not see why Members are getting too excited over the Amendments to this Motion. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Bassey (Oron II) :** Do I continue, Sir? Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move the Amendment standing in my name—

**Mr T. O. Badejo (Mushin Central I) :** Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Point of Order, please.

**Mr Badejo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of Order is Order 24 Rule 2. It reads, Mr Speaker, Sir :

*If an amendment has been proposed to a question, the original motion cannot be withdrawn until the amendment has been disposed of.*

**The Deputy Speaker :** This is what we are trying to do now. The man is to move his Amendment and it is either you accept the Amendment or not. What I am saying is that we have not even debated it.

**Mr Badejo :** I have another point to add. With all respect, Mr Speaker, if you look at our Constitution, Section 8 (a), one of the conditions precedent to creation of States—I am not talking about condition consequent but condition precedent—is a request which is only a mere technicality ; a mere evidence. Even we do not need to debate on it. When there is evidential value that there is a request on which I can take a judicial notice of, because it has been distributed, nobody on earth has the right either by Motion or anything, to demolish another request. To do that is very, very unconstitutional and the motive needs to be questioned. (*Applause*)

**Mr Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, I have to make a ruling on this issue.

**An hon. Member :** Point of Order.

**Mr Deputy Speaker :** Are you pointing me to order or what? The hon. Member for Mushin Central I (*Mr Badejo*) has made a very important observation. I believe that the hon. Members are in receipt of two requests for the creation of a State in the Cross River State. There was the first hand-out that was given and a second one was issued after that. So, we can say that we have two requests in front of us. (*Interruptions*)

I would very much advise the hon. Members from Cross River State to abide by the decision or ruling we are going to pass in this House. All I know is that you want a new State and the other hon. Members are here to back you on your demand. We have the first hand-out which is a request for the creation of the State of Akwaibom, which I am holding here. Then we have received

another request for the creation of a New Cross River State which I also have here. Now, whether the signatures on the documents are authentic or not, we are handing over these requests to the appropriate Committee to vet these documents. (*Interruptions*)

Hon. Members, I would seek your indulgence for the hon. Members moving this Amendment just to read the proposed Amendment, and then this matter will be referred to the appropriate Committee. These are two separate requests.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No ! (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, thank you very much for that ruling. With your permission Sir, I now proceed to move the Amendment. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** All the hon. Gentlemen in this House know exactly what has been going on as regards this request for the creation of a new State in Cross River State because there has been lobbying left, right and centre which is normal. I am saying that Members should please be free to listen and decide either way because this Amendment would actually require the clarification of the Judicial Committee.

Hon. Member for Oron II (*Mr Etienam*), if you would just move this Amendment, I would refer it to the Judicial Committee. Then, this request or the Motion moved by Mr Ekok Ojogu and Chief Okon Ikpeme would be sent to the already proposed Special Committee on States.

**Mr Etienam :** Thank you, Sir. Mr Speaker, Sir, distinguished Colleagues, I beg to move the Amendment standing in my name and the names of Dr Mike Ukpog and Mr Michael Akpabio which reads as follows—

This Honourable House recalling that the creation of the Cross River State as at present constituted was based on the unanimous demand of the people of the area ; aware of the fact that the present Cross River State is made up of the old Calabar Province comprising Calabar Municipality, Odukpani Akamkpa, Oron, Eket, Ikot Abasi, Uyo, Etinan, Itu Ikono, Ikot-Ekpene, Abak and Ukanafun, as well as a part of the old Ogoja Province comprising Ogoja, Obudu, Ikom, and Obubra ; recognising the need for the creation of more states to foster more even development and national unity in the country, borne out by the fact that most of the existing states in the Federation like Oyo, Ondo, Imo, Rivers, Sokoto, Niger, Benue, Plateau, Borno, Bauchi and Kano States are based on the old Provincial boundaries ; further aware of the need for an acceptable uniformity in the criteria for the creation of more states in the country ; convinced that the old Provincial boundaries offer the most acceptable formula for the creation of more states in the country, therefore, calls upon the National Assembly to accept the request for the creation of a new Cross River State out of the present Cross River State on the basis of the old Provincial boundaries to exclude all the area of the old Calabar Province and to include all the area of the old Ogoja Province.



**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, when a Member is moving a Motion, you do not call that hon. Member to order particularly when he is reading the Motion that is on the Order Paper.

Is anybody seconding this amendment?

**Prince A. O. Awa-Ekpo (Eket II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Amendment.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, I do not advise that there should be debate on either the Amendment or the main Motion because the point at issue, as a neutral outsider, is the struggle for where Calabar remains if a new State is created. That is the whole problem. Therefore each of the two parties that are requesting for this State wants to have Calabar as its main headquarters. I am referring this Motion for the request of the creation of a new State in Cross River State to the Special Committee of the House that is looking into the creation of States.

**Some hon. Members :** No! No!

**An hon. Member :** Point of explanation.

**The Deputy Speaker :** I will now put the Question that the two requests be referred to the Special Committee on States.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That the two requests for the creation of States be sent to the Special Committee of the House on creation of States.

**The Deputy Speaker :** I want Members of the Selection Committee to meet at 1.00 o'clock so as to choose this Committee for the creation of States. Please I would like Leaders of Political Parties to be present at this meeting.

The next notice of Motion on the Order Paper is the Motion on the National Youth Service Corps standing in the names of Mr Tom. U. B. Egbuwoku and Mr Frank C. Ugwu.

## NOTICES OF MOTIONS

### The National Youth Service Corps

**Mr Tom U. B. Egbuwoku (Isoko) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of this House, I move—

That this House directs the Committee on Education to review the structure of the National Youth Service Corps Scheme and recommend the desirability or otherwise of changing the present structure with a view to (i) introducing basic military training into the scheme; (ii) broadening the youthful base of participants; (iii) exempting married women as well as other persons forty years old and over; and (iv) readjusting the remuneration payable to participants.

I move this Motion in conjunction with Mr Frank C. Ugwu. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Is anybody seconding the Motion?

**Mr Eddy Nkem Nweke (Nkanu) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members this Motion has been moved by Mr Tom U. B. Egbuwoku and Mr Frank C. Ugwu but the Business Committee that forwarded this Motion should have understood that the National Youth Service Corps was created by a Decree and for it to be amended, it must be by a Bill. The Business Committee should have directed Mr Tom U. B. Egbuwoku and Mr Frank C. Ugwu to prepare a Bill to repeal or amend what they are requesting in this Motion. May I please call on Mr Egbuwoku and Mr Ugwu to set in motion the process of preparing a Bill on this issue. We had similar issues previously.

**Mr Egbuwoku (Isoko) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, with every due respect to you, I think this is an issue that is of national interest. We thought that such an issue would first of all be referred to the Committee to study all its ramifications before we could talk of introducing a Bill. If at this stage we start introducing Bills I guess, Mr Speaker, Sir, we may be attracting a lot of noise on ourselves, and maybe we may not be well prepared.

Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker :** I accept your explanation, Mr Egbuwoku.

**Mr Egbuwoku :** Thank you. Mr Speaker, hon. Members, the National Youth Service Corps is a national programme and we believe that if it is going to serve the best interest of this country, we have to look at it from the national point of view. That is why the expert Committee-in-charge should look at the issue very closely and see whether some of the arguments we shall put forward here will be applicable or not. I am not saying that whatever I say should be accepted but it is left to the Committee to review it in the light of what you want that would give pride of debate to this House and pride of Legislation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, let me say quite briefly that the aim of the National Youth Service Corps was to make Nigerians know their own country. We are truthfully aware that many of us have not travelled widely enough in this country. Therefore, when issues affecting all sections of this country are being discussed, many people probably speak in ignorance and those who have served in the National Youth Service Corps are now living in areas where they had never dreamt they could live before. I think this was good and it is still good. On this basis, I would like to congratulate all those who introduced the National Youth Service Scheme.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, there is a saying—*catch them young*. Sometimes those of us who are old are becoming too stiff about the position which we hold and about certain issues. In order not to pollute the minds of the youths in this country, we should let them go to these places, see things for themselves and create a better nation for tomorrow so that when we leave the scene we can have people who can think in better ways. So, Mr Speaker, Youth Service Corps is an idea for the youths to know the country, to enforce discipline in them and of course to ensure national unity.

There are one or two issues which I would like the Committee to look into and see whether they are workable in the present frame-work of the National Youth Service Corps. One of these is the issue of introducing basic Military training in the youths. I had already been told by some hon. Members even before this came up, that something like that was already being done. This involves some sporting activities like running round the field and so on. This could be broadened since it is also provided for constitutionally that they should be trained in this aspect. So I am referring to this issue because it is a matter which we must handle very carefully. The issue of training our youths in basic Military areas is something which we must select carefully in the interest of our youths and in the interest of our country. I think it is an issue they can look into very properly.

Thirdly, we are also asking for the broadening of the youthful base. As I said, Mr Speaker, sometimes, I intend to believe that what you learn at youth lasts longer with you than when you grow old. It is interesting to observe that some of our children come back from the schools and tell us about Chidi and about Nuhu. You have got to make friends. If we start by giving a proper re-orientation and the proper atmosphere towards respect for one another, this will be one way of killing tribalism. So, we should not ask for the participation of old people, that is, people who are about forty and fifty years of age: people who probably have made up their minds about certain issues. I think that in the best interest of this country we should broaden the base of the National Youth Service Corps to take primary school students, students in the technical schools as well as students in the Basic Studies. In fact, Mr Speaker, I am saying that anybody who is over forty years and above should be barred from the National Youth Service Corps because they can go there and corrupt even the rural areas with their political beliefs.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Point of order.

**Mr Ogwe Kalu Ogwe (Bende) :** My point of order, Sir, is based on Section 274 Subsection 5 of the Constitution. If I may read it, Sir, National Youth Service Corps, Sir, is included in that section and it says :

*Nothing in this Constitution shall invalidate the following enactments, that is to say—*

(a) *the National Youth Service Corps Decree 1973 :*

(b) *the Public Complaints Decree 1975 :*

(c) *the Nigerian Security Organisation Decree 1976 :*

(d) *the Land Use Decree 1978 :*

*and the provisions of those enactments shall continue to apply and have full effect in accordance with their tenor and to the like extent as any other provisions forming part of this Constitution and shall not be altered or repealed except in accordance with the provisions of section 9 (2) of this Constitution.*

Mr Speaker, the tenor of the Motion as being advocated by my good friend Tom Egbuwoku, intends to alter the Constitution and if it is to alter this part of the Constitution, Sir, the provisions of Section 9 (2) should apply. I crave the indulgence of this House to say that any attempt to alter this particular provision should not be by Motion. There is no point wasting the time of hon. Members. It should be by Bill and not by sending it even to the Committee. It is premature, Sir.

I beg to sit down.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members I think all of us are quite agreeable on the point of order you have raised but we understand that there is no provision in this Constitution that cannot be amended by the National Assembly. (*Applause*) The Constitution has set out the requirements of amending any part of this Constitution whatsoever.

As you have seen and as you have heard, the Land Use Decree, the National Security Organisation Decree, the Public Complaints Decree, the National Youth Service Corps Decree and whatever Decree that had been made by the Military Government, as long as there is an Act of the National Assembly and as long as there is compliance with Section 9 of the Constitution, any part of this Constitution can be amended. This Motion in front of you is only requesting that this matter be discussed and referred to the Committee on Education to see whether it is relevant to change the structure of the National Youth Service Corps or not. I, therefore, think that it does not infringe on the provisions of the Constitution.

**Mr Egbuwoku :** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, and I thank the hon. Member who raised that point of objection. What we are trying to do, if we have to do it together, is to find out the full details before we can amend the Constitution. We will do it as a body ; it is not a matter of arrogating it to oneself that I did this or that. I do not believe in that.

Now, Mr Speaker, as I said while talking about people who are forty years of age and above, apart from the fact that these persons generally take a hard-line on issues, many of them have outlived their useful years of learning. Besides, we have discovered that by the nature of our society it is very hard on these persons because by the time you reach forty or above you are virtually settled down to a big family life. More often than not, it is very inconvenient to move these people. That is why I feel that they should look into this and see the merits and demerits of it in the way we argue and see whether they could readjust the age base.

Now, I also talk about exempting married women, and persons of 40 years of age. Well, as you will see, if we start to pick people from the younger age group, more often than not, these people are not going to be married and with the married ones, sometimes their percentage is very negligible compared with the total number of the Youth Service Corps. I do not think that we will be hurting this country, if we exempt married women from this scheme. My co-Mover on this issue I am sure, will explain further on this.

[MR EGBUWOKU]

Besides Mr Speaker, we want to have stable homes. If these wives, after being in the University for three years, now want to go for another one year, I think these things can bring a lot of problems to married homes.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The only point I would like the hon. Member to note is that the Constitution now makes it lawful for unmarried mothers. What is your point?

**Mr Egbuwoku :** Oh, very good. Mr Speaker, Sir, by the time they get to post-secondary level, more often than not, they think they are unmarried mothers and they will still be young. I think they can take care of this.

Well, hon. Members I think there is another issue you must look at very carefully and that is the remuneration which is being paid to Members of the National Youth Service Corps. Most of them go to places very far away. Some to Lagos, Port Harcourt and Kaduna ; in fact to many seriously congested urban areas and they are being paid ₦180 a month as allowance. This allowance started a long time ago when the Youth Service Corps Scheme was introduced. But right now I think the inflation in the country is biting very hard and I am suggesting that the Committee should look at this seriously and see whether they could adjust this figure a little higher than this. A man must live whether he is a Youth Corper or not. As a matter of fact, if most of them who graduate were to be given alternative employment they would live well. When they go there, it does not matter whether they are Youth Corpers, they are regarded as workers and the demands for them would be high. So, I want this to be re-adjusted.

Another aspect to it is this. We are going to have younger elements from schools, that is, if this scheme is to be re-adjusted, I think the salary scheme should be re-adjusted in such a way that it should reflect a bit of the diversity of the background of those who are participating in this scheme.

Finally, Mr Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity and I thank the Members of the House. This is not a controversial Motion. All I am asking for is that we should review it so that we can make a desired progress that is required by this particular scheme.

Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, hon. Member for Nsukka (*Mr F. C. Ugwu*).

**Mr F. C. Ugwu (Nsukka) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I crave your indulgence to allow me to speak. I am a co-Mover of this Motion and my hon. Colleague has ably explained the motive behind this Motion. I would not repeat some of the areas he has exhausted. I only want to clarify some other points and that is on the issue of married women.

I would like this Committee to carry out actual investigation on the plight of married women who serve under the National Youth Service Corps. My personal experience shows that it is now seen as a punishment for husbands to upgrade the knowledge of their wives by sending them to Higher Institutions of learning because there are cases where these

women spend four to six years in the Universities or Higher Institutions. During this period, in most cases if they are doing Teachers' Training Courses, they are not allowed to bear children. Under the National Youth Service Corps you are not allowed to bear children. Then I do not know whether one of the aims of the National Youth Service Corps is to curb population by introducing this type of requirement.

The other one is that the aim of the National Youth Service Corps really is for our people to go round and live with other people and under-study their ways of life. The scheme also provides that married women are posted back to where their husbands are. So, they do not serve that purpose. They do not serve the purpose of going to the other areas to under-study them.

On the issue of remuneration, I whole-heartedly support the idea by my Colleague that people from post-primary Institutions should be encouraged to undertake this scheme because it will help to phase out the recruitment of people above the age of 40 years. When you send somebody above the age of 40 years, who has already married with children and family to an area and you pay him ₦180 under the present economic situation, he is expected to supplement the problems of other members of the family. You just put him in such a state of confusion that he may not even concentrate on performing the functions required of him under this scheme.

If you look at the statistics of the accidents that have happened so far affecting Youth Corps Members, 75 Per cent of them concern married people either women or men. The reason is that if you post somebody say to Kano and he is from Lagos he will travel every month to see his family in order to know how they are faring. This does not help him ; it has caused a lot of accidents and loss of lives. We do not want to lose the lives of those whom we say are serving the Nation.

I wish to say to this House that this is not a controversial issue. The investigation by the Committee would help us to have better data and information which will help us in preparing any Bill which we may later on bring forward. I therefore crave for the support of the hon. Members. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, hon. Member for Uzo-Uwani (*Mrs J. C. Eze*).

**Mrs J. C. Eze (Uzo-Uwani) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members of the House, it is my pleasure to be given this opportunity to speak on behalf of women serving in the National Youth Service Corps. (*Applause*)

I also wish to thank the Movers of this Motion because we feel very happy when we see our men protecting our interests. I would like to say that some married women who served under the National Youth Service Corps had got into trouble by losing their babies by way of abortion after the tedious and strenuous exercises they undertook.

I am giving this Motion support because I know that people gain a lot of experience when they go through the National Youth Service Scheme.

This experience is better for the unmarried girls and not for married women. Moreover, as the Mover of the Motion has said, after four or three years that a woman has left her children to go through a study of one kind or the other in the University, I think that it is natural that she should be excused to go back home to look after her kids and husband than stretching her again to do another one full year of National Service.

With these few points, I am appealing that this Motion be given full consideration.

On the question of remuneration, I would say that our boys and girls are suffering generally because of the poor salaries that they are being paid during their NYSC after spending about three or four years in University. We all know that in some cases some parents are so poor that they even sell their plots of land to train their children in the University. Some of these children in most cases, are the first daughters and sons of the family. Also, they have about four or five other younger children who are probably in the Secondary Schools or the Primary Schools. It is these people who are being paid one hundred naira or so during their NYSC that would cater for their younger brothers and sisters including their parents.

For these reasons, I am pleading with this honourable House to appeal to the Committee to consider the increase in the allowance being paid to the NYSC members, or to pay them what they should earn as graduates if they were working.

With these few points, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr I. D. Hassan** (Dase-Tafawa Balewa): Mr Speaker, Sir, as an Ex-NYSC member, I feel that I am in a better position to speak for the NYSC scheme than anyone else.

Firstly, Mr Speaker, I would like to oppose the Motion on the following grounds. I think that the remuneration of NYSC Members was fixed to conform with the aims of the Scheme. One of the basic aims of the NYSC Scheme is to train the youths to make sacrifices to their Nation. They are not therefore in the Scheme to enjoy but to learn to forego certain things in the interest of Nigeria. The ₦180.00 given to graduates and ₦130.00 given to the NCE holders, I feel are quite enough. The Scheme was not to make NYSC Members to enjoy. We should learn to make greater sacrifices than this to our Nation.

On the question of married women, the Scheme allows them to choose where they want to go. So many of them prefer to go to where their husbands are. In short, they live with their husbands. They go for the physical training from their homes and also for the work they are assigned to do. They are not forced to join in the physical exercises which we men do. Sometimes when they go for the exercises, they would sit down and relax throughout the day. So I think that married women can take part in the NYSC Scheme quite comfortably. In fact, my experience has shown me that some married women and old people who are above forty could serve in the Scheme better than the younger ones because they are in a better position to appreciate the problems of this country than the younger people.

With these few contributions, Mr Speaker, I beg to oppose the Motion.

**Mr M. G. Shamaki** (Katagum): Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members I am going to give a lame support to the Motion before the House. On the question of the salary or allowance being paid to the NYSC Members, this seems to me to be too small because everything goes with time, ₦180.00 or ₦130.00 is not a reasonable amount to accommodate somebody somewhere in Nigeria. It would be a very nice thing if the Government would do something about the improvement of the remuneration of the NYSC Members.

On the question of the married women, I am totally against the question of exempting married women from the NYSC Scheme. We here in Nigeria treat men and women equally; so there is no point exempting women from this Scheme. If we start to exempt married women, I am afraid, most of the female students will try to get married before they go for the NYSC. Therefore, if there is a sort of help that we can render to these married members of the scheme, I think it is better to send them to the States where their husbands are.

With these few remarks, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr M. Isyaku Gumawa** (Gabasawa): Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to strongly support the Motion before the House. It is a shame for any well-meaning Nigerian to oppose any idea of providing better welfare or encouragement for the NYSC Members.

Mr Speaker, Sir, you can imagine the situation where a man is being removed from his home-town which may be either Lagos or Kano to another extreme part of the country, and living on ₦130.00 as an NCE holder or ₦180.00 as a graduate after having spent years in the University. This is the only thing that he has been hoping for in his life, that is, to graduate from a University. After graduating, he is exposed to suffering and hardship again. The worst part of it is that these people go to these areas with the enthusiasm of serving their Nation, but unfortunately in some places they are not being accepted as part of the working group. They are just looked upon as a windfall type of manpower.

They are neither given proper accommodation nor allowed to know actually what they are going to do there. For example, some of them who know nothing about accounting are posted to the accounts department. Even in some places, you will find that they are taken to some offices where they know better than the heads of those offices. They are not allowed to know the actual activities in the offices because they are regarded as strangers who would soon disappear. They are also regarded as more knowledgeable workers. This being the case, you would find that somebody who could do better in the office and actually contribute towards the development of that area would be denied the right to contribute anything better. Instead, they would be put in a place where they would not be useful. For example, they could be asked to prepare vouchers or work as mere clerks. These people really know

[MR GUMAWA]

the activities of these offices and can contribute better. But, simply because they are in the Youth Service Corps and they will soon go away, they are not given the actual job they are supposed to be given.

I know of a Veterinary Doctor who was attached to one office where there was need for establishing better poultry and taking care of animals. But, unfortunately because the Superintendent in that place who was just a diploma holder was using the animals and the chickens there to serve his own purpose, he did not allow this doctor to know anything. He did not even allow this doctor to have accommodation near the farm centre. The doctor was just given an accommodation about four miles away. He knew very well that the doctor did not have transport; so the doctor was allowed to take care of himself. He actually suffered by taking transport up and down every day. He even had to look for his own accommodation. These are the types of hardship these people are exposed to. Instead of being accepted as indigenes of the area and allowed to know and contribute better, they are just looked upon as strangers. I strongly support this Motion.

I would ask the Committee to request the National Youth Service Corps Directorate to take more stringent measures in order to find out what actually the situation is when they send out the Youth Service Corpers. Sometimes when Youth Corpers are sent to some areas, they would be there for about six months and no inspector would go round to see what is happening. The Directorate relies more on the report received from the heads of department which is not actually the case. The Inspectors should be following them to take care of their welfare and to see that they are useful there. Therefore, Mr Speaker, I support the Motion.

**Mr B. J. Abegunde** (Ekiti East) : As a pioneer member of the National Youth Service Corps and having the singular opportunity to work in the National Youth Service Corps Secretariat for three months after my assignment, I think I am in a very unique position to talk as an insider about the scheme. In supporting this Motion, I would like to point out two areas where the Scheme needs improvement. That is the mode of operation.

The mode of operation of the Scheme is a bit elitist and the right materials are not used for the operation. It looks elitist in the sense that a Scheme with very noble objectives of inculcating discipline and making youths more amenable to mobilization and so forth should have really gone down to the earth to mobilize these people. The method of operating the Scheme does not give room for such attainment of noble objectives.

For instance, at the inception of the Scheme in 1973 a lot of people who were expected to be in their homes were posted here and there. People from Calabar were posted to Sokoto; people from Oyo were posted to Maiduguri, and a host of other places. Some of these people were over thirty years of age. They had already made up their minds about life itself not to talk about certain aspects of Nigerian

life. So most of them regarded the scheme then as one year's holiday. They did not show much seriousness. In fact, the initial resentment to the Scheme was more or less a switch-board for negative response from most members. The deployment of members then also helped to reduce the effectiveness of the Scheme because there were some engineers who were asked to teach history—

**Mr Adewara Toyin Lawal** (Ifelodun) : Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Yes, there is a point of Order.

**Mr Lawal** : My point of order is Order 26 (2) *A Member must confine his observations to the subject under discussion and may not introduce matter irrelevant thereto.*

**The Deputy Speaker** : You have made your point

**Mr Lawal** : Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker** : If you read the Motion it says : *the desirability or otherwise of changing the present structure with a view to :*

(i) *introducing basic military training into the scheme ;*

(ii) *broadening the youthful base of participants ;*

(iii) *exempting married women as well as other person forty years old and over ; and*

(iv) *readjusting the remuneration payable to participants.*

**Mr Abegunde** : Thank you, Mr Speaker. I was just giving a preamble so as to enable me—

**The Deputy Speaker** : No, you should go straight to the point. You are not giving a lecture.

**Mr Abegunde** : I would now like to talk on the introduction of basic military training. In fact, I really support this idea. There was a basic drill and this basic drill can be graduated into basic military training which can be of use in future. As regards broadening the youthful base of the participants, I have already mentioned this in passing that the Scheme should be confined to the youths, not the adults who may have made up their minds about the society. The right materials for this type of scheme are Post-Secondary students and not graduates who are highly needed in the industries and other places. I do not see how graduates of Arts and Science or Engineering who teach Mathematics can be of use to the nation.

I would now talk on the question of married women. There may not be need for exemption of this group of people and this has been taken care of by some other speakers that married women are posted very close to where their husbands are. The remuneration is a very important aspect of it. At the inception of the Scheme, members were earning ₦120 but that has been increased to ₦180. At that time, it was a bit difficult for members to make ends meet because they had to adjust to the existing realities in various locations. If the scheme has to

[MR. ABEGUNDE]  
continue, we really have to adjust the salary of the participants so as to be able to concentrate on what they have to do in their various locations.

**Mr Deputy Speaker :** Nearly all Members have spoken in favour of this Motion with the exception of one. Is there anybody who wants to speak against the Motion ?

**Mr D. O. Agi (Oju) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I had wanted to speak for the Motion before, but because the speaker has ruled that out. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Mr Agi, please, take your seat. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Agi :** Mr Speaker, I am speaking against the Motion—

**Several hon. Members :** No! No! (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** It is the responsibility of hon. Members not to mislead the Speaker. I have made it clear that many Members have spoken enough in favour of the Motion. I do not want to make up your mind for you. So, I want somebody who wants to oppose the Motion to speak. I do not want Members to say that they are speaking because I have said that only those who would oppose the Motion should speak.

Please, be fair to your conscience, Mr Agi. You are in support of the Motion and you had better remain so.

**Mr Agi :** Mr Speaker, I am speaking against the Motion. (*Interruptions*)

**Several hon. Members :** No! No!

**The Deputy Speaker :** Mr Agi, please, take your seat.

**Mr Agi :** I am perfectly at home with my conscience and I am speaking against the Motion. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Order! Order! Is there anybody who wants to speak against the Motion? Yes, Dr Egberipou?

**Dr P. I. Egberipou (Yenagoa) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I rise to oppose this Motion for the following reasons :

Firstly, it appears to me that four different items have been lumped into a whole Motion. Secondly, item No. 1 of the four items which says, *introducing a basic military training into the scheme*, is not clear. I would have expected the Movers of the Motion to tell this House what they actually mean by the words *introducing a basic military training into the scheme*. It may be a dangerous thing to introduce a basic military training into the scheme.

We have heard from one who had undergone training under this scheme—

**Mr Ambrose Gapsuk (Shendam East) :** Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, what is your point of order ?

**Mr Gapsuk :** The hon. Member on the Floor is not properly dressed. (*Interruptions*)

**An hon. Member :** Point of order. The Member for Shendam East (*Mr A. Gapsuk*) is not properly dressed.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The point of order is taken. (*Interruptions*)

**Dr Egberipou :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. It is an insult on our ways of life in the Rivers State for a Member who does not even come from that State to stand up here and say that I am not properly dressed traditionally. (*Interruptions*) In the first place that hon. Member—

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member (*Dr Egberipou*), you should direct your speech to the Speaker and not to any of the Members of this House.

**Dr Egberipou :** Mr Speaker, I am very properly dressed.

**An hon. Member :** He is not putting on his cap. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Is the cap part of the traditional dress in the Rivers States ? (*Interruptions*)

**Some hon. Members :** No ! No !

*Mr Gapsuk* rose.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Mr Gapsuk, please, keep your cool. About three or four Members here have written to me saying that they could have spoken but they were not going to do so because I had earlier on ruled that matters touching on welfare should not be discussed on the Floor of this House. However, it is unfortunate that Members have been without water in their flats thereby rendering them unable to even take their bath. Members had complained that they could not put on their complete suits because they did not have water in their flats for laundry. (*Interruptions*) However, I still feel that it does not. (*Interruptions*)

Order ! Order ! Hon. Members, now, I want to know from people of Rivers State origin whether or not the cap is part of the traditional dress of the Rivers State.

**Dr Egberipou :** Mr Speaker, may I explain, please ?

**The Deputy Speaker :** No, I do not want the explanation from you. A neutral person from the Rivers State should make the explanation.

**Dr Eze O. A. Nwala (Ikwerre/Etche II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, it is important that those who come from that part of the country should enlighten Members of this House on the mode of cultural dresses in the Rivers State. Now the type of dress being put on by the hon. Member across the Floor is a proper traditional dress. There is a distinction. When you are a recognised Chief you are allowed to put on a cap and a walking stick to accompany that dress. But if you are a commoner and you are not a chief, you are not allowed to put on a cap. So the hon. Member is properly dressed. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member for Shendam East (*Mr Gapsuk*), I will come to your point later.

Hon. Member for Yenagoa (*Dr P. I. Egberipou*) are you a chief in your State ? Are you a chief or not ?

**Dr Egberipou :** I am a medical doctor.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member, finish your speech first and I will take on hon. Gapsuk's case later.

**Dr Egberipou :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. A Member who has undertaken the NYSC scheme has told us that the remuneration is adequate for them. As for those of us who graduated before this noble scheme was introduced, I do not think we are experienced enough to challenge him on that. I believe it is a scheme designed for sacrifice and I think one hundred and eighty naira is an adequate remuneration for those undertaking the scheme.

As regards the exemption of married women, I can understand and feel with the womenfolk in this House who have given reasons to exempt married women from this scheme. But in Nigeria we should think of the craze for marriage when hajj operation is about to take place. If we exempt married women from this scheme, I can assure you that in my place a fourteen or fifteen-year old girl can get married by native law and custom. All these women will hurry to contract all sorts of marriages and get exempted from the scheme. Already provisions have been made for married women to undergo the scheme in places where their husbands are resident ; and for pregnant ladies whether married or not, they get exempted from the scheme once they could get a valid doctor's certificate six weeks before and six weeks after delivery. So, provisions have been made for all these categories of members who undergo this scheme.

Mr Speaker, this is one of the noble schemes introduced by the Army and we should not do anything to kill it or dress it up to our own way of thinking and life. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, I think we had better close this Debate. Let me first dispose of the Debate before I give a ruling on hon. Gapsuk's case.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members I think the Motion has been exhaustively discussed. I beg to move that the Question be now put.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, the Motion standing in the names of Mr Tom. U. B. Egbuwoku and Mr Frank C. Ugwu reads :

That this House directs the Committee on Education to review the structure of the National Youth Service Corps Scheme and recommend the desirability or otherwise of changing the present structure with a view to (i) introducing basic military training into the scheme ; (ii) broadening the youthful base of participants ; (iii) exempting married women as well as other persons forty years old and over ; and (iv) readjusting the remuneration payable to participants.

Those Members in favour of the Motion say *Aye*.

**Several hon. Members :** *Aye* !

**The Deputy Speaker :** Those Members against the Motion say *No*.

**Several hon. Members :** *No* !

**The Deputy Speaker :** Please hon. Members, you have not yet woken up this morning! There is airconditioner today. I will put the Question again. Those in support of the Motion say *Aye*.

**Several hon. Members :** *Aye* !

**The Deputy Speaker :** Those against the Motion say *No*.

**Several hon. Members :** *No* ! (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, both myself and the Clerk of the House have the same feeling that there has been a very close Noes and Ayes. I am putting this Question for the last time, otherwise we have to force a Division. Please hon. Members, we must always be serious when Questions are put. As Gentlemen and hon. Members you are supposed to say either *Aye* or *No* once but Members have the tendency of saying *Aye* and then saying *No*. I will put the Question again and I pray hon. Members to vote only once, please.

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

**Resolved :** That this House directs the Committee on Education to review the structure of the National Youth Service Corps Scheme and recommend the desirability or otherwise of changing the present structure with a view to (i) introducing basic military training into the scheme ; (ii) broadening the youthful base of participants ; (iii) exempting married women as well as other persons forty years old and over ; and (iv) readjusting the remuneration payable to participants.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, I think we have to dispose of the issue of dressing. The most important one which is going to give us some problem is the French Suit. I remember an hon. Member on the left-hand side of this House was asked to leave this House because he was wearing a long sleeve French Suit. He came back the following day with a French Suit, shirt and neck-tie and he made it a point of duty to come to my office to show me and asked me : *Am I properly dressed today* ? I told him *yes*. Now the House has ruled that a shirt and a short sleeve French Suit constitute being properly dressed.

**Several hon. Members :** *No* ! *No* !

**An hon. Member :** Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Point of order on who ? The problem we are having here is only on French Suits and nothing more. (*Prolonged Interruptions*) Hon. Members who are lawyers would agree with me that, once somebody constitutes a nuisance, you can call for an injunction because if you continue to tolerate that nuisance, you are directly or indirectly agreeing to that nuisance. We have already taken decision in connection with dress as regards Members here, which means that this House has directly or indirectly agreed that there is a standard mode of dressing that is acceptable to this House. We cannot go back on that. The ruling we are trying to get is on French Suit, whether a short sleeve French Suit with a shirt underneath and no tie amounts to being

[The Deputy Speaker]

properly dressed or not. I am going to put it to this House and the ruling then stands final for other Members to note.

Mr Gapsuk, is that agreeable to you? (*Interruptions*), I am a Member of the Standing Committee of this House and the new Standing Order requires that Members could wear long sleeve French Suits, shirts and neck ties. The new Standing Order is yet to be brought to this House and with the acceptance of Party Leaders we have adopted that. Therefore this matter is closed. (*Interruptions*)

**Alhaji A. Tuggar (Gamawa)** : Point of observation.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Observation on what, Alhaji Tuggar?

**Alhaji Tuggar** : On the conduct of the meeting of this honourable House.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Which meeting?

**Alhaji Tuggar** : This meeting that is going on now.

**The Deputy Speaker** : The sitting of this House?

**Alhaji Tuggar** : Yes.

**The Deputy Speaker** : On dress or what?

**Alhaji Tuggar** : I only want to make an observation.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Yes.

**Alhaji Tuggar** : Mr Speaker, I would like to appeal to you because Members might have observed the remark made by the Speaker himself before putting the question that some hon. Members of this House would say Yes and then later answer No. I think this is a very serious allegation from the chair and it goes very much to show disrespect to the hon. Members of this House. I hope the Speaker will in future guard against saying this.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Alhaji Tuggar, before I took this Chair I had been sitting just as you, as a Member from Minna North and I had observed this as well as other Members. Anytime a Question is put, people say Yes, and then say No. Members can bear me out.

**Several hon. Member** : No! No! (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker** : All right, thank you very much. Mr Debo Akande and Alhaji Tuggar, your observation is noted.

Shall we go to the second Motion on the Order Paper, that is, the situation in Zimbabwe to be moved by Mr Edet Bassey Etienam, Professor Opeyemi Ola, Mr S. A. Adeagbo and Mr David Atta.

#### The Situation in Zimbabwe

**Mr E. B. Etienam** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name and in the names of Professor Opeyemi Ola, hon. S. A. Adeagbo and hon. David Atta—

That this House profoundly condemns the continued presence of South African troops in Zimbabwe and the repeated violations of the Lancaster Agreement on Zimbabwe by the pro-apartheid Soames' Regime in Zimbabwe and accordingly urges the President of Nigeria to bring more pressure to bear upon the British Government so as to compel the immediate withdrawal of South African troops from Zimbabwe; and this House further directs the Committee on External Affairs to investigate without delay the avenue or avenues for ensuring that the forthcoming elections in that country are free and fair.

Mr Speaker Sir, I beg to move.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Anybody seconding the Motion?

**Mr Debo Akande (Ibadan North)** : I beg to second the Motion Sir.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Hon. Member for Oron II (*Mr Etienam*) you either make your contributions now or later because the Standing Order allows you thirty minutes and by the time you finish it would be after one o'clock. Do you want to make your contribution now or after three o'clock?

**Mr Etienam** : Well, I can continue now Mr Speaker, and when it is one o'clock—

**The Deputy Speaker** : Can you speak till that time?

**Mr Etienam** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I am in your hands. If it is the wish of Mr Speaker that we have a debate on the Motion during the afternoon sitting, I have no objection.

**Mr O. Afolabi (Oyo East)** : I crave the indulgence of Mr Speaker to inform the Party Leaders that we still require the names of their Members who would like to serve on the new Committees that have been set up. They should submit their names either to me or to the Leader of the House, Alhaji Kaltungo. The new Committees are on Industries, National Planning, Transport and Aviation.

**Mr Etienam** : Mr Speaker, Sir, the history of Zimbabwe is the history of colonial exploitation, the history of the betrayed people and the history of human degradation. Zimbabwe became a victim of imperialist struggle for Africa in 1885 when that celebrated British capitalist, Cecil Rhodes who pretended to be a Missionary and a messenger of God went to Zimbabwe and obtained a concession of mineral rights from the indigenes of Zimbabwe to form the British South African Company in Zimbabwe. The first thing he did with the licence which he got, Mr Speaker, Sir, was to push out all the African owners of the land and to rename Zimbabwe after himself. That was how Zimbabwe came to be known as Rhodesia. This led to the bloody war between the black owners of the land and the white settlers led by Cecil Rhodes. That was the beginning of the long and bloody struggle of the Zimbabwe people to regain their land from the white settlers and to re-establish their identity in their home land.



[MR ETIENAM]

Mr Speaker, Sir, most of the owners of the land were pushed up to the north which was later renamed Northern Rhodesia while the British white settlers preferred to live in the South because of the beautiful climatic condition in that area. But thanks to the courage and the revolutionary zeal of the great people of Zambia under the leadership of President Kaunda of Northern Rhodesia as it was known then, who proclaimed the total independence of that part of Rhodesia as a separate nation in 1964.

I want to say that the total independence of Zimbabwe as a sovereign black African nation is a matter of time. Whether Ian Smith is alive to witness the independence of this black African nation or whether Governor Soames is in secret alliance with the apartheid South Africa to install a puppet black government in Zimbabwe, one thing is very certain and that is, Mr Speaker, the forces of the national democratic revolution under the progressive leadership of the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe will triumph over the forces of reaction and neo-colonialism.

Sir, the situation in Zimbabwe poses a great threat not only to African unity and African civilisation but it seeks to recolonise the black man and to destroy his identity in the continent. It is a serious threat to world peace in this part of the world.

It is therefore, imperative that we in this country must rise to the occasion. It is not enough for the leadership of this country to make mere protest to the British Government. I think, we need a more concrete action. We are aware of the implications of the Lancaster House Agreement, that no partisan troops should be used in the implementation of that Agreement. But what have we seen? The so-called auxiliary forces of the Smith/Muzorewa Regime are being used by the present British Administrator in the implementation of the Agreement. This is being done at the expense of the vital interest of the Zimbabwe people as represented by the Patriotic Front.

It is my submission, Mr Speaker, that the Nigerian Government should intervene in a more positive manner by demanding the immediate withdrawal of the South African troops from Zimbabwe as well as the immediate disbandment of the so-called auxiliary forces which are pro-Smith/Muzorewa factions. If the British Government through their Administrator or through their agents in Zimbabwe fails to do this within a period of one week, Sir, I feel the Nigerian Government has a duty to mobilise for action against the British interest in this country.

My line of action, Sir, is that if the British Government fails through their agents in Zimbabwe—the government in Zimbabwe—to involve the Patriotic Front in the implementation of the Lancaster House Agreement, we should nationalise their investments here. They should give equal and direct access to the people of Zimbabwe in the current campaign for the elections that are scheduled to take place next month in that territory and also order the immediate withdrawal of South African troops which are giving certain support to the Muzorewa faction. Mr Speaker, Sir, I think this would be quite consistent with the Foreign Policy of this country that we should take

immediate steps to nationalise the UAC Group of Companies and all other British interests that are associated with the UAC.

I will also suggest that the Nigerian Government reviews its membership of the Commonwealth. I do not see what we benefit from associating with our former colonial masters in the face of their continued exploitation of our blood brothers in Zimbabwe.

The third suggestion I would like to make is that we should suspend our diplomatic relations with Britain. I think the time has come when we should not only bark but also demonstrate a capacity to bite on behalf of other black brothers suffering colonial exploitation and human degradation in other parts of the continent. Mr Speaker, Sir, this is an issue which deserves the unanimous support of this honourable House because it is not only non-controversial but it is consistent with our Foreign Policy which regards Africa as a centre-piece.

Finally, Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to say that some time ago there was a statement that Nigeria was sending an observer team to Zimbabwe. But up till now, we are not aware whether that team which was to be led by Mr S. G. Ikoku has been disbanded or whether that team has gone to Zimbabwe. We would like to know because we are aware that on issues like this, our attention and attitude are always taken for granted. I think it is important that we are taken into confidence on the concrete steps that the Nigerian Government is taking to ensure that we do not let down our brothers in Zimbabwe.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Just for point of information on the matter raised by the hon. Member for Oron II (*Mr Edet Bassey Etienam*), I have looked at the Gallery and even down here and I have found that we have nobody who is against the liberation of Zimbabwe. The observer team that was appointed has not taken off on the ground that the Ministry of External Affairs has to take a different action to go and settle the quarrel between Mugabe and Nkomo which came at a time, most unfortunately, when reconciliation was supposed to take place.

Can I call on the hon. Member for Ekiti West (*Prof. Opayemi Ola*), the narrator?

**Prof. Opeyemi Ola (Ekiti West) :** Hon. Speaker, if you want me to go on, I do not think that I can finish my contribution within the fifteen minutes allowed.

**The Deputy Speaker :** That is why I call you a narrator. I do not think you will take the ten or fifteen minutes we have.

**Prof. O. Ola :** I can not finish, Sir.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Mr Adeagbo can you take ten minutes?

**Mr S. A. Adeagbo (Iro North) :** Yes, Sir.

**The Deputy Speaker :** All right, Professor Ola, you can wait until 3 o'clock.

**Mr S. A. Adeagbo** (Ero North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to contribute to the Motion standing in my name and the names of Prof. O. Ola, Mr Edet Bassey Etienam and David Atta.

You have already heard the activities of our brothers in Zimbabwe and I would like to go back to the formation of political parties in Southern Rhodesia. I would like to tell you that Messers Mugabe and Ndabaningi Sitholi were all Members of the same party and Mugabe, being the Secretary of that political party, was very loyal like any other frontliner. Unfortunately, Ndabaningi Sitholi, like any other politician who is corrupt, in his only little way was parading in Rhodesia as supporting the minority forces. Mugabe, like Nkomo and others, were fighting outside Rhodesia. You have all heard that our brothers and sisters in Rhodesia have been subjected to a lot of degradation and sufferings. Glory be to the activities of the last government that was responsible for bringing in the present situation in Zimbabwe, that is, the coming elections which I will say is the baby of Nigeria. Incidentally, the coming election needs to be fair and it is only in being fair that we shall be able to get the result. But I am afraid, the presence of Southern African troops is embarrassing and the troops are harassing the Africans. It is very paramount that we call on the British government to get South African troops out of Rhodesia.

I will tell you that this is not different from what happened in the days of Patrice Lumumba in the Congo—the diplomatic moves and the double dealing of British government in those days were just as they are now. I join others in condemning the British government totally in the present move and at the same time share the view of the hon. Member for Oron II (*Mr Edet Bassey Etienam*) that British properties in Nigeria should come under a very strong hammer because the lives of the black race, that is, our brothers and sisters in Rhodesia, are as important as ours in Nigeria. I cannot see how in an African country British subjects should move up and down in affluence. They live in the best of our cities, in the best houses and occupy the best positions at the expense of our own people. What you find in Nigeria is greater than those in Southern Rhodesia. I join this honourable House in appealing sincerely to the President to ensure that Mugabe and Nkomo are brought into an agreement whereby they would have to contest the coming elections on a single ticket.

We would want our people—the progressives—to win the elections and not to hand-over to puppet Prime Minister Muzorewa who, we all know, will do nothing better than continue to follow the dramatic moves of the British government to exploit the black man in his own home. This is why we are all totally committed to call on this honourable House to support this move that our brothers in Zimbabwe are really suffering. You may ask me one thing and that is to thank the leaders of the front-line countries—Dr Kamuzu Banda, Dr Julius Nyerere and Kenneth Kaunda—for all they have been doing and are still doing in assisting our brothers and sisters in Southern Rhodesia. Furthermore, Sir, I would like to appeal to the Government of Nigeria

that sending observers to Rhodesia is not enough. We need to ensure that our finances in the O.A.U. are relatively high, particularly in the liberation issue.

I would suggest that the Nigerian Government should, particularly on Rhodesian issue, increase our finances to be able to liberate our brothers. If I may recall the activities of Lord Soames, who a few days ago made an announcement in Rhodesia directing that British and European Administrators should now give directives in place of the Commissioners and Ministers. This attitude, again, is very provocative and to this end I am again calling on the Nigerian Government that our support should be total and nothing but total.

We should not adopt any half measure in dealing with the British people. It is disturbing (if you do not mind me saying this) to hear some days ago the Chairman of UAC telling us in this country that his remunerations are of a secret nature. To my mind I will call that type of individual a British agent. This is nothing and if we could see that in Nigeria here, we would see worst things in Southern Rhodesia. So Mr Speaker, Sir, I am calling through you, on the President of this country to mobilise the youths, the workers, the legislators, the women and the entire children of this country to support the fight in Southern Rhodesia and to ensure that Mr Mugabe and Mr Nkomo come under one flag to fight the coming elections so that super-rigging by the British is checked. We should be able to liberate our brothers and sisters who are in the hands of the Whites in Southern Rhodesia.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Thank you.

Before we suspend sitting till three o'clock there is a notice by the Chairman of the Banking and Currency Committee that he would like to have a meeting with all Members of the Committee on Banking and Currency at one o'clock at the Red Brick Building, Room 4.

Is Mr David Atta here ?

**Mr David Atta** (Ikpokwu East) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I am going to be very brief. I am relieved by the fact that Professor Ola will do the summation in the afternoon. I would like to emphasise the multi-party expanse of the sponsorship of this Motion. I think you will all agree with me that this is a very healthy development. It presupposes the general nature of the Motion itself and it is relevant to all of us here present.

As Legislators we owe it a supreme duty to stimulate interests in the general decolonisation of Africa. Mr Etienam has very ably given the historical background to the problem and the contemporary problems which we are now having in relation to the handling of the transitional arrangements which have come out of the Lancaster House Agreement. We know the immediate problem which the presence and activities of the South African troop poses in Zimbabwe. We can see evidence abounds to the effect that the Observer Forces which have been sent to monitor and see to it that impartiality is maintained are almost walling down the impartiality alley.

[MR ATTA]

Are we going to sit down and do nothing about this development? Hon. Members I see this as our finest hour. We owe it a duty to do something to make the institution or the establishment of a Constitutional legitimate government in Zimbabwe a reality. If we stand and do nothing that opportunity and prospect is going to elude us for ever. By our special circumstances, the leadership role in this issue is conferred on Nigeria more so when Africa is the centre-piece of our Foreign Policy. We have the resources, we have the leadership that can initiate action in this direction and I am sure we can boast too of enthusiastic public backing on this issue.

Liberation problem in South Africa is something which we cannot toy with. South Africa is a common enemy, we all know, and we know that the essence of their presence there is to protect the minority monopolist interests in Zimbabwe. As my hon. Colleague has ably pointed out, the idea is to collude with Muzorewa's group and install the puppet regime so that what we will have in effect is a government which will be seen superficially to be manned by Africans but in fact the *status quo* remains the same.

Already, our President has condemned the presence of the troops from South Africa. I think we can do something more. The Presidential System of Government thrives on information and free communication. If we know and we are able to assess correctly, the development in Zimbabwe, we will be in a better position to know what kind of policy to adopt. I say this because I understand and reliably too, that we have lifted the trade embargo on Zimbabwe. I think this action is a little bit hasty. We have done this and we can now see the repercussions. We could have waited to assess the situation much better. I say so because the Motion is asking the Committee on External Affairs to investigate the situation in Zimbabwe and that will entail sending a Legislative delegation to make an on the spot assessment of what is happening in Zimbabwe. By so doing, we will be able to determine the right policy to adopt in dealing with this matter.

In rounding up, Mr Speaker, I think this issue is mutual in its significance. Nigeria occupies a unique position to champion this decolonisation crusade in Africa and it poses a challenge to all of us. Before I take my seat, I will oppose the idea of Nigeria sending a troop under the present arrangement to Zimbabwe because we should not be seen to be part of a system that is going to legitimise what is illegitimate. If we are going to participate in the maintenance of the Observer Forces the present arrangements and the activities of the Observer Forces there will have to be radically overhauled. I would like to subscribe, too, to the suggestion that diplomatic pressures should be brought to bear on Britain which has not acquitted itself creditably in its handling of the transitional arrangements in Zimbabwe.

Most Members are signalling to me that the time is running out and on this point I would like to stop. I will allow Professor Opeyemi Ola to come in the afternoon to summarise all the points that we have made. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, I would like to remind Party Leaders again that there is a meeting immediately after this suspension of sitting at the Speaker's office. I would also like the Chairman of the Business Committee, Alhaji Hamman Dikko, and Mr Debo Akande to be present.

Sitting suspend : 12.55 p.m.

Sitting resumed : 3.00 p.m.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, I understand that we are dealing with the very last Motion. That is Motion No. 2 at the back of the Order Paper and I understand that Professor Ola would speak.

**Mr S. Oduntan (Ifo/Ota) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I observe that a lot of hon. Members are not in the House and I suggest that we check the quorum. I believe quorum is not formed to carry on with this Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** You know, under the Standing Orders, we do not check quorum until after 4 o'clock. It is only after 4 o'clock that we check the quorum.

**Prof. O. Ola (Ekiti West) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I rise to speak on the Motion standing in my name and co-sponsored by hon. Bassey Etienam, hon. Adeagbo and hon. David Atta.

Hon. Gentlemen, I think you saw in the morning that the Motion is quite an important one bearing on the independence of Zimbabwe, probably the next new nation to be added to the list of Independent nations of the world. The message of the Motion is simply this. To make this nation and the world at large to be aware that what is happening in Zimbabwe is not in the interest of Zimbabwe in particular, and in the interest of Black Africa at large ; to make the nation aware that the Soame's regime which was established to undertake a fair and free transitional election for Zimbabwe is not undertaking that exercise ; and in regard to this, to find out what Nigeria can do in order to save the situation. If that is the Motion, Mr Speaker, you will agree with me that the Motion is not only important for Zimbabwe that is seeking independence, but also important for Nigeria which is the largest nation in Black Africa particularly because Nigeria seeks to champion the cause of the whole of the Black Africa and the Black Race. In any event, since this Motion is interested in raising the dignity of the black man and in raising the freedom of some of the few nations that are not yet free, I think we should take interest in this Motion. It is in this respect that I am gratified that the Motion was sponsored and supported by almost all the Parties as you see in the nature of the co-sponsorship. I believe that all these five Parties will give it support and consideration.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I believe that you as a person will take personal interest in this Motion particularly, I guess, that because of your background, having lived in multi-racial society of Britain, you know the practicalities of what we are talking about, that we are not merely talking grammar here, but things that affect the black man wherever he comes in contact with the white man.

[PROF. OLA]

That having been said, I would like to say, Mr Speaker, that as my hon. Friend Mr Etienam tried to make us understand in the morning before taking decisions on this kind of Motion we have to see some background information to know particularly that Zimbabwe was a British creation and that the situations there since the last 100 years have been the British responsibility. As we have been made to understand the last 100 years have seen the take over of the Bantus of Zimbabwe particularly in the Shona, the Endebele *et cetera* by the British.

Right from the time of 1888 when Cecil Rhodes and Moffat came in contact with that ruler Lobenguela, the British have been establishing their contact and rule in Zimbabwe. In short you will find that right from this century this area known as Zimbabwe became an area of interest first of all, and then, secondly, an outright colony. What is of interest to us here is not history but to know that right from the beginning you had a typical racist settler, colonial society whose economic and political sociology will be of interest to us. At the top was and still is a ruling class, an aristocracy of white minority group who claim to be rulers and who claim to be the owners of the land, and in the middle you have a small middle-class of black catechists, or call them rent collectors, and so on and so forth. And then beneath you have the black majority, the dispossessed black majority, the so-called natives who have no land, and have no positions in the Government and who have been dispossessed not only of their freedom but of everything. Then it will be of interest for us to note that at the bottom of everything was the alienation of land from the black majority. While in the past and up to now the majority of whites have on the average about five thousand acres per person, the individual black man does not have up to sixty acres and in fact, there are thousands who have no land at all.

Apart from this, it is the policy of the whites, as has been written in books and in policies, that the blacks there are Kaffirs who are merely to produce cheap labour and to be exploited. Now, when you see this, then you will see the establishment of two races. One is the so-called superior master-race and secondly, the inferior alienated black race. The first was supposed to be the master-race and its economic and cultural interests are to be dominant and to be regarded as superior. The second, the inferior black race, are supposed to be disregarded and according to people like Cecil Rhodes and Lord Hailey and people like E. D. Morel, the black people are supposed not only to provide raw labour and raw materials, but in exchange for this, the white people are supposed to give them civilization. And in the words of Rudyard Kipling, in this exchange between black labour and white civilization, the white man will be bearing the black man's burden but in reality what did you have ?

Instead of giving civilization to the black man here, they were given subjugation ; instead of civilization, they were given colonisation ; instead of civilization ; they were given exploitation ; instead of civilization ; they were given segregation

and alienation. This was exactly the kind of multi-racial society that we have in Rhodesia and you will find that, as against the situations in other black African countries where independence was delayed, very early in 1923, we had the dominion status being given to Zimbabwe particularly because of the interest of the white settlers there.

Now, this is the kind of background we can give you to make you understand that the period of 1890 to 1970 saw no progress, no civilization, whatsoever but only the extermination and domination of the culture and economy and the society of the black people, the great Bantus of South Africa. Therefore, when the wind of change was moving across black Africa in the 1930's, 1940's and 1950's, the white settlers, society there resisted change and for a ruse, they designed what they called the multiracial federation which, in short, broke down.

**Dr Eze O. A. Nwala** (Ikwere Etche II) : Point of order.

**Mr Speaker** : There is a point of order.

**Dr Nwala** : Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of order is Rule 26 (2). We are being given a lecture on history here. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker** : Please the hon. Member for Ekiti West (*Professor O. Ola*) continue. (*Laughter*)

**Prof. Ola** : Now, Sir, to cut it short this kind of federation broke down and then you have the period of the nationalist struggle. But, in short all the kinds of benefits that we had in places like Ghana, Nigeria and sometimes in Kenya where we were allowed somewhat to struggle for independence, these people were not allowed and therefore the efforts of people like Dr Nkrumah and so on were not allowed to see the light of the day. But in Northern Rhodesia, Malawi and so on, because the whites were not there in large substantial numbers, they were allowed to have their independence. That is the background that I have for you and that is the background that led to armed confrontation between the blacks and the whites.

Seeing that the white minority there will not allow the black majority the right to self-independence and self-transformation, and seeing that the procedure and the process of persuasion, the process of democracy, will not be allowed, the Smith's regime decided in 1965 to set on what is called U.D.I., (Unilateral Declaration of Independence). In this process the British Government refused to do anything and we, the African Governments, were not able to do anything and the United Nations was not able to do anything. So the black people there were forgotten and they were at the mercy of the racists, exploiting, suppressive society.

Hon. Ladies and Gentlemen I hope I am not wasting your time.

**Several hon. Members** : No! No!

**Prof. Ola** : Thank you. That was the background that led people like Nkomo, Mugabe and so on and so forth to go to the battle field, to go to the guerrilla tactics, not because these people were blood thirsty, not because they were looking for war, but because the racist society of Zimbabwe and South Africa entered into an unholy alliance to suppress the black people eternally and for ever more.

[PROF OLA]

The British Commonwealth should be broken into pieces as at the time the election is being rigged in Zimbabwe. All black African countries should withdraw from that Commonwealth.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, I would suggest that if the election is rigged and if the alliance of Lord Soames and South Africa is to see a puppet regime in Zimbabwe, then Mugabe and the patriotic guerillas should go back to the battle-field. When they go back to the battle-field, there should be a resumption of the war. At this time, it would not be fire next time and in the words of James Baldwin, *It would be fire for fire!* If one black man dies then ten Whitemen should also die. This, I think, is what we should do. In doing this, hon. Speaker, I would like to remind you in that august seat in which you are, that you are the fourth in line in this nation. I would want to request Sir, that the Motion we have moved on the Floor of this House today like any other important Motion that we have ever moved, should receive your support.

Not only that, you should make sure that this kind of Motion receives the attention of the Authorities of this country, that something is done so that we are not gathered here merely haranguing, debating, quarelling and suffocating for nothing. I would think that with your attention and with your support the President of this Nation would do more than what he has done. I think we should be grateful that he has done something not only in terms of protest but also in terms of sending an observer team.

If you do this, you would be encouraging us in this National Assembly that we are serious and dedicated nationalists and patriots; that we are people who are really interested not only in the independence of Zimbabwe but a group of people who are interested in benefiting the Nigerian nation, particularly a group of people who are interested in raising the elevated civilization of the Zimbabwean people.

Finally, I would like to say that, what we are trying to do here is to reject that image that has been given to the black people in history, the image of an inferior, idiotic and backward race. We no longer can tolerate this. The image of a people that should be eternally subjugated when other people are free. What we want instead is the image of a free people moving not only towards dignity but also towards internal transformic civilisation. This is what people like Marcus Garvey, Martin Luther, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, Dr Kwame Nkrumah, President Senghor, Chief Awolowo and the late General Murtala Muhammed did. I think, Sir, this is what befits us in this honourable Assembly.

Thank you hon. Ladies and Gentlemen. (*Applause*)

**Mr Speaker** : Thank you. I do not know whether all the co-movers have contributed ?

**Several hon. Members** : Yes, they have.

**Mr Cornelius Okpa Agbor (Obubra I)** : Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I very much associate myself with those who are in support of this cogent Motion. I think this Motion is straightforward as can be seen.

The fact is that we were being told and we know that ceasefire arrangement for the transitional government in Zimbabwe has been violated seriously. We also know that South African troops are present in the Zimbabwean territory. The Motion is also requesting the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to take more active measures to make sure that we are able to withstand the taunting tactics of Britain and South Africa. Lastly, the Committee on External Affairs should explore all avenues by which we can ensure free and fair elections in Zimbabwe.

I think much has been said by the previous speakers. If I would be allowed to suggest other measures, I would say that Nigeria should start now by sending a delegation to all OAU countries to tell them the stand that Nigeria has to adopt, if this ceasefire violation continues. After that Nigeria should press that she sends her own troops to join other Commonwealth monitoring troops in Zimbabwe.

Lastly, if the British government fails to implement the ceasefire agreement, Nigeria should insist on embarking on seizing British assets and also ask other African countries to follow suit and if possible pull out of the Commonwealth. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker** : Thank you, very much.

**Mr Bello Dauda Furo (Fufore)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, in contributing to the debate on the Floor of the House, I would like to thank the hon. Member for Ekiti West (*Professor O. Ola*). This is because what he has said so far has pre-empted every other Member that may wish to contribute to this debate.

However, I would like to come in from where he mentioned 1965, when Ian Smith took over power in Zimbabwe. In fact, Mr Smith acted in the interest of Britain and America, but after realising that African countries protested against Mr Smith Bishop Muzorewa was cleverly substituted in order to subjugate the Blacks. In fact, what happened then was only a change of face from white to black.

After the Lancaster Agreement, and following the continued protests from African countries, the British Government came out in a different form in trying to still maintain its domination over Zimbabwe. Britain reclaimed Zimbabwe and planted Lord Soames to take over the leadership. In his own turn, Lord Soames realised that he must protect the interests of his country. It is, therefore, not surprising that from the day he assumed office, Lord Soames had been embarking on ways and measures to make this transitional period impossible for the Patriotic Front. One of such measures is the presence of South African troops in Zimbabwe.

As Professor Ola had said, these South African troops are there not for any other reason but to check at the barracks provided for the Patriotic Fronts. They go into ambush and attack the Patriotic Front soldiers as they live their quiet lives in their respective barracks. Thirteen soldiers of the Patriotic Front were massacred. We expected that Lord

[MR FURO]

Soames would come out with a release, at least, condemning this attitude, but to our utter dismay, Lord Soames chose to justify the attitude because he kept silent and said nothing about it.

The other basic issue is the fact that at present, five thousand members of the Patriotic Front are imprisoned. I begin to wonder why these people should still remain in prison. I would suggest that it is time that these people were released so that they could participate in the campaign for the Patriotic Front in respect of the forthcoming elections in Zimbabwe.

Another thing is the fact that it is not only the soldiers of the Patriotic Front that are being attacked. About a fortnight ago, we heard that three people were injured following an attack by some unknown policemen there. The people injured were the relatives of Mr Joshua Nkomo. At this juncture, I would like to call on this House to condemn, in totality, the appointment of Lord Soames as the Governor of Zimbabwe. (*Applause*)

Mr Speaker, Sir, another point is that Nigeria should endeavour to increase the number of members of the Observer Team which she intends to send to Zimbabwe to monitor the elections.

Finally, I would like to remind the House that following the basic fact that the Leaders of the Patriotic Front are not given sufficient time to prepare themselves for the forthcoming elections, the time of the elections should be extended.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I beg to take my seat.

**Prince J. S. Sangha (Bori I)**: Mr Speaker, Sir, I think justice has been done to the diagnosis of the problems besetting the people of Zimbabwe. My attention here would, more or less, focus itself on looking for solutions.

People have recommended a review of our relationship with Britain, perhaps nationalising some of her assets but my impression is that at times, we bark but we do not bite. I am reluctant to commit this honourable House to take any action that cannot be backed-up by some type of positive and meaningful actions—actions that would send words across to Mrs Thatcher who, I understand, is of the strong breed; actions that would send words across to Mr Soames and those of his mentors. However, if we were to have any power to say anything, I hold the view that, with Africa as a cornerstone of our foreign relations, we should not stop at sending protests against those obnoxious attitudes. The time has come now; we have some vital economic factors that could be used in any situation.

In terms of foreign relations, three things are looked at. First is the economic power, second is the military power and the third is perhaps, diplomatic relations. We have one factor out of these three factors and it is a very vital factor.

I think Britain could be brought down on her knees if we decide, at this time, to re-examine Britain's assets in this country. In this direction, I would say very specifically that we should stop exporting oil to Britain until Lord Soames is removed. As long as Lord Soames is still there, and Lord

Soames being an agent of not only South Africa but that of America and the rest of the western world the situation in Zimbabwe would remain the same. It would not be surprising that a puppet regime could be installed in Zimbabwe.

The second thing is in diplomatic circles. I have questioned myself time and again as to why we are still members of the Commonwealth if we cannot use our advantage in the Commonwealth to bring pressure on Britain to remove South African troops from Zimbabwe, and engage in some meaningful efforts that would bring about free and fair elections in Zimbabwe. In fact, I do not know why we should continue to belong to that moribund society.

Not only that, our contribution to the OAU is substantial and we belong to other international organisations. This is the time to call for the help of those international organisations if, really, Africa is a major issue in our foreign relations. We have friends and I have always believed that we can do without some of these Western powers. I know in some areas we may have problems initially but with time we would overcome them. Other countries have done so and today they are living. This is the time.

Let me join others, Mr Speaker, to urge this House to direct the President to take immediate steps to ask for the extension of the date for elections. Only yesterday when Mugabe returned to his homeland we heard that his supporters were banned from going to welcome him. In fact, in some cases they used grenade and tear-gas. These are not pointers to fair elections. So, what are we going to do? Let us ask for time so that these people will have time to go round and reorientate the people of Zimbabwe, to tell them either to accept freedom or to accept slavery for ever because voting otherwise is more or less enslaving themselves eternally. Mr Speaker, Sir, I join those Colleagues who advocate an extension of time for the elections. I think this is only fair. All of us here have been through elections. We know how much time one needs to prepare his people for that type of election even in countries where democracy has been prevailing, let alone a place like Zimbabwe that for centuries has been under one type of domination or the other. So, the President should be urged to take more drastic action than he had done. I congratulate him on the steps he had taken so far, but we need more drastic action. Thank you.

**Mr David Akpan Ukpang (Itu)**: Mr Speaker, I rise to associate myself with this Motion. I do so because this Motion is calling for a reorientation of Nigeria's foreign policy and we see it as very vital in that in foreign policy analysis, there is no permanent foe, no permanent friend. A country reacts in its foreign policy analysis based on situations confronting its national interests and we see very vividly that Africa is the cornerstone of Nigeria's foreign policy.

We all know, Mr Speaker, that Britain all along has been our friend, but today there is no reason hiding the truth. Britain is sending Lord Soames to Zimbabwe as the Governor solely to protect its

[MR. UKPONG]  
*status quo*. Any Governor sent to any African country is not to the interest of that country but to the interest of the governing master. So that it is well established even by the filibustering of the hon. Professor Ola, that Lord Soames has very unilaterally violated the peace-keeping agreement. Therefore this House has a duty to tell the Executive what it has to do for the interest of this country and Africa at large. Other countries of this continent are today looking at Nigeria as the leader of the continent and therefore I believe that we have a duty to give that direction today as we assemble. I am not interested in this Motion being thrown to the Committee on Foreign Affairs. I wish this House takes this decision. In fact, Professor Ola has highlighted those steps we should take. I doff my hat to him because his line of thought looks to me very scholarly. I think if we do not tell Britain that we are here, Britain will never be afraid of Africa. So, I share the view that Britain's economic interests in Nigeria should all be nationalised.

And again, Mr Speaker, I am thinking as others have said, that the Executive even though it has written to Thatcher, should be told to send a further letter asking Britain, at least, to postpone the forthcoming elections of 27th February to a date whereby other parties will be given enough time to campaign, because this is a country that has gone into Civil holiday for a very long time. One month is not sufficient for any form of campaign. We knew how much it cost us to campaign. We took months to cover all our Constituencies. Think of somebody who has to cover the whole country. It needs a lot of time. So, Mr Speaker, in order not to go too far, I think this country should react immediately.

**Dr E. C. Emekekwe** (Onitsha South): Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I stand to speak in support of this Motion on Zimbabwe. If there is any aspect of the former regime that I have to commend, it is only their foreign policy as regards other African States. It is our responsibility in this House as an arm of the Civilian Government of this country, if anything, to make our own foreign policy more forward-looking, more nationalistic, more virile and more dynamic.

The people of Zimbabwe are on the verge of great national calamity. These our brothers down South are on the verge of having their elections rigged to such an extent that had been unrivalled in any part of Africa. They have the sword of Damocles hanging over them symbolised by the Tory War Lord Soames. He is there for a purpose. He is there to implement some policy for his home government. He is there to divide these African people, to set them against one another's throat in order to perpetuate British imperialism in that part of Africa. He is there to gerrymander as had never been done before in any part of Africa. He is there to precipitate a multi-faceted civil war as had never been seen before in that country where one faction, one private army under Muzorewa, will be fighting another private army under Nkomo and both fighting another army led by Mugabe and some fighting the imperialist agents. It is going to lead into nothing but chaos. It is going to create a political vacuum.

As we all know, nature abhors a vacuum. Your guess is as good as mine as to what will result from such a situation.

Now, we have to look for solutions to these monstrous thoughts. We have to stretch an arm of help to these African people in great danger. We have to do all we can to prevent massive rigging of the election. We have to do our homework right now. We have to insist on being allowed to send enough observer team for each polling booth to be supervised by at least two people from this country. These observers will be able to re-echo the cry of these our brothers in great danger. They would be in a better position to make their voices heard beyond their own national confines. These our observer teams will make their voices heard in the OAU, in the United Nations, and in the other parts of the Commonwealth. There would be no meaningful election in Zimbabwe if our Government and if we in this National Assembly, do not insist that those elements of the racist army that were recruited from the Republic of South Africa should be repatriated forthwith. The handful of South African troops guarding the bridge do not constitute much of a danger. The real danger are these other elements that have infiltrated the entire Zimbabwean Army. Robert Mugabe himself who is in a position to look into intelligence reports has put their number at 3,000. We have to bring pressure in whatever way is within our disposal to ensure that before whatever date is fixed for the election, these infiltrating troops are put beyond the Zimbabwean border, right to where they belong in South Africa. We have to warn Republic of South Africa and we have to warn Great Britain that should there be an outbreak of hostility once more in this African country, that we as a Government of the greatest country in Africa, shall have no choice but to encourage our young men and women to go as volunteers and fight on the side of the Zimbabweans.

We shall warn Britain that if this fratricidal war continues, aided and abetted by them, that we owe it as our responsibility to give whatever assistance we can to the Irish Republican Army in Northern Ireland! We, as Nigerians, have responsibility to the black peoples of Africa and we are not going to shirk that responsibility.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I beg to support.

**Mr Speaker**: Yes, Let us hear Mr Adigwe.

**Mr F. C. Adigwe** (Awka): Mr Speaker, hon. Members, in supporting this Motion, I will strongly advocate for the extension of time. You will agree with me that with Mr Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo staying out of Zimbabwe for five years, it is a major disadvantage and it is impossible for them to come back home and hold elections within three months. Take the case of Mr Mugabe who came back just two days ago. It is impossible for him to perform. So I am appealing to Members to consider the extension of time by appealing to the President to look into this very issue.

**Mr E. Ononokpono** (Oron I): Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Mr Ononokpono :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am citing Order 8,—Quorum.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, we must go by the procedure. The Clerk should please check the quorum. (*Quorum checked*)

Hon. Members, I understand that we have not got a quorum and in the absence of a quorum this House stands adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House accordingly adjourned at 4.11 p.m. pursuant to Standing Order 8 (2).*



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Tuesday, 29th January, 1980

The House met at 10.25 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Mr Speaker :** Please, the Leader of the House, Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo, wants to make an explanation.

**Deportation of the Majority Leader  
in the Borno State House of Assembly**

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of this House, you would recall that last week the hon. Member for Konduga (*Alhaji Konduga*) made a statement on the Floor of this House concerning the deportation of the Majority Leader in the Borno State House of Assembly. He made a statement concerning his deportation which this House took note of and as a result of this, all the Political Party Leaders met yesterday and deliberated on the issue. After having discussed the matter properly, we decided to meet the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Alhaji Shehu Shagari, so that he could brief us on what actually happened before we could come back to inform this House. Accordingly, an appointment has been fixed with the President for 12.30 p.m. today. All Party Leaders should be in the State House before 12.30 to meet the President at 12.30 p.m. When we resume again, this House will be accordingly informed of the result of that meeting.

Thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you.

**Mode of Dressing**

**Mr A. Gapsuk** (Shendam East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I am very pleased to be allowed to explain a point that is very pertinent and quite important to the normal proceedings in this very honourable House. I would very much like to express my serious embarrassment about the mode of dressing in which I appeared before you all yesterday. If for any reason this House in my absence at one time or the other had passed a Resolution about what dress is actually supposed to be the one to be known as the proper one, I am very sorry, I was not aware of it. But to the best of my knowledge, this very honourable House has not yet resolved on what type of dress to be worn. I have neither found it in the Constitution nor in the Standing Orders that a French Suit is not a proper dress. Not only that, it appears that if we go along this line, nobody will be properly dressed in this House.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Gapsuk :** I am very sure that since I arrived here, I have never put on this suit which I appear in now in this House. It is because sometimes it is very hot here in Lagos and somebody would like to appear in a French Suit which I consider is lighter in keeping with the heat in this very House. But for anybody to say that Jimmy Carter of the United States who wears the same type of dress as I wore yesterday in America or that President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania is never well dressed is lamentable. So the issue of dress must properly—

**Mr Speaker :** Mr Gapsuk, please leave the issue of dress because that was resolved yesterday and particularly, you know that the Speaker has the discretion in conducting the affairs of this House. Also it is contained in our Constitution that no Member of the National Assembly shall conduct himself in a manner that will be inconsistent with the dignity of the National Assembly. It is left to the Speaker to decide whether or not the conduct of a Member whether by dressing or otherwise is inconsistent with his membership of the National Assembly. That was resolved yesterday, so please do not comment on it again.

**Mr Gapsuk :** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. The Standing Order gives the Speaker that much power, but I hope the Speaker will not turn out to be a village headmaster in an honourable House. (*Laughter*)

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you.

**Lack of Water at the National Assembly Flats**

**Mr F. C. Adigwe** (Awka) : Well, Members you would recall yesterday that we had no water starting from Sunday night, and all through yesterday it was all repair work.

**Mr Speaker :** Point of Order.

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel** (Degema II) : It has been decided that we do not discuss our welfare here. That is the point of Order I have.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member for Awka (*Mr Adigwe*) if you do not mind, leave that matter alone. I think Members got water this morning.

**Daily Times Publication**

**Chief S. A. Oduntan** (Ifo/Otta) : I have a point of explanation first of all, on the publication of the *Daily Times* of January 28 *Grave Vine* page. It says among other things :

*Federal legislators say they are paid ₦2.50 for breakfast, ₦4 for lunch and ₦6 for dinner. The only bulk sum that has got to them was the ₦1,000 described as provisional consolidated allowance which they received last Christmas.*

Mr Speaker, I have never heard when such a statement was made on the Floor of this House and several times we have appealed to the members of the Press to cross-check whatever information they want to publish so that they do not give false information.

I would like to ask the Speaker to please again appeal to them so that they do not embarrass us all the time.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you very much.

(172)

**Standing Orders**

**Mr S. A. Oduntan :** The second point I want to make Mr Speaker, Sir, is the question of Standing Orders.

Before we went on Christmas holidays the Standing Orders Committee was asked to present its report and the Speaker actually told this House that this report had been ready. Up till now, we have not got the advantage of seeing this report, and I therefore ask the Speaker to let us know what is happening to these Standing Orders.

**Mr Speaker :** As a matter of fact, the report is ready. You can see the hon. Member for Brass (*Mr Inko Mac-Eteli*) laughing because he was responsible for the meeting not being held last week. We are now fixing another meeting for the Rules Committee simply to go through the report and bring it before the House. It is quite ready and there is no doubt about that.

Then the other one is that we have appealed repeatedly to the Press. I do not know how else we can do so, I do not know whether it would be called a threat again. I am not threatening anybody but we have considerable powers here. and we do not want anybody to push us to a stage where we shall be compelled to use these powers. I have always begged members of the media to please report accurately and that if they are in doubt of what was said in the House they should come and ask me. On the other hand I have said that we are going to set up a Public Relations Department. I have appealed to hon. Members like Mr David Attah, Mallam Sidi Alli and Mr J. C. Ojukwu and those who are in the public relations business to please help us get somebody who would handle our Public Relations Department for us.

Hon. Members, let us go to the Business of the day because we have so much to do.

**PRESENTATION OF BILLS****Membership of the Army Council**

A Bill to make provision for the number of persons to constitute Membership of the Army Council, presented by Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South); read the First time, referred to the Committee on Defence.

**Mr Speaker :** I understand that the Chairman of the Defence Committee the hon. Member for Langtang (*Mr John L. Laven*) is not here. I would like the Members of Business Committee to meet in my office immediately after this meeting so that we can get an acting Chairman to go on with the Bill right away.

**Membership of the Air Force Council**

A Bill to make provision for the number of persons to constitute the Membership of the Air Force Council, presented by Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South); read the First time, referred to the Committee on Defence.

**Alteration of the Financial Year**

A Bill to provide for the alteration of the Financial Year and for the appointment of the new period of January to December as being the Financial year henceforth and for purposes connected therewith, presented by Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South); read for the first time, referred to the Committee of the Whole House.

**An hon. Member :** Point of information.

**Mr Speaker :** There is no point of information.

**Mr A. O. Omisore** (Oranmiyan Central) : Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes.

**Mr Omisore :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of this House, we are now reaching the important part of our work and when a Bill like the three Bills that have just been presented is coming before the House, there must be a preamble to show the intent of those people who are trying to introduce the Bill before it is passed to a Committee. This is what I want the House to note before we go further, Sir. The effect of the preamble, Mr Speaker, is to give some kind of directive, some kind of guidelines to the House about what that Bill which we are trying to introduce is after.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member, I would not really like to call you to order but that is the work of the Committee. The Committee will go into all these details. That is why we have the Committee. Go and meet the Committee and tell them whatever you want and they will bring it to you.

Yes, Mr Okoi. Do you want to say something ?

**Personal Explanation**

**Mr C. O. Okoi** (Obura II) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members my point of explanation is this. It is unfortunate that before you started the Business for the day you did not in fact inform this House whether you did go through the Votes and Proceedings to know whether what transpired here yesterday was true or not. Now, it is on this, Mr Speaker, that I am drawing your attention and the attention of the whole House to a statement which was made by the Deputy Speaker yesterday as it affected the Representatives who came in here to lodge the request for the creation of new Cross River State.

First of all, the information we had from the Deputy Speaker yesterday, was that it was only the Zaria Representatives who paid a courtesy call on the Speaker of the House of Representatives. I would like to inform this House that that was a little bit misleading in that the Representatives of the Cross River State who came to lodge the request in fact did pay a courtesy call. In fact they went to the Speaker. So, I would like that information to be got right because the Representatives knew exactly what they were doing. They went to the President of the Senate and also paid a courtesy call on the Speaker of this House.

Mr Speaker, that is my point of explanation.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you very much. As a matter of fact, those who are agitating for the new Cross River State paid a courtesy call on the Speaker of this House. So that is a fact.

### ORDER OF THE DAY

#### Adjourned Debate on Question

(28th January 1980)

#### The Situation in Zimbabwe

*Motion made and Question again proposed,* That this House profoundly condemns the continued presence of South African troops in Zimbabwe and the repeated violations of the Lancaster Agreement on Zimbabwe by the pro-apartheid Soames' Regime in Zimbabwe and accordingly urges the President of Nigeria to bring more pressure to bear upon the British Government so as to compel the immediate withdrawal of South African troops from Zimbabwe ; and this House further directs the Committee on External Affairs to investigate without delay the avenue or avenues for ensuring that the forthcoming elections in that country are free and fair.

**Mr Speaker :** I do not know whether Mr Adigwe who was speaking yesterday still wants to go on.

Mr Adigwe, you were speaking before a point of order was made against you. Do you still want to go on ?

**Mr F. C. Adigwe (Awka) :** Yes.

**Mr Speaker :** All right round up then.

**Mr Adigwe :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, yesterday, I was still on the extension of time for the election. I gathered from the yesterday's Network News that the Senate approved three months' extension. This I consider very right and I congratulate them.

My second point on this Motion is on the role this country should play. That is the importance of putting Nigerian troops at alert in the event of any collapse in this very Election because the lives of Africans would be at stake. Hon. Members, you will agree with me that with the presence of South African troops and the Muzorewa's group, it will be a very risky affair to leave the lives of fellow Africans in the hands of this very group. As such, Nigeria being the leader of this continent should be playing the role of leadership, and should at all times be prepared not to be taken unawares. So, in this context I am appealing that every effort should be made to make sure that we have a good strength to counter any abuse in the event of any. This brings to mind the importance of a thorough intelligence network. I could see that in the whole of the House Committees Intelligence Committee is not one of them.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Mr T. C. Amasiatu (Oru) :** My point of order is Order 18 (3). With your permission I read—

*If proceedings upon an order of the day be interrupted by the adjournment of the House, such*

*order shall become a dropped order, and shall not be replaced upon the order book except upon a motion which may be made without notice before the commencement of public business, and shall be decided without amendment or debate. If it is proceedings upon a motion which are thus interrupted, such proceedings must begin again from the beginning and a fresh notice is required. The provisions of Standing Order 20 (Manner of giving Notices) shall apply to any such notice.*

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member for Oru (*Mr Amasiatu*) you made a very good point of order. Mr Etienam is the person who brought the Motion.

The best thing for the hon. Member to do is to bring a Motion for it to be placed on today's Order Paper. Then we can go on with it. You just bring an ordinary oral Motion. We want to finish with this Zimbabwe matter today.

**Professor O. Ola (Ekiti West) :** Order 18 (3) Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member for Ekiti West (*Professor Ola*) in order to save us time the best thing to do is for you to bring a Motion to suspend this particular Order. Then we can go on because we want to finish with this Zimbabwe affair.

**Prof. O. Ola :** Mr Speaker, my point of Order Sir, is under Order 18 (3). Can I read it?

**Mr Speaker :** What I am asking you to do is to move that this Order be suspended.

**Prof. Ola :** I beg to move that Order 18 (3) be suspended so that we can take care of this Zimbabwe situation.

**Mr Speaker :** That is all right. Anybody to second the Motion?

**Mr Nuhu Poloma (Tangale Waja North) :** I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, hon. Members the Question is that Order 18 (3) be suspended.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Mr F. C. Adigwe (Awka) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, coming to my third point, I mentioned the Intelligence Committee. I noted with care that this House should have in a way been able to form an Intelligence Committee among our Standing Committees.

The importance of the Intelligence Committee is that the External Relations Committee and the Defence Committee cannot effectively carry on their functions without a good intelligence network. For this country to move in the right direction the Intelligence Committee must be in a position to interpret every given situation and then give relevant facts to the Foreign Relations Committee when necessary. You will agree with me that it is not every issue that the Foreign Relations Committee can dabble into especially the security aspect of our Foreign Relations. When it comes to this, it is the duty of the Intelligence Committee to advise and direct the Foreign Relations. The same thing is applicable to the Defence Committee because the

[MR ADIGWE]

Defence Committee cannot effectively do their work without the necessary guidelines from the Intelligence Committee.

For us to tackle our responsibility towards Zimbabwe, it is advisable that these three Committees must work hand in hand as to direct the affairs of this country when it is necessary. I therefore call on this honourable House and the President to take account that the Zimbabwe issue will involve Foreign Relations, Defence and Intelligence Committees.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr J. U. Uyeh** (Vandeikya East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to oppose this Motion. (*Applause*) In doing so, I have some observations to make.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it was in 1965 that Ian Smith declared Unilateral Declaration of Independence in Southern Rhodesia. For the first time in the history of the Commonwealth countries, the Commonwealth Leaders were summoned to move out of London, the city where these Commonwealth Leaders had been meeting for a number of years, to go and hold their first meeting in Nigeria. It was only because of this issue that these countries had to meet in Nigeria to decide on the position of Zimbabwe which we are now discussing. For how many years will this thing continue to be on the pages of the papers and discussed in Houses of Parliament? Mr Speaker, Sir, on this particular thing which the honourable House is now trying to take a decision, I want to remind Members that the decision that this honourable House will be taking will be absolutely invalid. It will not be binding on anybody or any group of people.

I would also like to draw the attention of this honourable House to the fact that Nigeria must learn to try to put her house in order first before poking her nose into other countries.

**Several hon. Members** : Fire ! Fire !

**Mr Uyeh** : Mr Speaker, Sir, in 1965 when the late hon. Prime Minister of this country, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, summoned all the Commonwealth countries to come and meet—

**Mr Ogwe Kalu Ogwe** (Bende) : Point of order.

**Mr Speaker** : There is a point of order.

**Mr Ogwe Kalu Ogwe** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, my point of order is Constitutional. Section 19 of the Constitution, with regard to foreign policy, Sir, if I may read, says :

*That State shall promote African Unity, as well as total political, economic, social and cultural liberation of Africa and all other forms of international co-operation conducive to the consolidation of universal peace and mutual respect and friendship among all peoples and States, and shall combat racial discrimination in all its manifestations.*

As far as this is concerned, Sir—

**Mr Speaker** : That is all right. You have made your point but what he is saying does not contravene that Section of the Constitution.

**Mr Uyeh** : Thank you very much. Mr Speaker, Sir, as I was saying, as far back as 1964 this great country was on fire, there was crisis in the Northern part of the country, crisis in Western Nigeria but this country left its problems to summon all the Commonwealth countries to come and decide on Southern Rhodesia. That is why I am now calling upon the hon. Members that they should not take a Resolution which will not be binding on any country. Some of the Resolutions we are taking here will not be binding ; they will just be wasteful exercises.

I would also like to call upon this honourable House to think within itself of what we are saying. We are now accusing Britain that Britain is trying to rig the election. For whom is Britain rigging the election? It is this country that is trying to impose the leadership on Southern Rhodesia. Let Southern Rhodesians choose their leaders themselves. We are trying to impose the leaders on these people and I am calling upon this honourable House to stop poking its nose into things that do not concern it. (*Applause*)

I also want to make it clear that we in Nigeria continue to accuse one another of rigging elections. How many times have we been accusing one another of rigging elections? (*Interruptions*)

**Several hon. Members** : Fire ! Fire !

**Mr Uyeh** : What justification have we now got for accusing other people that they are planning to rig elections?

Another point I would like to raise, Mr Speaker, Sir, is on apartheid. We are accusing South Africa for being an apartheid country. Are we not practising apartheid ourselves in this country? (*Interruptions*)

**Prince A. O. Awa-Ekpo** (Eket II) : Point of order.

**Mr Speaker** : There is a point of order.

**Prince Awa-Ekpo** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, Standing Order 26 (2). I submit that the hon. Member on the Floor is delving into irrelevances.

**Several hon. Members** : No ! No !

**Mr Speaker** : The hon. Member for Vandeikya East (*Mr J. U. Uyeh*) please continue.

**Mr Uyeh** : Mr Speaker, Sir, as I was saying, we are accusing South Africa of being an apartheid country. How many Nigerians have been expelled from African brother-countries? So many of them were expelled from Zaire so many of them were expelled from Equatorial Guinea and so many of them were expelled from Ghana. Is this not apartheid? Why should we not set our house in order before accusing other people? (*Interruptions*)

The other point, Mr Speaker, Sir, that I would also like to raise is the decision we are now asking the President to take. The President has already taken a decision ; the President is already ahead of us. The President has decided on what line of action to take. Why are we wasting the time of this honourable House on an ordinary Resolution? What else do we want the President to do when he is already ahead of us?

[MR UYEH]

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would not like to take the time of this honourable House but I am now calling upon this honourable House that it should now stop taking Resolutions which will be unnecessary and which will be wasting our time. With these few remarks, I beg to oppose the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** The hon. Member for Aba (*Mr S. U. Nwanganga*) please sit down. The hon. Member for Aniocha (*Mr G. N. Uwechue*) is to speak.

**Mr G. N. Uwechue (Aniocha) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion. (*Applause*). It is unnecessary at this point to make any reference or any reply to what the last speaker said because he was addressing the Speaker. It is enough to say that it is unfortunate that an hon. Member of this honourable House opened his honourable mouth to say—(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Frank C. Ugwu (Nsukka) :** Point of order.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Mr F. C. Ugwu (Nsukka) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of order is Constitutional. Section 36 (1) of the Constitution says :

*Every person shall be entitled to freedom of expression, including freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas and information without interference.*

I am saying that the hon. Member should be ruled out of order.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Mr Uwechue continue.

**Mr Uwechue :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, as I was saying, this is a situation which involves all Africans. The situation in South Africa is not a South African affair. It is an African affair. Nigeria is part of Africa and quite frankly it is the largest. One out of every four Africans you see on the street is a Nigerian. Therefore, anything that concerns Africa concerns Nigeria and it is part and parcel of our deliberations here.

Mr Speaker, hon. Members I go along with those who have suggested an extension of the time for holding the elections in Zimbabwe. It is unfortunate that the African countries and the OAU did not heed the warnings of those Africans and World Journalists who in 1977 warned that Britain must not be allowed to supervise any election during the transition period. It is this very Britain either by default or by design that brought about the situation in South Africa itself, in Zimbabwe, and the whole of that area. This same South Africa was a colony of Britain. It is not possible for the British Government after 13 years of letting go or letting loose the rebels to come back and be able to organise a free and fair election in the country. We must remember now that they have come with a constitutional authority.

Zimbabwe is part of the British territory but they have no control or authority over the Courts. they have no control over the Armed Forces. they have no control over the Police and they have no control over the machinery they need to conduct

free and fair elections. These people are still loyal to Ian Smith and Abel Muzorewa. So, there is no way in which Britain, weak as it is, can effectively conduct a free and fair election in Zimbabwe.

Another point which we should condemn Mr Speaker, Sir, is that when they went to Lancaster House, it was clear that the Patriotic Front insisted at that time that the United Nations Troops should come in. As a compromise they agreed on the Commonwealth Troops. Today the controversial troops are moving about. When you are going to conduct an election there is something called security. We have held elections here. These controversial troops are there going about shooting the so-called guerilla or African troops at sight. The nationalist soldiers are confined to about twenty kilometres. They are not free to come out to take part in these security duties. How can we have a free and fair election ?

On this point I join those who condemn the British Government for their action there. There was no reason whatsoever why they should not call a Commonwealth country to come and help. Why should they call South Africa of all countries ? It is an evidence of bad faith. It is an evidence of a conspiracy between some powers in South Africa and the British Government to trick all those Africans to come in and surrender. Nigeria is the strongest country in Africa. We owe it as a duty to these people to insist that since the other side is in breach of the Lancaster House Agreement we regard the Agreement as null and void of no effect or consequence for now. Therefore they must postpone the elections. They must allow Mugabe who has just come in ; they must allow Nkomo and these other people enough time to campaign and set up their own security arrangements for free and fair elections. Let me say this before I sit down. I am not interested in who wins the election in Zimbabwe. I am only interested in free and fair election there. Whether it is Mugabe or Nkomo or anybody else that is not our business here. All we want is a free and fair election like we had a free and fair election in this country in October. (*Interruptions*)

Mr Speaker, hon. Members, it is only in Africa and only in the black man's land that you see the minority lording it over the majority. You can never see it happening anywhere else in the world. How can we come here and say it is not our business. It is only in the black part of the world that you can see such a thing. Will you see it in the United States ? The Blacks in the United States built that place but they are even denied the fundamental human rights in America. But within our own continent a tiny minority wants to lord it over everybody. It is a shame on Britain and shame on anybody who supports apartheid. We hereby condemn apartheid, we condemn Muzorewa and we condemn Lord Soames. Let him go back to Britain. I urge this House to move that the Government should advise that the OAU countries should come together quickly and call for the postponement of these elections so that they may have free and fair elections over there.

Thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Mr Njoku.

**Mr Appolos N. Njoku** (Isiala Ngwa) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise not necessarily to oppose this Motion but surely not supporting it outright. I want to be very objective in my analysis of this debate. The Movers of this Motion are calling for condemnation of what is happening in South Africa. They are also calling for the need for free and fair election which is almost around the corner. There are two issues to be examined here.

In the first place, I have to express some sympathy for all the speakers who are supporting this Motion. They have not done one thing, and that is that everyone has been criticising the existing situation but nobody has been bold enough to offer alternative suggestion towards solving these problems. What are we then talking about when we keep on criticising what is existing without having the courage to offer possible and positive suggestions which can be acted upon ?

The point here is that an election is a matter of number. We have eighteen million blacks going into election with two hundred and eighty thousand whites. If this is the case, what are we afraid of ? If the Africans are educated to know their rights and to know what they are about to do, why should 18 million people be afraid to fight over such a negligible number ? When we talk of rigging, what are we going to rig ? Are you going to rig 18 million against 280,000 ? If these people use their votes very well can we not get what we want ?

The trouble here is that we have refused to establish an effective presence in South Africa. We sit here passing Resolutions and Motions. We cannot do anything by talking in Nigeria and saying that we are the greatest and have the largest number of people in Africa. What exactly are we doing to effect a change in South Africa ?

**Prince A. O. Awa-Ekpo** (Eket II) : My point of order is Order 26 (2). The hon. Member on the Floor is talking about South Africa, whereas we are talking about Zimbabwe.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, go on, Mr Njoku.

**Mr Njoku** : What I am saying, in effect, is that instead of passing Resolutions here in Lagos, which I know would have no direct impact on what is happening in Zimbabwe at the moment, we should think of more realistic approach in finding out what the problems of the Blackmen in Zimbabwe are. Once these problems are detected, we would be able to offer some suggestions that would have real impact on the happenings in Zimbabwe.

This is a matter of international politics where people are trying to safeguard their interests. We cannot safeguard the interests of the Blackmen in Zimbabwe by merely sitting here or sending observers or suggesting solutions. We are talking about free and fair elections in Zimbabwe. Were we able to organise free and fair elections here ourselves? (*Interruptions*) What suggestions are we going to give to Lord Soames in Zimbabwe to accept?

**Mr Speaker** : Wind up.

**Mr Njoku** : Mr Speaker, Sir, the trouble with us in this House is that we have never tried to be realistic. We are always carried away by emotions. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker** : No! No! Do not say that here. Do not make statements that would have the tendency of inhibiting Members from expressing their honest views. All of us here are always realistic.

**Mr Njoku** : I am sorry about that. In any case, we have got to take certain matters into the realistic perspective. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, GNPP Member.

**Mr Hamza M. Nganjiwa** (Biu North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion.

The role of the British Government in any international transaction is clear and that is that, at peace negotiations, the British Government goes with the olive branch in one hand and a dagger in the other. It is quite clear that the question of South African troops was not contained in the peace packet of the Lancaster House. The British Government went behind and flirted with the government of South Africa in order to protect their interests in Zimbabwe. Africa and African countries have got to make it a point of duty to make sure that the interests of Africans are protected in that part of the continent.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is the duty of all Africans and all African countries, Nigeria inclusive, to make sure that we guarantee the democracy which the British Government has succeeded in raping and has succeeded in hijacking to suit its own advantage. I wish to say that this honourable House, which perhaps is one of the most distinguished law-making Bodies in the whole continent of Africa, has got a duty to make its stand clear on this issue.

Mr Speaker, this position is clear. It is that we must say, at the meeting of the Ministerial Council of the O.A.U., that the position of Nigeria and other friendly countries is to support the other Frontline countries to give a whole-hearted support to the leaders of the Patriotic Front. If, in any event, there is a disagreement between the two leaders, it is the responsibility of all African countries, through the O.A.U. Ministerial Council, to negotiate peace between the two Leaders of the Patriotic Front—Mr Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe. We have heard today that there is a sort of misunderstanding between the two leaders on the question of leadership in Zimbabwe.

Secondly, it is the responsibility of the O.A.U. Ministerial Council to make sure that the situation in Zimbabwe is controlled so that we do not have a repetition of what happened in the Congo now Zaire, in the early sixties when an important leader in the person of Patrice Lumumba was abducted and eventually assassinated to suit the interests of the colonial masters.

Thirdly, I would like to call upon this House that the safety of the Patriotic Front leaders in Zimbabwe should be guaranteed so that, at least, peaceful elections would be conducted under a

[MR NGANJIWA]  
free atmosphere in order to elect their own Leader amongst the Patriotic Front Leaders. It is clear that Bishop Abel Muzorewa, a clergyman turned politician, is serving the interests of the colonial masters. It is clear that South Africa is protecting its interests in Zimbabwe. It is also clear that the British Government is protecting its interests in Zimbabwe. All these three have no right to rule Africans in that corner of the continent.

I would call upon this House to support this Motion whole-heartedly, so that our voice could be heard throughout the forests and savannahs of Africa as a voice destined to protect the interests of the Black man all over the world, first and foremost in Africa. Thank you, Mr Speaker. (*Applause*)

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you very much. Yes, let us hear from the PRP Chief Whip.

**Dr Junaidu S. Muhammed (West Ward) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion.

In supporting it, I would like to express my appreciation of the sentiments expressed by those who opposed the Motion. As a Nigerian, I find it very difficult to stand and point accusing fingers at any country and tell that country that its citizens are rigging elections.

Secondly, I believe it is axiomatic that a progressive foreign policy can only emanate from a progressive internal policy. If this country is to play any meaningful role in African and world affairs, we have got to call on those who oppose this Motion to set our own house in order.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is nonsense talking about South Africa when we here cannot live in peace amongst ourselves. I would like to assure Members here that the differences between Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo are real, and since the two of them come from different tribes, there is a likelihood of a tribal clash-point after the elections, no matter who wins. This is the issue I would like Africa to address itself very seriously to. It is one thing to talk of ejecting the whiteman from African soil; it is one thing to hurl abuses and shout slogans against imperialism, neo-colonialism, *et cetera*, and it is another thing to settle down and govern our country properly. The art of government is a very important art indeed, and we must learn to compromise. Again, I do not think Nigerians are the best to point accusing fingers at others.

Mr Speaker, Sir, my main point of supporting the Motion is this. Whether the Motion passed today has any effect or is binding on Britain or those parties involved in the Zimbabwean issue is not the issue at stake. The issue is that this country has seen it fit to express an opinion on a moral issue, an issue that affects the fundamental interests of Africans wherever they are. A distinguished speaker on the Floor of this House has indicated that one out of every four Black people in the world is a Nigerian. So you can see, Mr Speaker, Sir, we are forced by the forces of economics, demography, geography and what not, to play a very important role in African affairs and in the international affairs at large. So, whether we like it or we do not, we cannot

sit back and look while a racist in the name of Lord Soames is playing with the intelligence of the whole of African Continent and trying to rig (and again I am being careful to use the word *rig*) an election in favour of puppet Abel Muzorewa.

Mr Speaker, Sir, what the Motion is asking this House to do is merely to condemn the activities of this Lord Soames and the puppet he is likely to install on leaving the Zimbabwean soil in a month or two. Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not necessarily support the views of those who are asking for deferment of the elections simply because the Senate did so yesterday. From all indications, none of the parties involved, either the Nkomo faction of the Patriotic Front or the Mugabe faction, or in fact the Front line African States, has asked for deferment of the elections. We have to be very careful in not being too much of do-gooders. If the people concerned feel, in spite of the obstacles and hurdles ahead of them, they can still contest the elections and come out reasonably well, there is no need for those of us sitting here to be asking or passing Resolutions, asking that the elections be postponed. Anyway, the agreement is the collective responsibility of the Commonwealth. Nigeria alone in international relations cannot sit down and say we are asking for these issues to be re-negotiated or these elections be deferred. We have to consult our brothers and sisters in the Commonwealth who owe the Patriotic Front a commitment to an election that is free and reasonably fair.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to make it abundantly clear that the issues in Southern Africa are not as simple nor are they as straightforward. In passing Resolutions, we have to be extremely careful and perhaps it is wiser to be vague.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to support the Motion and I beg to say that the Question should be put.

**Alhaji Yusuf Ibn Muhammed (Moro) :** I rise to oppose this Motion.

The reasons for opposing this Motion have been touched by some of the speakers who have earlier spoken on it. When we look at the international situation and concern of this Motion, it may be foolish for any Member to oppose it but for the purpose of clearing certain issue we have to think twice in passing any Resolution on this Motion. If I may go back further for the purpose of illustration, in 1966 before the Army took over, it was on the same Zimbabwe that while the election problems were going on in the old Western Region we regarded those problems as internal ones and we were organising Commonwealth Conference to talk about Zimbabwe. What happened later was that we were neglecting the situation in Nigeria and we were trying to pokenose into other African countries' affairs and that led to Army take-over in this country.

Secondly Members in this House may not know that when we talk of apartheid in Southern Africa and in Zimbabwe we have a common apartheid problem existing in this country.

**Some hon. Members :** No! No!

**Alhaji Muhammed :** I will explain this. In some of the Northern States including Kwara up till today we still have some areas where, perhaps, their traditional rulers are being imposed on them. This is apartheid. As a result of this—

**An hon. Member :** Point of order.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel (Degama II) :** My point of Order is 26 (2). The hon. Member should restrict himself to the issue on the Order Paper. The second point of Order is Constitutional. Section 19 of the Nigerian Constitution (1979) is very plain as regards our foreign policy objectives and any Member rising from his seat to oppose the Motion against the Constitution means that he is opposing the Oath he has taken. So, he should not say anything about it.

**Several hon. Members :** No !

**Mr Speaker :** Yes.

**Alhaji Muhammed :** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for allowing me to continue. I think if it is Constitutional for this country to find solutions to African peace, it is Constitutional for Nigeria to fight for internal peace. What I was trying to explain before I was called to order is that in the Northern States, some of the problems we have today—

**Mr Speaker :** Please, hon. Member for Moro (*Alhaji Muhammed*) go straight to the substance of the Motion. Leave the Northern States alone. You can bring a new Motion for that. Go straight to the substance of the Motion.

**Alhaji Muhammed :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. But I think an issue cannot be discussed in isolation. Inferences could be made because I oppose the Motion not because the intention of the Motion is not good, but because of other things which are happening in the country which ought to have been looked into first. For instance, when we were talking about free and fair elections, one of the hon. Members made mention that the last election was free and fair. We are talking of fair elections in Zimbabwe when perhaps in the country the problem remains the same. I am only explaining why I oppose the Motion and I want to illustrate why I am opposing it. So, Mr Speaker, Sir, it is a part of the Motion that I am trying to explain. Some of the problems we have in this country which need to be looked into before we go into African problems—

**Mr Speaker :** No. Please leave the country alone. When we come to the country you can bring a Motion on that. Go on to Zimbabwe.

**Alhaji Yusuf Ibn Muhammed :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. With these few remarks, I beg to sit down.

**Mr G. B. Sadiku (Epe) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members—

**Mr S. O. Olowu (Ikale) :** Point of order.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order against you.

**Mr Olowu :** My point of order is Order 26 (9).

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, read it.

**Mr Olowu :** *A Member desiring to speak shall rise in his place.* The hon. Member is not speaking from the place allocated to him.

**Mr E. Ononokpono (Oron I) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise with honesty and sincerity of mind in support of this Motion. Mr Speaker, Sir, there once lived an African, one I regard as the greatest of all Africans and that was Kwame Nkrumah. He said, and this coincides very much with Section 19 of our Constitution on foreign policy and I quote :

*The independence of Ghana shall not be complete unless it is bound up with the independence of other African countries.*

Mr Speaker, Sir, I also want to make reference to one of the most respectable Nigerians alive and that is Mallam Aminu Kano who, as a Federal Commissioner, was leading a protest and somebody asked : Are you protesting against the government ? He replied : *I am protesting against the order of the day.* Mr Speaker, I am saying that this Assembly does not depend on what Mr President of the Federal Republic has done by sending observer team to Zimbabwe. We are free as an independent arm of the government to demonstrate to Great Britain and to the imperialist world that we are not happy with the situation as a legislative arm of the government of this country, the greatest black nation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I regard the imposition of Lord Soames as the Governor of Zimbabwe as a serious assault on the intelligence of the black man. I regard it as a serious act of imperialism which is the most refined form of slavery. Mr Speaker, therefore, I would go straight to recommend the following : first, that this august House should, in the manner of one of the most radical Nigerians, Mallam Aminu Kano, a very honest man, lead a protest to the British High Commission here in Lagos and tell them that we are not happy about the situation, no matter what—

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Ononokpono :** Mr Speaker, I need your protection.

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order !

**Mr Ononokpono :** No matter what Mr President has done in his own executive capacity, we have the right to demonstrate to the world that we are not happy. Mr Speaker, I recommend, secondly that all political prisoners in Zimbabwe be released for a fair and free election because I did not do my election in a prison camp. I did my election as a free man campaigning in all the hamlets and villages of Oron I.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am recommending, by the permission of this House, that all white troops in Zimbabwe be withdrawn. Whether they are from Australia, New Zealand, or Canada, they are all whitemen and they do not like us. They are all members of the clique of Ian Smith, Thatcher the snatcher of Great Britain and all the imperialist world.



[MR ONONOKPONO]

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am also asking and recommending like my Colleagues have done that the election be postponed for the next three months to allow Mugabe and all the others who have just come back to Zimbabwe to prepare themselves for proper campaign and electioneering activities.

Finally, Mr Speaker, Sir, I am recommending that, in view of the fact that the Zimbabwe issue has been a long-standing issue and has been the beating of the dead horse, Britain be told that after 13 years it has been proved that it is a failure to allow the fate of Zimbabweans in the hands of Great Britain; that the United Nations and the OAU should now come to the rescue of these black brothers, and that there should be a United Nations approach to the issue rather than giving our brothers to those who have enslaved us, those who are victimising us. It is just like the saying that the man accusing you will be your judge. Britain is accusing us of wanting to have freedom and Britain is now coming to be the judge of our independence, and the judge of our struggle to free our hands from the imperialist arm.

With these few remarks Mr Speaker, I wholeheartedly support and I think if there is any black man in this House he should support this Motion.

**Mr G. B. Sadiku (Epe):** Mr Speaker, Sir, on the issue of seats we shall discuss that later.

Thank you for recognising me to speak. I am not surprised at the various excuses many Members have given for opposing this Motion but they stand to be corrected. An obstacle or difficulty to an objective is not a proof of its impossibility. If I were going to Lagos and there is go-slow that would not mean that I should not go to Lagos. I should look for ways and means of remedying and removing the difficulties on my way. Certainly if elections were rigged, if Nigeria has concentrated more on external affairs, if *again* our Motion here may be of little impact, these are not sufficient excuses for us to ignore the justice of the cause we are fighting. Elections in other places should be fought in a fair and balanced manner.

Mr Speaker, Sir, certainly Zimbabwe is not near Nigeria. It is far, far away, but let us recognise that until every State in Africa is politically free, the freedom of Nigeria politically, economically, socially and mentally is a doom and a frustration.

Ladies and Gentlemen, there are five great points why Nigeria must take very special interest in this very Motion. The first is Constitutional. Section 19 has specifically directed us that we should defend African freedom and African liberation. To fail to do that is to fail to keep our Constitution especially Section 13 which points out to us that it is the duty of every institution be it Legislative or Executive, Judiciary or individuals to keep this Constitution and proclaim it. Section 1 tells us that this Constitution is supreme. To fail or to dodge that point therefore, is to be unconstitutional.

Secondly, Ladies and Gentlemen where is our first Prime Minister, Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa today? Where is Chief Okotie-Eboh today? Where is the Sardauna of Sokoto? Where is Chief S. L. Akintola? If we fail in this assignment, we shall be dishonouring the memory of these noble, energetic, nationalistic, and patriotic Nigerians. (*Applause*) Such was the importance of Zimbabwe, such was the distance of Zimbabwe, that these great leaders, when Nigeria was on fire, felt that Nigeria should not be selfish, should not be self-centred, should not be self-concentrated as to forget her other brothers. They left the problems of Nigeria to convene the conference of the Commonwealth in Nigeria. It was in the process that a *coup* was planned and executed. Their blood, therefore, is like the blood of martyrs, and for us now to fail to take concrete action on those things which have contributed to their loss of lives, is to fail Nigeria. What is more, that was the first civilian regime and they fought gallantly to defend Zimbabwe and we are a successor to that regime. As a successor, a worthy successor, and a filial successor, we are under obligation to continue where they had left.

**Several hon. Members:** Fire! Fire!

**Mr Sadiku:** Thirdly, where is the oil boom today?

**Mr Speaker:** There is a point of order.

**Several hon. Members:** No! No!

**Mr Niyi Adelu (Ibadan East):** My point of order is Order 26 (2). This hon. Member is becoming very irrelevant. We are talking of Zimbabwe; we are not talking of Nigeria pass-aways.

**Several hon. Members:** No! No!

**Mr G. B. Sadiku (Epe):** Thank you very much Mr Speaker, for giving me your protection against Mr Adelu, a Trade Unionist.

Thirdly, where is our oil boom? Nigeria is poor today. What has contributed to part of our poverty. It is the fight for freedom in Africa. Millions and millions of our oil revenue money has been spent in helping militarily, in training personnel and in buying fire arms for the freedom fighters in Zimbabwe and other parts of Africa. Some years ago, 14 million was given to Angola. So, for us now to give up the fight when victory is not fully secured is to frustrate the money we have already spent. Nigeria, where is your leadership? You are the greatest and the most populated black country in Africa. You had really shown your impact in many ways when you, Nigeria stood by Angola, and Angola got her Independence. (*Applause*) America fears Nigeria and so is the United Kingdom.

Some few weeks ago, the Prime Minister of Britain, Mrs Margaret Thatcher was to take a different stand on a certain issue but when Nigeria made a pronouncement, she sank down and yielded to us. If we now stop this struggle we shall be losing our leadership and God forbid that we do that. What of the racial impact? A black man is a black man anywhere—in Washington, in the ghettos of London, in Zimbabwe, in South Africa, in Nigeria, in Rhodesia

in fact anywhere. The tarnishing of the image of the black man, the degradation of any black man, the humiliation of any black man, is a humiliation, degradation and the tarnishing of all black men all over the world. (*Applause*). Therefore, for us to stay aloof is to concede that we are races to be suppressed and for ever not to be allowed to breathe.

Our case in Nigeria is quite different. In Nigeria we are fighting only against Great Britain. The South Africans in Zimbabwe are fighting against three forces. There is Britain which is a sufficiently strong power to do battle with. There is the callous, brutal and most inhuman South Africa totally excluded from the world. Democracy is no vocabulary for them. Respect for human nature has never been their part of life. Parliamentary elections have never taken place there. They have spent their lives since the 16th century there when they got to South Africa as an isolated bank, unknown and untouched by world civilization. And these are the people now fighting against our brothers. It is a strong force and that is why the whole world has not been able to find a solution to the problem of South Africa. In fact, even Britain and United States cannot find the solution to its problem. It is not because they do not want to fight South Africa, but it is because South Africa has become a unique race in the world.

Then there are the White people in Zimbabwe itself. These are the people who do not claim to be strangers in the place. They claim the ownership of the place. They came there in the 17th century and found the grassland very yielding. They found gold there. They found mineral oil there. So, they began to exterminate the natives, kill them, assassinate them and brutally extinguish them and they took possession of their property, their gold-mines and everything. They made them theirs! They now feel that Africa is their Continent. They are now fighting as if they are fighting against their landlords. They now claim ownership of that place and they are ready to lose their blood and to lose every inch of their life on it. These are the three battles which our brothers in South Africa are fighting. They cannot fight it alone. All their Political Parties have been banned. The African National Congress was banned and the National Democratic Party was also banned.

**Mr Speaker** : Please round up.

**Mr Sadiku** : Mr Speaker, I am saying that we have a duty, a very binding duty, to examine this Motion very critically. Four demands have been made upon this House. The first one is that South African troops must be removed from Zimbabwe. There is a bridge between Zimbabwe and South Africa and the troops from South Africa are deployed to guard this bridge. Who are these South Africans? Is there any need for South Africans to be there? There is no need at all. Is there anything between us and the Cameroon? There is none. There is no need for these people to be in Zimbabwe. These troops are the very troops that massacre Africans in South Africa. These are the very troops that assassinate South Africans in the very land where they come from. They will brutally kill the Rhodesians and the Zimbabweans. Therefore, we should do all we can to get these troops removed from that place.

**Mr Speaker** : Please round up.

**Mr Sadiku** : Mr Speaker I am saying that this Motion must be supported in-to-to without any inhibition, because we have to remember our great leaders who have left this world.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am asking that this Motion should be supported. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

**Mr Speaker** : Thank you very much Pastor. (*Laughter*)

**Alhaji Idris Ibrahim** (Minna North) : I would not waste your time but because of the contribution of one of the Members here I find it necessary to explain to this honourable House that Nigeria is the largest democratic country in Africa. Nigeria is the fourth largest democratic country in the world, and therefore, we have a role to play in seeing that all our African brothers who live under dictatorship are free. This is the reason why we must take a stand which is not contradictory to our conviction that the black man, no matter where he comes from, must feel that he has the same role to play against any white man anywhere in this globe. (*Applause*)

The most important thing, hon. Members, is that we must see that the Zimbabwe affair is brought to a sudden end because every year we send one hundred million naira worth of arms through the Frontline States to Zimbabwe because liberation movements cannot have them directly. These five African Frontline States are using the Nigerian arms and it was the Nigerian arms that were used by Tanzania. This is why I am making you to understand that as far as this Motion is concerned I support the Movers of this Motion. We have to be very careful that having given support to this Motion in-to-to without any amendment, the members of the Foreign Relations Committee has a job to do. They should not necessarily wait until such a Motion is brought before they take action. They should see to it that measures that would bring about a fair election in Zimbabwe are taken.

So, hon. Gentlemen we need your support.

**Mr O. Afolabi** (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, the Motion has been exhaustively dealt with. I now move that the Question be put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

**Resolved** : That this House profoundly condemns the continued presence of South African troops in Zimbabwe and the repeated violations of the Lancaster Agreement on Zimbabwe by the pro-apartheid Soames' Regime in Zimbabwe and accordingly urges the President of Nigeria to bring more pressure to bear upon the British Government so as to compel the immediate withdrawal of South African troops from Zimbabwe; and this House further directs the Committee on External Affairs to investigate without delay the avenue or avenues for ensuring that the forth-coming elections in that country are free and fair.

**Mr Speaker :** Party Leaders, you have an appointment with the President, and you can now leave. The Party Leaders only should leave.

Motion No. 2 which is Manufacture of Low Cost Cars for Workers, stands in the name of Dr Eze O. A. Nwala.

**Mallam Sidi H. Ali (Dambatta) :** Point of explanation.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes.

**Mallam Sidi H. Ali :** Mr Speaker, Sir, this little explanation would have come earlier if I had had the opportunity to speak on the last Motion. I feel that the 37 days spent by the Presidential envoy to deal with the situation in London which led us to remove the embargo on Zimbabwe, should have been communicated by the Committee on External Affairs to the Party Leaders at least. Some facts could have been passed over to us. So I beg that from now onwards when such things happen, they should not wait until we reach such a level. They could make contact and keep us up-to-date. Thank you Sir.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Dr Nwala.

#### Manufacture of low cost cars for workers

**Dr O. A. Nwala (Ikwerre/Etche II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members I rise to move the Motion standing in my name :

That in pursuance of the economic objective contained in Section 16 (1) (a) of the Constitution and considering the need to make available to Nigerian workers and other citizens, low cost cars with sizeable cubic capacity, and reasonable durability, this House directs the Committee on Industries to explore ways and means to make Peugeot Automobile Nigeria Limited manufacture Peugeot cars of 1100-1300CC known as Peugeot 304 and 305 in addition to the 504 models now in short supply and too expensive for the average Nigeria workers.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

**Mr H. M. J. Wachukwu (Ukwa) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members I rise to second the Motion.

**Dr O. A. Nwala :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I feel honoured to be called upon to propose one of those Motions, which I consider very important, that will lead to the improvement of the quality of living of the Nigerian workers or the working class of this country. In moving this Motion, please permit me to read the relevant Section of the Constitution. Section 16 (1) (a) which is cited in this Motion reads thus :

*The State Shall, within the context of the ideals and objectives for which provisions are made in this Constituion—*

(a) *control the national economy in such manner as to secure the maximum welfare, freedom and happiness of every citizen on the basis of social justice and equality of status and opportunity.*

There are certain significant words in this Section of the Constitution. For purposes of emphasis I would like to reiterate or read them over again, *maximum*

*welfare, freedom and happiness of every citizen on the basis of social justice and equality of status and opportunity.* I think these key words are very relevant particularly as they concern one aspect of our economic life. We all know that Peugeot Automobile Nigeria Limited is one of those industries in which this country has invested a large sum of money or has controlling shares.

This industry is established for the benefit of all sectors or all socio-economic classes of this country. But what we have witnessed very recently is that the output or the product of this industry is directed towards only a very few limited section of the society. What I may call the upper middle-class or the upper-class to the detriment and neglect of the low and lower middle-class workers of this country. I think that this is a very unhealthy situation which we should not allow to persist or perpetuate itself for a very long time. In order to do that, there is need for us to call to the attention of this particular industry that these other classes of Nigerians are being isolated from what naturally belongs to them and ought to be properly catered for. If I may call the attention of Members I will say that Peugeot Automobile Nigeria Limited in this country enjoys a comfortable monopoly in the assemblage of cars in Nigeria.

Not only that, it also has a comfortable economic protection and reserved market. All Nigerians have learnt over the past three decades or more to patronize Peugeot Products because of its proven durability. There is also the high demand and preference by Nigerian workers for small cars. Now elsewhere in the world where Peugeot cars are manufactured, we know that they manufacture a whole range of cars starting from such models as 104, 204, 304 and we understand that 305 is now in circulation elsewhere in the world. They have 404, then 504L which now is 504GR, 504GL and then 604. What you notice is that in Nigeria we have concentrated in producing the more expensive models and only few Nigerians have access to these models. I think this is not a healthy thing. It is necessary for the Committee on Industries to go into great detail to find out why this sort of condition must prevail in Nigeria which is not prevalent in other parts of the world.

Now the opponents of this Motion would like to give me an example by pointing to Volkswagen Nigeria Limited as manufacturing small cars and therefore it is not necessary for Peugeot Industry to go into that sort of competition. I do not think that this is a very relevant argument in the sense that Volkswagen Nigeria Limited produces Volkswagen cars ; it does not produce only one type of model. In fact if example is anything to go by, you will find that Volkswagen produces 1300cc, 1500cc, Igala, Passat, Audi and so on, thus giving Nigeria a wide range of choice. What we have found in the case of Peugeot made in Nigeria is that they are strangulating and limiting our individual choice and this is not what we want in this country.

If any economic activity is going to cater for the consumers' preferences or consumers' taste, they should give us alternatives and this is not the case with the Peugeot Nigeria Limited. I think that the sooner we

[MR NWALA]

ask this company to liberalise their assembly policies the better it will be for the working classes. When I say the working classes, I mean people within the salary range of Grade Level 07 and Grade Level 10. These people cannot readily procure a bank credit to buy cars.

I took some time this morning to find out the prevailing price of Peugeot 504 GL. It now costs ₦6,629.00 to put that car on the road. This is nearly ₦7,000.00 and that is the least expensive model of Peugeot assembled in Nigeria. This is not a very healthy thing for the working class. I believe that when the Committee on Industry might have done its homework, it should come up with a sound recommendation that will make it possible for Peugeot Automobile (Nigeria) Limited to produce cheaper cars.

I do not want to belabour this issue because the Motion is a very straight forward one. So, I will crave your indulgence by asking the hon. Members to support this Motion which is directed towards making life better for the working masses of this country.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes the hon. Member for Okehi Adavbi (*Mr Jimoh Damisa*).

**Mr Jimoh Damisa (Okehi Adavbi) :** There is a mistake in the Order of the Day.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the intention of this Motion is to take care or make sure that the Peugeot Assembly Company gives us other brands or models as the company does in other countries. The prices of some of these cars differ according to their capacities and not only that, there are times even now when some of the cars this Peugeot Factory produces do not have some accessories which they dare not do in foreign countries. Airconditioner is an example. Apart from giving us all the models, they should make sure that all the cars produced by the Peugeot Factory have airconditioners.

**An hon. Member :** What of Volkswagen ?

**Mr Damisa :** I am coming. We are talking of the models of Peugeot. What the Volkswagen gives us is no more a luxury in this country. We want clocks in some of these cars ; we want radio sets and safety driving belts in these cars. In some countries, cars that do not have these accessories are not allowed on the road but most manufacturers have discovered that Nigeria is a very fertile ground where they can dump anything. We take anything at very expensive prices for that matter and that is why it is better that this Motion which comes up in this honourable House should get the blessing it needs. Let us make sure that we have the standard of cars which the Peugeot Factory can give us and that the accessories are complete as in other countries.

With this Mr Speaker, I beg to sit down.

**Mr Speaker :** Mr Princewill.

**Mr Dagogo Princewill (Degema I) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members I am in sympathy with the Mover of this Motion. Dr Eze Nwala is a very good

friend of mine but I am afraid it is not good for us to describe such a Motion as irrelevant. Therefore, I have to oppose it on the following grounds.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the essence of importing cars into this country is for us to have economic advantage because we are not a car producing nation notwithstanding the fact that we have Peugeot Plants. The problem as I see it, Mr Speaker, is not a question of manufacturing small cars. Are we manufacturing small cars for the invalids ? We are not calling for small cars like the motorcycles. I do not think we can import a small car that is cheaper than a Volkswagen. Do hon. Members know that in this country Volkswagen is sold at an exorbitant price ? It is almost ₦4,000.00. Can the hon. Member who moved this Motion tell us if he can get a car which is cheaper than Volkswagen ? The problem, Sir, is not the question of importing small cars but the problem is the manner in which this country charges import duties on cars imported into this country.

The problem, Sir, is this. If you bought a car overseas with an engine capacity of 3,000cc say in America, this will possibly cost you ₦5,000.00. If you go to Europe or Japan, the countries that make small engine cars, you will get a small engine capacity car of say 1,500cc at almost the same price, if not more. But now when you import these two cars, into this country you find out that a car that was imported from United States of America with 3,000cc attracts a custom duty of three hundred per cent while the 180k Datsun car costs about 50-70 per cent. I am saying that Custom Duties should be imposed on F.O.B. (Free on Board) and not on the engine capacity. If this country imposes the Custom Duty on F.O.B. rather than on the engine capacity, I am sure that there will be a great market for the Americans who make bigger engine capacity cars because in the long run their luxury cars will be almost the same price as the Japanese cars.

**An hon. Member :** They are too big for Nigerian roads.

**Mr Speaker :** Go on.

**Mr Dagogo Princewill :** Mr Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member said that they are too big for us but they are Insurance against accident. The Volkswagen cars and the small cars are so light that they are easily carried away by the winds and suddenly we have accident. On that point big engine cars are security because they have all the luxuries which hon. Member for Okehi Adavbi (*Mr Jimoh Damisa*) has just mentioned. If the engine capacity is strong and big it will have all the luxuries like the seat belt and what have you. Volkswagen has no seat belt whilst Japanese cars have seat belts.

One day I was in a taxi in Lagos and I asked the Taxi driver how long he had been using the taxi. He said it was only two years but the panel was all rusty. So I am saying that the system of importing cars into this country is against the economic interest of our great country. Therefore, this country should impose Custom duty on Free on Board (F.O.B.) instead of on the engine capacity. In so doing, the prices of small cars manufactured in Europe and Japan will drastically come down.

With these few points, I beg to oppose this Motion

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, hon. Member for Ethiope North (*Dr Sowho*)

**Dr J. E. Sowho** (Ethiope North) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, this Motion should not have been brought to the Floor of this House. There are in Nigeria cars that have been in existence for many years meant to serve the interest which this Motion wants to serve.

The Volkswagen, the one you call Beetle, is called the Peoples' Car in Germany. It is a car that was brought into existence many years ago by Adolph Hitler to make it possible for the so-called common man to be able to get a car. What is happening in Nigeria is that because of our pricing tendency it has become so expensive that it is nearly becoming cheaper to buy a machine. I think what we ought to do is not to call on the Federal Government to allow us or encourage Peugeot Automobile of Nigeria to bring in their smaller series of cars but to bring down the duties charged on cars. If these duties are brought down the prices will drop. The solution is not in bringing in the American cars to have a bigger engine capacity that consumes a lot of fuel. If you bring in these cars, the people you want to sell to cannot maintain the cars. Then we are encouraging again another aspect of corruption in this country. They have to look for the money. The cars that are available now are so expensive in Nigeria that with the cost of one Peugeot 504, you can buy two in France. So, what we need to do is to look at the pricing point and see where we can bring down the cost to be within the ability of the average Nigerian.

I think from now the Beetle should serve the interest of this group of people so that they can maintain them. When you buy a car, you have to think of your salary ; you have to think of your ability to make enough allowance to maintain the car. Most people in Nigeria today are buying cars which they cannot afford to maintain. Very many people have come to view the car as a symbol. So, people are actually living outside their means. Let us not do things that will continue to encourage this because this is just the crux of our problem in this country.

This Motion as it stands should be thrown out for now and we should bring up a better Motion calling on the Federal Government to bring down the duties on imported cars. (*Applause*)

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, hon. Member for Ankpa South (*Mr A. Abutu*).

**Mr A. Abutu** (Ankpa South) : Hon. Members, I would not say that this Motion should be thrown out. I would rather say that the Motion has a very good idea and method but lacks mechanism and preparation. (*Applause*)

**Several hon. Members :** Fire! Fire!

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, go on.

**Mr Abutu :** It is a very good Motion and it is being sent to a Committee for study and then make a recommendation to this House. Why most commodities like cars are very expensive is not the

fault of the importers or the manufacturers, it is the fault of the previous government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. It is the fault of the bureaucrats because of ten per cent ; it is the fault of we Nigerians who are the middlemen who, after getting these cars in bulk from the foreign firms who are interested in selling these cars at a very low cost to us, take the cars to their homes or shops and sell at 300 per cent.

If I knew that this Motion was coming up, I would have brought facts and figures which I am going to submit to the Committee. There are cars that can arrive here at ₦2,500 each. After a month or two they would say no, it is too cheap you want to lower our economy and they would increase it overnight like they did with Opel Kadett and Volkswagen as my hon. Friend said here. This Committee should come out with a clear-cut policy. I know I would be ruled out. Apart from cars there are other commodities that are cheaper, but when we go into the market to sell, we Nigerians quote 300 per cent price. This is what everybody here is aware of.

If this Motion is to stand, let it go to the Committee on Industry to look at the ways and means by which we can get cheaper cars maybe by lifting embargo on some of these cars so that they can come in large numbers and we can buy them cheaper. By imposing embargo or high Custom duties, what did they do with the money ? Nothing ; all went to private pockets. Nigerian workers and other poor people like us are suffering. Therefore, we should abolish this embargo and bring more cars. We should cancel distributorship and dealership in Nigeria so that every Nigerian can go and purchase directly all the cars and other commodities. Thank you Mr Chairman. (*Applause*)

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Mr Kalgo.

**Mr Kani Danbare Kalgo** (Bumza Kalgo) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion on the following conditions.

All of us here know that motor cars that are given to workers are no luxuries. They are necessary and we should remember that. If at all we have to pass this Motion I would like to appeal to the Committee concerned to take the following points into consideration.

The cost of these cars should be reduced so that Nigerian workers can buy these cars which we are talking about. Let us take Peugeot cars for example. Their prices before were so moderate, but now the prices are so high that a worker cannot buy a Peugeot car. The only car you can say a worker can get at ₦4,000 is a Beetle car. This is only the car you can think of and even with Beetle cars you are thinking of workers who are entitled to Loans.

Another point is this, by bringing this issue to the House we have to re-introduce the basic car allowance to our workers. This is to enable them maintain these cars we are talking about. How can a man be given the money to go and buy a car without basic allowance. How does he maintain it ? Without this basic allowance they cannot maintain their cars. This Committee should think about this.

[MR KALGO]

The other point is to make spare-parts available throughout Nigeria. There is no need bringing Peugeot cars in abundance with no spare parts. After driving cars for three or four months you have to keep them for years, sending people here and there looking for spare parts. So, spareparts should be made available throughout the Nation.

The Committee on Industry should oversee the work of the Price Control Board. It should check the activities of the motor companies. If we say that Peugeot should be sold at ₦4,000, it should be sold at that amount, instead of people buying it at ₦4,500. The Price Control Board should therefore do its work properly. Some people look for these cars but could not get them, whereas some people are hiding them in their houses. We know that this type of people are many in Nigeria. If you go to some corners, even in this Lagos, you will find Peugeot cars lying about just like that, and there are people who are looking for these cars to buy. It is because somebody has got many of them but he is hiding them so as to sell them at prohibitive prices. This Committee should take this responsibility as their own and work on this problem.

If we are to help the Nigerian Workers, we should reduce the Custom duties on imported cars. This is very important. We always buy cars at very cheap rates outside the country and sell them to our own people at exorbitant prices. Why can we not make the prices moderate for them? If we want to help our workers, this Committee should shoulder this responsibility.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to take my seat.

**Mr Eddy Nkem Nweke (Nkanu)** : I rise to support this Motion with these few points.

The Mover of this Motion has carefully selected a very interesting point. He is not talking about himself nor his State nor any other area in this country, but he is talking about the workers of this country. Their cases must be handled carefully and tolerably. We are here making laws for the people of this country who we call the workers. So, their benefits and welfare should be looked into carefully.

On the question of cars mentioned in this Motion it is understood that the money these workers are being given as loans and advances cannot buy the available cars. Why are these cars very expensive? They are expensive because of monopoly. Peugeot and Volkswagen cars have monopolised the car market in this country. Therefore, what do you expect the poor workers to do with the small money that they are given? I am therefore suggesting that this honourable House and the Government should stop that monopoly by these two Companies. A worker who gets a car loan of ₦4,800 or ₦3,600 cannot buy a car; he cannot buy Peugeot 504 car. We should therefore ask why Peugeot stopped producing 304, 404, and 504L cars. We should also ask why the Government banned other cars from coming into the country. That monopoly should be broken.

Therefore, the Committee on Trade and Industry should properly investigate why this should continue. On the other hand, as I have said before, Section 16 of the Constitution has made it possible for the economic objectives of this country to go on. If we insist on importing cars from America, London and Japan, how then do we justify this Constitution?

The idea of reducing the Customs duties on imported cars should not come in at all. We should be able, in this country, to manufacture and start our own car industry. For instance, last night on the Television a young man from Borno State, who by profession is a photographer has undertaken to manufacture a helicopter. He will do it, Sir, just watch him. We should therefore encourage our own industry.

**An hon. Member** : The helicopter has not taken off.

**Mr Nweke** : It will take off. You just have to wait. My aim is that we should encourage our own industry. Whether this aeroplane takes off or not, this boy is only asking for the engine of a car to get his job done. Why can we not therefore encourage our own industry? So, the idea of importing a car of any capacity and reducing the custom duty does not come in.

With these few points, Mr Speaker, I suggest for the interest and sake of Nigerian workers, we should all support this Motion. As long as we go against the interest of Nigerian workers, I am sure that any kind of law that we make in this House will never go through. I beg that we should all support this Motion.

**Mr S. D. A. Magani (Sangon Katab)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion, and in supporting it I have a few observations to make.

In the first place, Mr Speaker, Sir, we should ask the Federal Government to reduce the Custom duties on some of these cars. Some of the Nigerian workers are not able to purchase cars because the duties on these cars are very high. We said that these cars are assembled here but you still find their prices are still very high. If the Custom duties are reduced on some of these cars, then you will see that an average Nigerian will be able to purchase a car comfortably.

As some hon. Members have said, car is no more a luxury but a necessity. This is very important. What the previous Government did was to stop the average Nigerian to have a car. In addition to that, they stopped salary increase so that these people would not have means of buying cars to go to places of their work. This is very bad. If there is no increase in their salaries, and the prices of cars are increased, then you will find that most Nigerians will not be able to buy a car.

**An hon. Member** : Point of information.

**Mr Speaker** : There is no point of information.

**Mr Magani :** We do not have a very good transport system in this country and the Federal Government has not been able to do anything about this for the comfort of the average worker. I am suggesting that the only solution is to allow other brands of cars from all over the world to come in as before so that if one is not able to buy a Volkswagon car or Peugeot car, one would get an alternative. If the cars come into the country in large quantities you will see that the prices will be reduced and everybody will have an alternative. I think this is the proper thing to do.

Mr Speaker, Sir, these are the few points that the Committee on Industry should look into so that they will be able to reduce the prices of these cars, and also allow more cars to come into the country, With this an average Nigerian will be able to have a means of transport to and from his office.

With these few points, I beg to support.

**Mr Clement Erongu (Obioma Ngwa) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I have to thank the Speaker for allowing me today to speak. As a matter of fact, I must really express my feelings about my presence here. I must actually say that I have been treated like an observer.

**Mr Abubakar Abutu (Ankpa South) :** Point of Order.

**Mr Erongu :** Excuse me, what point of order ?

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Mr Abutu :** My point of order is Order 26 (2). Mr Speaker, you allowed him to speak and he wants to level an accusation by trying to divert us from the main subject on the Floor.

**Mr Erongu :** My hon. Colleagues, I think I have a sense of responsibility in this honourable House and I owe it a duty to my conscience to come here and associate myself and contribute to the debates in this honourable House. As a matter of fact, I have spoken only but once. (*Interruptions*) Hon. Members, I just want to express my feelings, and I hope you do not mind. I have been a victim of oversight. (*Interruptions*)

The question is: with all these bans upon bans, what have we really derived from them? The economic stability is not there. At the same time, we must understand that the common people in this country are the people who are really suffering. It is like Moses seeing Canaan and never reaching there. Suppose we continue to ban every little thing in this country that affects the lives of these common people, I think by the time the Messiah comes most of us must have perished. (*Laughter*)

**Several hon. Members :** Fire ! Fire !

**Mr Erongu :** As a matter of fact, I am very happy that most hon. Members have really said that the question of mobility or cars is not a question of luxury but a necessity. Why do we have to buy this car called Peugeot 504 at almost ten thousand Naira? How long will it take an average worker

to pay back this money? We should take all these things into consideration. It is unnecessary for us to adopt laws that actually come to mean punishments to the common man of this country. (*Applause*)

**Several hon. Members :** Point! Point!

**Mr Erongu :** I think, Mr Speaker, we have to face facts and admit them. We are not happy with this question of buying a Peugeot vehicle when people have really made it impossible for the ordinary man to walk into the shop and buy it. Sometimes you have to pay one thousand Naira extra and sometimes more and definitely you have to wait for as long as six months. What do we derive from this policy? Absolutely nothing.

I think this country needs a little bit of competition in world trade. We cannot afford to ban those things we cannot produce ourselves. There must be an atmosphere where the ordinary man has to benefit from the so-called national cake. I have not even seen one myself. I do not even know it.

**Several hon. Members :** Fire ! Fire !

**Mr Erongu :** So, Mr Speaker, Sir, I will not take much of your time but I think the Committee should take into consideration the fact that for the next fifty years (may be by that time I must have gone), with this present policy, we are not landing anywhere. So, what we need is a complete change of attitude. We have seen a lot of window-dressing in our policies and I think the Peugeot and the Volkswagen Assembly Industries should be exposed to competition so that they will sit up. (*Applause*)

I beg to take my seat.

**Dr John E. Eburuche (Agbaja/Uvuru) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to preface my speech by refuting a point made by the hon. Member for Ankpa South (*Mr Abubakar Abutu*). In his personal opinion, the Motion was not well prepared but I think this opinion is wrong and too erroneous to believe. If anyone has any credit, I dare say this is one of the most beautifully prepared Motions, the most scholarly piece of Motion that has ever come to the Floor of this honourable House.

**Several hon. Members :** Fire ! Fire ! (*Interruptions*)

**Dr Eburuche :** I would like to beg for your audience.

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order ! The hon. Member for Agbaja/Uvuru (*Dr J. E. Eburuche*) if you may resume your seat, you will continue thereafter.

Hon. Members the time is about 1.00 o'clock now, that is, break time. In the circumstances, the House is suspended till 3 o'clock this afternoon.

*Sitting suspended : 12.55 p.m.*

*Sitting resumed : 3.10 p.m.*

**Mr Speaker :** Gentlemen, we are still on the manufacture of low cost cars for workers. Yes, Dr Eburuche.

**Dr Eburuche :** I was trying to point out the highlights of the Motion before time ran out on me. If you have a pen or a pencil please underline the following words in the Motion—*Low cost cars with sizeable capacity, find ways and means and manufacture—(Interruption)*

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, go on with the Motion.

**An hon. Member :** Are you amending it ?

**Dr Eburuche :** No, I am not amending it, but I am showing you the highlights. I am sure that most of those who have opposed this Motion do not understand what the Motion is asking. The Motion is asking us to request that low-cost cars be produced.

**Alhaji Abutu (Ankpa South) :** Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, there is a point of order.

**Alhaji Abutu :** My point of order is that the hon. Member is using an unparliamentary language. He said that Members did not understand.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, go on.

**Dr Eburuche :** I did not say that Members did not understand. I said that the Members did not understand the Motion. The Motion is asking us to come up with more low-cost cars and small ones too. It is asking us to manufacture too. So with those highlights now, you can ask why are cars so expensive in Nigeria at the moment ? At the moment, we are importing most of our cars except a few and that is, Peugeot cars which are assembled in Kaduna and which do not really last long anyway. The high price of these cars can be attributable to a number of factors including cost of transportation, Custom duties, and what may be called imported inflation. If we can manufacture these products that have been asked for by the Mover of the Motion, we will be reducing the cost because we will not have to pay Custom duties, the cost of transportation will be minimal, and we will not have to import inflation from foreign countries where the labour cost is high as opposed to Nigeria.

My second point is that the Motion is asking the Committee to explore the feasibility of producing such vehicles in Nigeria. Right here I can tell you even without any feasibility study, that it is feasible to produce the categories of cars mentioned in this Motion. You will agree with me that about eighty per cent of the materials that go into the making of vehicles are steel and Nigeria abounds in steel as a raw material for car production.

Thirdly, Nigeria must be emancipated from the strait-jacket of exploitation by monopolistic producers and sellers. One kind of product is not sufficient. We do not have variety of cars in this country and the monopolist operates in a funny way. He reduces his supply so that he can raise the price. If you reduce the price of cars then you are reducing the producers' profit. Therefore the incentive to produce more will be lacking. If we produce the cars we import locally we will be reducing the price of cars. Local production does not only have an advantage over importation in the sense that it will provide employment opportunities for our people, but it will also help to curb inflation. It will help to industrialise this country to a larger extent.

In fact, I recently talked to a foreign investor and he told me what their fears are. They are ready to come here and open up these things. Their fears include the indigenisation policy—the forty-sixty per cent ownership. They are afraid of it. This is so because they say that if Nigeria owned sixty per cent and the foreigner forty per cent then it means that Nigeria makes the crucial decision that determines the fate of their business. So if we can relax the indigenisation policy in some way, then we will be attracting them. I am not saying that we should give them one hundred per cent. If we can raise it to give them a margin of safety, it will attract them to give us what we are asking for.

I talked about variety of cars. We have been limited to a few cars, most of which are inferior that nobody likes to use. There are some small American cars that are very good and equally good for our roads. Americans could be encouraged to come here and produce if the ten per centers can waive that requirement. I think the Motion is a good one and should receive universal support.

With that, Mr Speaker, I support the Motion.

**Mr David G. Gba'aondo (Takum) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to oppose this Motion. In the real sense of it, the Mover demands that Peugeot Automobile Nigeria Limited should manufacture Peugeot cars of some capacities which he has stated here, as 304, 305, up to 504 models. Some people have however misunderstood the whole issue. If at all Peugeot Automobile Limited is going to manufacture all these cars, the quantity cannot solve our problem. The Automobile Company can manufacture millions of this type of cars, yet the price will not be reduced. This is so because we the Nigerians have our own problems. The rich wants to get richer so that the poor would become poorer. This is because the Managing Directors of these Companies do not care whether the poor man is suffering or not, provided they themselves have the money.

I do not believe that the Federal Government has a great share in that Company. If you go into details, you will find that the Federal Government has not got up to sixty per cent. Some people mentioned the reduction of Customs Duties on imported goods. This is not possible because we get most of our money in this country from Custom Duties.

This Motion, as somebody has earlier said is lacking in mechanism ; so it should be withdrawn. I beg to sit down.

**Alhaji Hamman Dikko (Maiha) :** I rise to oppose this Motion.

In contributing to the Motion, as my Colleague has said, manufacturing cars in Nigeria will not reduce the price of cars. As he has already said, the top people are the people having shares in these companies. We know them. Therefore, in this case, we should ask the Federal Government to take necessary action on this matter. If they refuse to do so, we in the National Assembly have the right to take a Resolution in respect of prices of cars.



[ALHAJI DIKKO]

Secondly, I am opposing the reduction of Custom Duties because our salary is being paid from there.

**An hon. Member :** Have you got any salary ?

**Alhaji Dikko :** Yes, I know that I have not got any salary but I know that the Federal Government gets a lot of revenue from Customs and Excise Duties. Therefore, I oppose the idea of reducing Customs Duties on imported cars. Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

**Mr Aliyu Isa (Makarfi) :** I rise to sympathise with the Mover of this Motion. The Motion is wrongly placed because at the moment the Assembly factories cannot produce enough vehicles for Nigeria. If we ask them to produce other brands of cars, it will take two years to bring down the machinery and the spare-parts to Nigeria.

What I want the hon. Members of the House to realise is that we are not manufacturing cars in Nigeria ; we are assembling them. It is regrettable that the cars we produce in Nigeria are sub-standard. They have no quality to justify their marketing in other countries. The worst cars are Volkswagen, Audi, and Passat. No sensible country in the world will allow such cars to be marketed but they are being marketed in Nigeria at high costs. If we look well we will find that standard peugeot cars from Europe and America, cost between three thousand Naira and four thousand Naira but in Nigeria it costs over eight thousand Naira. It has no quality and it is sub-standard.

The only alternative to reduce the suffering of the masses in this country is to ask the Federal Government to lift the unfortunate ban on importation of cars. Various types of cars should be brought into this country at a cheaper rate and with reasonable custom duties so that with two thousand Naira to three thousand naira, a poor man would be able to get a good car to buy.

The government should have taken better measure on Volkswagen and Peugeot Assembly Plants instead of restricting importation of cars. They should have taken control of production, quality distribution and pricing but they failed to do this. The past Economic Advisers of the Government were either dishonest or they did not know what they were doing.

I would ask the Mover of this Motion to amend his Motion that the Government should allow free importation of vehicles into this country so that everybody can make a choice of any type of vehicle that he wants at a cheaper rate. Thank you.

**Mr Akin Ogunseye (Lagos South II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to oppose this Motion. In doing so I would like to say that I am not doing so on sentiment. I oppose the Motion on its merit. The Motion lacks merit, and from the trend of debate and even from the Movers of the Motion, one would discover that the Movers are not even prepared for the Motion. They do not have their facts right, they do not have the data, they do not even have, I am sorry to say, the elements of cost that make up the cost of a vehicle.

One of the Movers of the Motion did say that he wanted us to underline the word *manufacture*. Why he wanted that underlining, I do not know. The point is that we cannot manufacture vehicles in Nigeria today. This is true. We can only assemble motor vehicles ; we cannot manufacture. We just do not have the raw materials to manufacture. The vehicles that are assembled in Nigeria today—the Peugeot cars and the Volkswagen series are only assembled and not manufactured in Nigeria.

In order to give some facts on why I oppose this Motion, I would like to say briefly, Sir, that whether we decide to assemble smaller brands of Peugeot cars in Nigeria or not, does not necessarily reduce the cost of production in so far as we cannot remove the elements of cost such as cost of labour which cannot be reduced, cost of materials which we have no control over, and over-head charges which cannot be removed. While these are static, there is little that anybody can do to reduce the cost of production if ever it is possible to produce in Nigeria.

The reason why vehicles are costly and dearer in Nigeria is what several Members have touched upon and this is because of the exorbitant duties, namely, import duties and excise duties. A Member said that if we manufactured smaller Peugeot vehicles in Nigeria then there would be no duties. I suppose that is a wrong assumption. Whether we assemble cars in Nigeria or not the duty is still there. The difference is that the duty for assembled cars in Nigeria is excise duty and not import duty. The amount of excise duty that is imposed on vehicles assembled in this country today is so exorbitant that it is singularly responsible for the high cost of the price of the vehicles.

Mr Speaker, Sir, added to this is the high premium charges levied by the various insurance companies. The two main factors that are responsible for high cost of vehicles in this country are the high cost of custom duty if it is imported, or excise duty if it is assembled here in Nigeria, and also the high cost of insurance premiums. I understand that as at now, one has to pay between ten and twenty *per cent* of the cost of the vehicle as insurance premium. I suppose what we should look forward to is that we should direct our attention to seeing that what we pay as premium is brought down as low as possible, having regard to the amount of money that the various insurance companies pay out—

**Mr H. M. J. Wachukwu (Ukwa) :** Point of order.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, what is your point of order ?

**Mr Wachukwu :** My point of order is Order 26 (2). The speaker on the Floor is talking about insurance, whereas the Motion is about low-cost cars. Insurance has nothing to do with the cost of cars. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, go on, Mr Ogunseye.

**Mr Ogunseye :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I shall try to wind up. I suppose hon. Members have seen the point I am trying to make, that it is not the assembling of cars in Nigeria, whether big or small

[MR OGUNSEYE]  
cars, that would reduce the cost and the burden on the community, but the bringing down of the amount we pay as duties and the amount we pay as premium.

In any case, this Motion, in so far as it picks out Peugeot cars alone, is discriminatory. It is not only Peugeot cars we assemble in Nigeria. Why does the Motion not include Volkswagen cars and other brands of vehicles ?

Mr Speaker, Sir, with that little remark, I suppose we should let this Motion be withdrawn and a proper and more thorough Motion be brought forward in future. Thank you very much.

Mr Jire O. Akintunde (Oluyole) : Mr Speaker, I rise to support this Motion. This is because the Motion is good, it is well-framed, and it is timely.

I say that the Motion is good because it calls on the Committee on Industry to find ways and means of providing very low-cost cars for Nigerian workers. It is the duty of this Committee to go into details and do the job that this Motion asks the Committee to do. I say that the Motion is good also because the Motion is for the Nigerian workers and all other Nigerian citizens. It means, in effect, that the Motion embraces the farmers and the low-income group. It does not necessarily mean workers that are over and above Grade Level 07 or 17, but the low-income group of workers and other Nigerian citizens like the market-women, teachers, carpenters, drivers, painters, labourers, *et cetera*.

Again, call it any name, be it 304 or 204, what the Motion is after is low-cost cars and not necessarily Peugeot 404 or Volkswagen cars. It may be pick-up cars or any other type of car. The Motion goes on to say that it does not want reduction of engine capacity. It speaks of durable cars but with low-cost, starting from ₦2,000 upwards. The Motion is speaking about providing a car which Nigerian workers can buy with or without car loan. This is what the Motion is after. Whether we manufacture or import, is not this Motion's concern now. We have a Committee on Technology in this House and the Committee on Industry has been asked to find ways and means of providing low-cost cars for Nigerian workers. This is the time that Nigerian citizens should be able to ride in cars, not necessarily airconditioned ones.

We talk of Green Revolution. Officials of the Green Revolution must be mobile. Officials of Food and Shelter Committee must be mobile too. The Motion speaks of village teachers also. If we talk of education, we need teachers who can go from village to village or who can move about from one school in the rural area to another. Some people are thinking of Lagos area alone where, even if you have a car, you cannot ride it because of traffic hold-up. The Motion is not on that ; it is on low-cost and durable cars for the rural areas.

This Motion is good, it is well framed and it is timely. The present Administration must see that before the next two or three years, all Nigerians must be able to ride in low-cost cars.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I support the Motion.

Mr David Adelu (Ibadan East) : Mr Speaker, in the interest of the Nigerian working class and in the interest of the poor Nigerian man, I rise to oppose this Motion.

Mr Speaker, in those days when Hitler called on the German people to devise a car which would be for the people, the Volkswagen car was devised. Volkswagen car is the people's car ; it is small enough and durable enough. It is less costly. The Volkswagen car was made by the German people. But today, are we ripe enough to make any car ? No ! I know that when it comes to talking about roads, our Nigerian engineers can get the data ; but when it comes to making cars, do we have engineers in Nigeria to do that ? No !

Some hon. Members : No !

Mr Adelu : Thank you very much. Mr Speaker, Sir, what will take another twenty years to do should not be started now because we cannot build cars by words. Already we have a Decree in this country on the Car Assembly. On this Car Assembly, I am sorry to say, Mr Speaker, that those who actually built Nigeria are attempting in the economic sense to destroy the country. These are the very people who have great shares in the Assembly Plant in the country. They are economic saboteurs. They are the very people who make the cars to be very costly. I think what we should do now and almost immediately is to see to it that more cars are imported into this country. I think many of us have ridden in cars assembled outside this country. They are durable despite the Nigerian weather and the Nigerian bad roads, but those assembled in this country are really poor in every sense, in material and even they are costly. The accident rate is so high.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would appeal very strongly to the Mover of this Motion to please withdraw the Motion in the interest of Nigeria. In the interest of our great country we must import more cars and then at a time when we are able, we must be able to construct engineering arenas where cars can be constructed. But until then, we cannot devise any means of having cheaper cars. What this Motion is actually seeking is to give us some sort of motorcycles and not cars. Anything lower than Volkswagen would be a motorcycle, and the medicine sellers we see on the roads, build certain sheds on motorcycles. Is that the sort of thing that this Motion is seeking ? I do not think this country would like that. We do not want bourgeois poverty ! We want to rise above the present economic poverty level. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Chief Yomi Akintola (Ogbomosho Central) : I am grateful to the hon. Member for Ikwere/Etche II (*Dr Eze Nwala*) for thinking it fit to think of the common men in this country. It is very nice and thoughtful of him to have thought of them and of providing a mode of transportation for them. But can the common man afford a Volkswagen ?

Some hon. Members : No !

An hon. Member : Who are the common men ?

**Chief Akintola :** We are the common men. We are now talking of our people who are working in factories, in building sites, in the docks, on the roads and even those of them who are ushering us in into this august Assembly. Can any of them in the real sense afford a Volkswagen not to talk of Peugeot 304 ? What actually at the moment is the cost of Peugeot 304 or 305 ? I can tell you. It is within the range of ₦5,000 and ₦6,500.

**An hon. Member :** Are you a dealer ?

**Chief Akintola :** As a representative of the workers and a defender of the oppressed, I think I should implore the House that what we are after actually is to provide some comfort in the mode of transportation for these workers. As such we should attempt not to get them into unnecessary debts but to provide bicycles, motorcycles—

**Several hon. Members :** No ! (Interruptions)

**Chief Akintola :** Just a minute. There is a car that is available now. It is called Pony and it is manufactured in Korea.

**An hon. Member :** He is a dealer ; so he knows everything about cars.

**Chief Akintola :** It will cost a little over ₦1,800 to bring it into this country and if we could provide this type of car for the common men whom we represent, I am sure they would be more than happy and more than grateful to us. Also, to start limiting our choice to just one brand of vehicle is, to talk the least, most selfish because most of us who own cars would probably be able to afford this type of car for our better halves.

Mr Speaker, Sir, on behalf of the oppressed workers of this nation, I suggest that we reject this Motion.

**Mr Dagogo Princewill (Degema I) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and negatived.*

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, the next one is Minimum Wage and Living Conditions for Low-income Workers. It stands in the name of Mr T. N. Ochiama.

**Mr T. N. Ochiama (Ikeduru) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, considering the time factor, and the fact that hon. Members are fanning themselves, and also that proper quorum may not have been formed, I am suggesting Mr Speaker, Sir, that this Motion standing in my name and in the names of some of my hon. Colleagues—Alhaji Mohammed A. Yelwa, Mr David H. Gbaaondo and Mr Amos Sunday—be deferred till 4th February, that is, next Tuesday, so that we can start it in the morning when the whole place will be more conducive to proper action.

**Mr Speaker :** The Motion will be deferred but you will not tell us time. The Business Committee will fix the appropriate time.

**Mr Ochiama :** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. *Motion by leave deferred.*

**Mr Speaker :** The other item is the Restoration of the Two-Tier System in Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology by Mr Paul Mshelia.

**Mr P. Mshelia (Biu South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, in view of the fact that there is no time and in view of the fact that the Hall is now very hot and Members are exhausted, I wish to defer this Motion till Monday.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you very much. Your Motion will go back to the Business Committee to fix appropriate time.

*Motion by leave deferred.*

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, the Order Paper is virtually exhausted.

#### Meeting of the Speakers of various States

Just for the information of Members, there will be a meeting of the Presiding Officers from all States of the Federation that is, all the Speakers of the various States on Thursday and Friday this week.

#### Visit of Members of the Rockefeller Foundation

Also, the Members of the Rockefeller Foundation who are doing some job on Foreign Affairs in Africa will be visiting the National Assembly on Monday, the 4th of February, and they say that they would like to meet Members of our Foreign Affairs Committee. So, the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee should please arrange an emergency meeting of his Committee and get himself prepared. He should possibly get in touch with the Ministry of External Affairs and the Institute of International Affairs to supply the Committee with materials for discussion. The Chairman is Alhaji Sanni Abubakar and the man leading the Mission is a Professor at Michigan State University. He said he is an expert on African Affairs.

Yes, Mr Afolabi.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr O. Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I wish to bring to the notice of the House that tomorrow is a public holiday and that there are other matters which will involve the attention of Mr Speaker and his Deputy and many Members of the House. So, in view of these factors, I respectfully Move that this House adjourns till Monday the 4th of February at 10 o'clock in the morning.

**Mr Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion?

**Mr E. B. Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Does anybody want to say something?

**The Plight of People of Ikale**

**Mr S. O. Olowu** (Ikale) : Mr Speaker, Sir, while on the Motion for Adjournment Sir, I wish to remind the Federal Government of the plight of my people in Ikale Land as regards Federal Roads. About three months ago the President directed that certain roads should be rehabilitated—

**Alhaji A. Abutu** (Ankpa South) : Point of order.

**Mr Speaker** : There is a point of order. What point of Order?

**Alhaji Abutu** : Order 8 (2).

**Mr Speaker** : That is about quorum, is it not?

**Alhaji Abutu** : Yes.

**Mr Speaker** : The Clerk should please check the quorum (*Quorum checked*)

Hon. Members, I understand there is no quorum and in the circumstances, the House is adjourned till 10 o'clock on Monday morning.

*The House accordingly adjourned at 4.00 p.m. pursuant to standing Order 8 (2).*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Monday, 4th February, 1980

The House met at 10.15 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, I have seen the Votes and Proceedings of Tuesday 29th January, 1980, and they are in order.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

I have only a very few announcements.

Special Committee on NNPC

I would like to invite the attention of Members to the meetings of the various Committees scheduled to take place today as reflected on the Order Paper. In particular, I wish to remind the Members of the Special Committee on the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) that the inaugural meeting of this Committee will take place today at 10.30 a.m. I have been informed that some Members of the Standing Committee on NNPC have expressed anxiety that the investigations to be conducted by the Special Committee might encroach on their responsibilities. I would like to make it abundantly clear that there is no basis for such fears. In this connection, may I remind all concerned that the Special Committee was set up by a Resolution of the Whole House in pursuant to Section 58 Subsections (1) and (2) of the Constitution and the work of the Committee is specially to investigate the alleged loss (or misappropriation) of the staggering sum of ₦2.8 billion from the NNPC. Of course, in conducting their investigations the Special Committee will have to call for all relevant papers, records and interview persons who might enable them to get at the root of the matter and submit a comprehensive and objective report of their findings to this honourable House. The Members of the Standing Committee on NNPC should not entertain any fear that the Special Committee will encroach on their responsibilities. In this regard, it seems relevant to mention the fact that the Chairman of the Standing Committee is Dr Sekibo who is also a Member of the Special Committee.

I have also observed from the report of the Standing Committee which was recently circulated that the Committee had directed its Secretary to invite the Managing Director of the NNPC to appear before it. Hon. Members, I am sure that you will agree with me that there is a need for the Special and Standing Committees to avoid creating the impression however unwittingly that they are working at cross purposes against each other or that they want to harass the officials of NNPC unnecessarily. I would therefore strongly urge that the Special Committee should be allowed to complete its own

investigations as a matter of urgency the Standing Committee embarks on interviewing any officials of the NNPC. It may well be (and I rather suspect that that will be the case) that by the time the Special Committee completes its assignment a lot of the information or data which the Standing Committee wishes to obtain from NNPC will have been unearthed by the Special Committee. I feel that it is necessary to make this statement to clarify the position, and would appeal to all concerned for their co-operation. Committees, Special or otherwise, which might find themselves in a similar position in future should please take note of the guidelines outlined in this statement.

Standing Committee on Education

A meeting of the Standing Committee on Education is scheduled to take place at 1 p.m. today. I am informed that the Minister for Education has been invited to appear before the Committee today. I would like to make a general observation here. Before inviting members from the Executive arm, for example, Ministers or top Government officials, to appear before them, Members of Committee must always make sure that they do their homework properly in order to ensure that such meetings yield the desired results and that the dignity of Members of this honourable House is enhanced. I assume that the Members of the Committee on Education must have made adequate preparations for today's meeting. I would however advise that the members of the Committee should assemble at the venue for the meeting thirty minutes or so before the commencement of the meeting to sort out their *modus operandi* and finalise their strategy for the discussions before the arrival of the Minister.

In accordance with last week's Resolution of the House, the Bill to alter the present period of the Financial Year will be considered by the Committee of the Whole House this morning. Without prejudice to the views of Members on the matter, it seems to me that the Bill is a fairly straightforward one. It should be possible to take the Third Reading of the Bill today and such a procedure will be perfectly in order and is permissible under Standing Order 48 (1). I would advise that this Bill be disposed of today.

I would like to mention that the Chairman of the Special Committee for the investigation of the NNPC is the hon. Member for Minna North (*Alhaji Idris Ibrahim*) who is the Deputy Speaker.

Personal Explanation

**Mr Folorunsho Yunusa (Asa) :** Mr Speaker, I rise to give explanation on the relationship of people in the former Ilorin Emirate which consists of Asa, Moro, and Ilorin.

It will be recalled that last Tuesday when the hon. Member for Moro was speaking, he made mention of apartheid being practised in the Northern part of the country and especially in the former Ilorin Emirate. That is why I am compelled to make a statement on what he said.

[MR YUNUSA]

Segregation, as it is known, is separation of people by race politically, economically, culturally and spiritually. To say that anything of this nature exists in the North or Ilorin is not to speak the truth.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Mr I. A. Olaleru (Oyun) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, the statement is not on the Order Paper ; so I do not think we are following the procedure this morning.

**Mr Yunusa :** This is an explanation and not a Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, go on.

**Mr Yunusa :** The people of Ilorin Asa/Moro as it is known in the former Ilorin Emirate are one in any aspect that anybody can think of either culturally, traditionally or religiously. So, for somebody to come here and denounce that fact on point of politics or anything else is not to speak the truth.

What happens is that in Ilorin like other Yoruba towns, you find that some people have their compounds in Ilorin while they come from villages or farm settlements in rural areas. Other Yorubas can testify to this and this is what happens in Ilorin. Majority of us who are in villages or who are at Asa/Moro today can easily claim that we are from Ilorin because we have our family compounds there and nobody can deny this. I think it is for administrative conveniences and not for political conveniences that divisions are created.

On the question of Village Heads which the hon. Member mentioned that are imposed on the people of Moro/Asa, it is not a fact. I can give an example of this. Onire District where I come from is a district in Asa Local Government area, and the District Head of that place comes from a place known as Ikwor. The name of that place was changed in 1951 due to a fire disaster. It is now called Temidire and it is in Asa Local Government area. The ancestors of these people were from this particular L.G.A. To say therefore that these people who hold the title of District Head, are imposed on the people, is not to speak the fact.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Mr David A. Adelu (Ibadan East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to point to Order 16. The matter being explained by the hon. Member is controversial and since no counter statement will be allowed it should be brought as a Motion. (*Interruptions*) If we know the method, it should not be made by him. The Speaker should rule on it. By this Order it is controversial and it should not be brought here otherwise the Speaker should allow another man to reply. It should be brought up as a Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Please round up, Mr Yunusa.

**Mr Yunusa :** Mr Speaker, thank you for protecting me. The hon. Member who raised this issue is from Jebba and from all accounts, Jebba is only a town out of several in that Local Government Area. Ninety-five per cent of people in Jebba are either from Abeokuta or from the Southern part of the country. These people are squatters ; they cannot say that because they come from the South they are not related to the Ilorin people. (*Interruptions*).

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, I think it is all right.

**Mr Yunusa :** So, to use one town to cover all the L.G.A.'s, is not fair to the rest of the people. I am sure the hon. Member concerned can say that he is not speaking the minds of the people from Moro Local Government area.

I would like to take this opportunity to say that people should not read different meanings into things.

Thank you.

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order !

Hon. Members, we have two new Bills.

**An hon. Member :** Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of Order.

**Mr Debo Akande (Ibadan Central) :** I am having in mind Order 40 on Page 33. I do not remember this House being given any notice in respect of this particular Bill.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member for Ibadan North (*Mr Debo Akande*), the notice is in respect of Private Bills. These are Government Bills.

**Mr Debo Akande :** Even the Government Bill ?

**Mr Speaker :** When this Bill is presented, it is deemed that a notice has been given and printed. They will go on straight to the Second Reading.

**Mr Debo Akande :** Just on the day it was brought to the House ? Well if it is so ruled—

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, the notice is deemed to have been given. These are Government Bills and they were distributed last week.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

## PRESENTATION OF BILLS

### National Provident Fund (Management Board, etc.) (Management) Act 1980 :

A Bill for an Act to make provision for the Re-constitution of Membership of the National Provident Fund Management Board, presented by Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) ; read the First time, referred to the Committee on Finance.

**Mr Speaker :** The next one.

### National Dock Labour (Amendment) Act 1980

A Bill for an Act to make provision for the Number of Persons to constitute Membership of the National Dock Labour Board, presented by Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) ; read the First time, referred to the Committee on Labour.

## NOTICE OF MOTION

### Natural Gas

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, let us make progress. The next item is a Motion on Natural Gas by the hon. Member for Port Harcourt (II) (*Chief G. B. Wodi*).

**Chief G. B. Wodi** (Port Harcourt) : This Motion reads :

That in view of the fact that an enormous quantity of natural gas exists in this country ; in view of the fact that much of this natural gas is being wasted even though this gas can be refined into coking gas for domestic use which has always been in very short supply, this House directs the Committee on Petroleum and Energy Conservation to take immediate steps to find out the cause or causes of the delay in executing the liquefied natural gas projects of the Federal Government.

I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker** : Anybody seconding the Motion ? Yes, the hon. Member for Nkanu (*Mr Eddy Nkem Nweke*).

**Mr Eddy Nkem Nweke** (Nkanu) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes Chief Wodi, please hold on. There is an amendment. The Amendment stands in the name of Mrs Biola Babatope.

**Mrs Biola Babatope** (Mushin Central II) : I beg to move the Amendment standing in my name.

Starting from line 2 after the semi-colon, leave out from the word *That* to the end and insert instead thereof the following :

this enormous volume of gas is currently burning away although the gas can be better utilised for some oil field operations and also refined for industrial and domestic use, this Honourable House directs the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation to lay before the Committee on Petroleum and Energy Conservation, Federal Government's Plan for liquefaction of natural gas to enable the Committee on Petroleum and Energy Conservation to recommend to this House an acceptable policy on natural gas exploitation.

**Mr Speaker** : Anybody seconding the Amendment ? Yes hon. Member for Okpebho (*Mr Iyayi*).

**Mr F. O. Iyayi** (Okpebho) : I beg to second the Amendment.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, Mrs Babatope please, tell us why we should consider the amendment.

**Mrs Babatope** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, this Amendment is necessary because I believe that there is an existing policy on natural gas exploitation. This has been done as far back as 1972, but up till now, there is no implementation of that policy. I also believe that this policy should be looked into and we should ascertain whether there are constraints which make the implementation of the policy difficult for the Ministries concerned.

**Mr Yakubu Balarabi Aliyu** (Bauchi Central) : Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker** : There is a point of Order.

**Mr Yakubu Balarabi Aliyu** : My point of Order is that the hon. Member is reading her speech. She has just finished reading one page and turned to another one. (*Interruptions*).

**Mr Speaker** : Order ! Order !

Yes, you can go on.

**Mrs Babatope** : Gas occurs in the ground as a natural resource just like oil. Gas occurs in the ground in two different forms. It can occur on its own as unassociated with oil. In that respect, we call it non-associated gas. In the oil industry, this gas is also referred to either as rough gas, or in ordinary language, it is referred to as natural gas. The exploitation of this type of gas depends on whether it occurs alone or in an oil producing region.

We are lucky in Nigeria that the natural gas which we have occurs in the oil producing regions. There is also another form in which the gas occurs in the ground. It can occur either being associated with oil or as a gas cap. Where it occurs as a gas cap, it is not usually produced when the life of the well is young but as the well advances, it invariably produces some amount of the gas cap. The type of gas that we usually produce is the one which we call solution gas. This gas is produced because of the difference in pressure from the formation where the oil occurs and atmospheric pressure when you bring the oil to the surface. So, there is no way in which this type of gas will not be produced.

I refer you to the Ministry of Mines and Power publication. Mr Speaker, Sir, with your permission I would like to read the figures. In March 1977 the crude oil and gas production figures were as follows : We had 1,392 wells producing oil in the country. Out of these wells—

**Chief Wodi** : Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker** : Let us hear your point of Order

**Chief Wodi** : She is not giving us the reason for the Amendment. She is rather arguing the Amendment.

**Mr Speaker** : Are you afraid of the Amendment ? Go on Mrs Babatope.

**Mrs Babatope** : Out of these wells we had an oil production—

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, there is another point of Order.

**Mr David O. Agi** (Oju) : Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of Order is Order 23 of the Standing Orders. All the sections are relevant.

**Mr Speaker** : Read them.

**Mr Agi** : It reads as follows :

(1) *Upon an amendment to insert or add words, Mr Speaker or the chairman shall state the amendment and propose the question thereon in the form "That those words be there inserted (or added)".*

(2) *Upon an amendment to leave out words, Mr Speaker or the Chairman shall state the amendment and propose the question thereon in the form "That those words be left out".*

(3) *Upon an amendment to leave out words and insert other words instead, Mr Speaker or the chairman shall first state the words to be left out and*

*put the question thereon in the form "That those words be left out", and if that question be agreed to shall then state the words proposed to be inserted and put the question thereon in the form "That those words be there inserted".*

What I am trying to say is that there is no room in this provision for somebody moving an Amendment to come up and defend it. I think it has been an illusion on the part of the Speaker that people should come and defend their Amendments. There is no provision to that effect Mr Speaker, Sir.

**Mr Speaker :** When there is an Amendment it is necessary that the person who is moving the Amendment should tell us the reason why that Amendment should be made.

Yes, hon. Member for Mushin Central (*Mrs Babatope*), please go on.

**Mrs Babatope :** As I said, in March 1977, we produced eleven million—

**Mr Speaker :** All that you should tell us is why we should accept this Amendment because we are going to vote on it.

**Mrs Babatope :** Please, let me quote the figures for you so that I will tell you why I am making the Amendment. I want to tell you how much oil was produced during that month, how much gas was—

**Several hon. Members :** No !

**An hon. Member :** Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, there is a point of Order behind you.

**Mr Yemi Adewumi (Oshogbo South) :** A certain standard has been set down for the behaviour of Members in this House under section 28 (1) (2) which reads :

28—(1) *During a sitting all Members shall enter or leave the House with decorum.*

(2) *Members shall not cross the floor of the House unnecessarily nor sit in a place allotted to any other Member.*

My learned Friend, Mr Akande, has been crossing all over. I want you to call him to order.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member for Ibadan North, (*Mr Akande*) there is a point of Order against you. It is that you left your seat to another person's seat and that you have been crossing the Floor and the point of Order was made by a Member of the UPN. (*Laughter*)

Okay, round up and let us vote on this Amendment.

**Mrs Babatope :** All I am trying to say, Mr Speaker, is that the gas that is being flared now is not the natural gas. The natural gas is vested in the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation and there is no oil Company—

**An hon. Member :** Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, let us hear Chief Ogwe Kalu Ogwe.

**Chief Ogwe Kalu Ogwe (Bende) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, my point of Order is based on

Order 29, Rule 1. with your permission Sir, I read :

29—(1) *Debate upon any motion, bill or amendment shall be relevant to such motion, bill or amendment, except in the case of a substantive motion for the adjournment of the House.*

The Amendment proposed and the defence thereof is irrelevant and she is lecturing us on geology. We are not interested. (*Interruption*)

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, let her finish. Please round up.

**Mrs Babatope :** Natural gas is not being produced now. The gas that we produce now is casing head-gas and this gas is the one we should find a better use of. This is the one that should not be burnt away ; this is the one that the oil companies have option either to use as fuel, either to sell as industrial or domestic gas or either to reinject into the ground and use it as an energy source for lifting up the gas. The gas that is being wasted is casing head-gas and not the natural gas. The natural gas is still in the ground. It is the property of the NNPC and the NNPC should bring out the Federal Government Policy on gas liquefaction.

If they have any problem in implementing that Policy, this House should recommend a more acceptable Policy for the nation because the nation is losing a lot by that gas being left wasting in the ground. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, you have all read the Amendment. Please let somebody move that the Amendment be put.

**Mr Debo Akande (Ibadan North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I move that the Question be now put on the Amendment.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and negatived.*

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, please let us hear Chief Wodi.

**Chief Wodi :** Mr Speaker, I seek your indulgence to read my Motion again.

**Mr Speaker :** No. Go on with the Motion. Just argue the Motion.

**Chief Wodi :** The crux of this Motion is that a natural endowment of this country and indeed the wealth of this country is being burnt away. To wit, this burning started since the exploitation of crude oil began in this country twenty-four years ago. I am very reliably informed that at the time when this country reached the peak production of two million barrels a day the value of natural gas burnt away for nothing stood at the value of two million Naira in the international market. What a colossal waste if compared with the overall development of this country ! I am not sure, Mr Speaker, that history will forgive us if we, in this time and age, allow this flagrant waste of this country's wealth to continue.

I want to explain the three types of natural gas mentioned by the hon. Member for Mushin-Central (*Mrs Babatope*).



[CHIEF WODI]

This is where she got it all wrong and if you may permit me, Mr Speaker, to read an extract from *Shell, Questions and Answers*, dealing with natural gas.

*In the Nigerian oil industry "oil gas" is one of the definitions for gas contained in the til. "Free gas" is gas on its own, or "Dome gas" which is the gas contained in a "gascap" overlying an oil-reservoir.*

Before you tap the crude oil, you have got to flare this natural gas and then get the crude oil. These are all types of natural gas. But hon. Members, those of us who have travelled to Port Harcourt by air must have noticed some flickers of light as you look down from the window of the aircraft. Right from the air you look at flickers, but if you get there it is quite a volume of light. It is the natural gas burning. In fact, you feel the light and the heat up to a radius of over twenty kilometres. It is indeed enormous. This is what I am talking about. Why should we be burning away this gas which is the wealth of this country?

At the moment, Mr Speaker, only very limited use is made of this natural gas. It is used at the location for injection purposes and working of electrical and mechanical things. This takes care of a very negligible quantity of natural gas. Again it is used in the breweries. For instance, Aba Brewery uses it; the utilities Board of the Rivers State Corporation uses it and the Glass Factories both at Ughelli and Port Harcourt use it. These are the uses we could put natural gas to at the moment but we are not tapping these. Ughelli and Port Harcourt Glass Factories are not the only ones we have; there are breweries all over the country. Why do we not harness and use this natural gas to the best advantage?

Hon. Members also know that we also talk of Kainji Dam. That is where we get the bulk of our electricity supply from and we are familiar with the natural phenomenon of this Kainji Dam. At one moment you talk of low water, at the other moment you find that the generated electricity there is not enough. We can use this natural gas in working turbines. The one at Afam (Port Harcourt) had adequate light some time ago until Afam was fed into the natural grid of electricity. Why can we not use this natural endowment to the best advantage by having myriads, if possible, of such turbines so that this country can be sufficient in electricity generation? Mr Speaker, it is not long ago, in fact in many development plans now, the utilization of natural gas has been mentioned over and over again. This is why I say that the crux of this Motion is to find out why we are wasting this natural endowment. Why can we not give effect to this development plan and harness this thing and use it either as liquefied natural gas or otherwise? These are all myriads of uses to which we can put natural gas.

Mr Speaker, the question then is, must we wait until this gas is flared away irrespective of the fact that we may perhaps have a lot of it? The oil companies have been doing the best they can. For instance, Agip headquarters in Port Harcourt make use of natural gas in all their electricity purposes. They had to tap this gas from a fuel station at Apará Well right into their premises. Their roads are well lit and it is all from gas. This is the point I want to make.

Let us harness this thing. Let all the breweries in this country use what we have and not the electricity which is insufficient. Let us make it possible for every location to be put up. In fact, if I may remind this honourable House, Shell said it here, in this very *Questions and Answers*, how they should make use of this. With the permission of the Speaker I may read

*In a "flowing" field, gas is a natural by-product of the oil production. Whether to burn, sell for domestic use, or re-inject this produced gas, is purely an economic question.*

There is the possibility of re-injecting this natural gas right into the hole there until you want to make use of it. But the oil companies are not interested. All they want is just the crude petroleum and after getting that, it is done with. They have no need at the moment for this natural gas. Why can the Federal Government not tell them not to flare up this natural gas, but to re-inject it right into the soil there so that we can make use of it when we need it?

Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not think it is bad if we inject up to a billion naira or more into the harnessing of this natural gas which is the wealth of this country. It is just the misplacement of priority that we cannot invest in this industry and make it yield the money we want. Everybody knows that it is a common parlance in this country that you use money to look for money. It is investing money in this viable project and yielding money for the development of this country.

Mr Speaker, it is very important that we give consideration to this matter. The best way of doing it is to ask the appropriate Committee to take care of this thing, investigate it and find out why the Government is procrastinating over this issue so as not to make this industry take off. I would like to inform this honourable House that an attempt has been made at Bonny, where we have the tank farm, and the volume of natural gas flared is in such a large quantity. They had cleared a whole town in order to start this industry. It had been many years ago but not much has been done about it, no report, nothing' and we would want the Committee on Petroleum and Energy Conservation to look into this matter. We all know what energy crisis is causing in developed countries. Natural gas is a very useful source of energy. We must do everything to preserve it and to use it since we are lucky to have it.

One other salient point is that in this country we use one arrow to kill two birds. We are exploiting petroleum and in the course of looking for petroleum alone, we strike another very important energy source which is gas. I would think it is just stupid for us to burn and waste it when we could just harness it and use it. So, I think it is necessary we should do something about it if we must escape the blame of posterity. That is my Motion, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker:** Thank you. The hon. Member for Mbaitoli (*Mr E. N. D. Uvandu*) is to speak.

**Mr E. N. D. Uwandu** (Mbaitoli) : Hon. Members, as a matter of fact, if you look at the Motion it says, from the last two lines :

*to take immediate steps to find out the cause or causes of the delay in executing the liquefied natural gas projects of the Federal Government.*

There is a presumption that the Federal Government is already engaged in finding means of starting a gas liquefaction production in the country. That is why I think it was wrong for us to have rejected the Amendment by the hon. Member for Mushin Central II (*Mrs Abiola Babatope*). I must give about three or four points why this Motion should be supported.

As you all know, the traditional technology in under-developed countries, as far as energy is concerned, is very slow. For example, the use of wood is becoming very expensive nowadays because as we are clearing the bush, we do not have sufficient firewood. In other places, in developed countries where you have gas, fuel and coal in abundance, they have started making use of these things. In this country where we are blessed by the Almighty with natural gas, I think it is very reasonable that we should use all available means to make sure that we transform it into ordinary gas which can be used for cooking, for industries, for production of electricity, for hydro-electricity and other things. The only important thing here is this question of cause or causes. I would rather say that the Federal Government has actually started making arrangements for the past two years on the issue. The question, as far as this is concerned, is finance and the problem we have with gas is that gas is very common all over the world nowadays. In Russia, you have natural gas ; in the North Sea, the United Kingdom struck oil and they have natural gas ; in the United States, they have natural gas. So, the problem we have is that if we develop our gas, shall we consume the whole gas in Nigeria ?

Of course we have not got the technology and for us to import technology, we have to import loan in order that we can develop gas in Nigeria. If we import loan from somewhere for the development of gas, it means that we have to repay the loan. While repaying the loan it has to be paid in foreign currency and if you pay in foreign currency, in that case, the money we have either in the United States or the United Kingdom and some other places, will be low. My argument is that for us to succeed, I have to make about four points here. The so-called oil companies in Nigeria and the banks we have should form a syndicate in order that they can raise money for the development of gas in Nigeria. This gas which we want to harness and develop will cost us not less than ₦500 million. It will be very difficult for the Nigerian Government alone to go on with the development.

The other point which I want to suggest is that we can ask the multi-national companies in Nigeria to help us by getting loans from abroad so that we can easily develop the natural gas we have in this country. Without all these, I am quite sure that it will be highly impossible for the Nigerian Government alone to harness and develop the gas in Nigeria without any help. In that case, I am supporting the

idea that the Committee should go on and investigate and ask the Government to lay before what they have done so far and what they intend to do. The Committee should find out whether we can develop the natural gas we have so that it will help us to give more people jobs, to have fuel for electrification and for other things especially for cooking.

Thank you, very much, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, GNPP.

**Mr Amos A. Inoh** (Ikot Abasi II) : Mr Speaker Sir, I rise to support this Motion.

In supporting this Motion, I would suggest that apart from using this gas for domestic purposes, since we are aware of the fact that electricity is very important for the establishment of industries and since we are also aware of the fact that rural areas should be developed, this gas should be used to generate electricity in rural areas of this country. For instance, there are so many places where this oil is found and where we have gas. In 1973, the then South-Eastern State had wanted to implement this but NEPA, which is still a problem child up till today, was an obstacle to this. So, I would ask this honourable House to urge the Federal Government to allow States which are able to make use of the natural gas for rural electrification to do so because it does not pay us in any way preventing States or individuals who are able to do this. What it does mean is that by wasting this gas we are wasting our national economy. So, I strongly suggest that for the purposes of rural electrification, gas industry should be established. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker** : Thank you. The hon. Member for Ringim Gado (*Mr Muhammed Mustapha*) is to speak.

**Mr Muhammed Mustapha** (Ringim Gado) : I rise to support this Motion because it is straightforward and direct in its request of what the committee on Energy and Petroleum is to do. This is to find out the causes, for the delay and non-implementation of this important industry in this country. I agree that if we know the causes then we will find the remedy to stop the waste of this natural product of this country.

I have been to Port Harcourt many times by air. Like the Mover of the Motion suggested, I could see the enormous natural gas which is being wasted and then you tend to wonder why the Government has not been doing anything over these years. This is a natural product of this country which should be harnessed not only for rural electrification as somebody has just said, but because nowadays the electricity bills of NEPA, even in the urban centres are becoming too high. The unreliability of supply from NEPA needs to have an alternative both in the urban centres as well as in the rural areas.

Mr Speaker, I think this Motion is very important and should be supported and a thorough study should be done by the Committee on Petroleum and Energy Conservation. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker** : UPN.

**Mr Abiodun Afonja** (Oyo Central) : Mr Speaker, Sir, in making my contribution to the Motion on the Floor, I would like to say that the spirit of the Motion is unquestionable and it should stir the blood of any true nationalist in this House. I am opposing the Motion not because it is not a good Motion but because of its superficiality. I have my reasons against this Motion in three-quarters, not two-thirds.

The first-quarter is the fact that the Motion directs our attention to a present problem which is being faced by those charged with the responsibility of the liquefaction of our natural gas. I think the Motion is superficial in the sense that the weight of the problem as of now is not taken into consideration. Secondly, I think this Motion is capable only of helping our Committee to waste hours. Thirdly, I think the fundamental problem of the country in planing the utilization of its resources has not been faced especially in this Motion on the natural gas issue.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it happened that some years ago, precisely about twenty years ago, a group of young men who thought themselves to be true nationalists presented a paper in form of a letter or a petition to the then government and the aim of it was to alert the nation to the fact, at that time, that it was their view that within the next decade after that time, petroleum was going to play an increasing role in the economy of the Nation. I remember I was a member of the delegation that visited some of our Legislators and some of the leaders of the country at that time. The reply we were given was that we were just angry young men who did not know what the problems of the nation were and that we were looking for very simplistic solutions to the nation's problems.

Mr Speaker, Sir, today, we find that if Nigeria had embarked on a comprehensive policy in the exploitation of natural gas and its petroleum since that time, we would be far ahead today in ensuring that the destiny of the development of our resources would be entirely in our own hands. Therefore, Mr Speaker, Sir, I would have liked that the House would be more mindful of the fact that the scope of this Motion would only cut the snake without killing it. Not only that, by continuing with this Motion or asking the Committee to go on with this Motion, we would only be watching the stable after the horse has been stolen. For a lot of natural gas has burnt off and a lot of our resources have been wasted but I think we should really look for a solution that would be more permanent. For example one of the problems we face, even if we try all we could, is the fact that to really exploit our natural gas, we depend very heavily, as my hon. Friend, the second speaker on this Motion rightly said, we will depend heavily on borrowed technology. If we look at what has been happening to us, we have always been a consumer nation. A consumer nation that consumes other peoples' technology, wherein they send you a lot of their reconditioned and old-fashioned equipment which you cannot keep. I think, Sir, I would like to bring the minds of hon. Members to the fact that if there is anything that reflects the national character of this country it is the inefficiency of all the utilities and all the machines we use in this country.

**Some hon. Members** : Fire ! Fire !

**Mr Afonja** : So, Mr Speaker, Sir, I would have preferred that we would look at the total problem. If it means setting a target for about five years to evolve a comprehensive policy that will ensure that we take the bull by the horns and develop as much as possible from our own resources in educational terms, in technical terms including commercial and exploitation and the marketing of our products ; I think it would be a better idea. Finding out the cause, at best, at this time will be a *post-mortem* and as you know, once you have the *post-mortem* that means the real issue has gone. The real subject is dead and then you are having a *post-mortem*.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, these are my reasons for opposing the Motion. I will prefer that we bring a more comprehensive programme or Motion that will lead to the evolvement of a very reasonable policy. Thank you, very much.

**Mr Effiong Ononokpono** (Oron I) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I want first of all to comment a little on the contribution made by the last speaker. My hon. Gentleman has spoken in a manner of an ordinary Nigerian who would oppose because it comes from a particular person, a particular group or a particular political party. But I am waiting for a day a Motion will come in by the Chief Executive, the President, and maybe his very close lieutenant, Aihaji Yunusa Kaltungo, will stand up to oppose it. Then I would say we have now started. I am waiting for a day, I believe that we have to start from somewhere—

**Mr Speaker** : Please go to the Motion.

**Mr Ononokpono** : I am going to the Motion, Mr Speaker. All I am saying is that whatever is to the national interest, now that we have come to start as fresh blood and looking round this House we have a cream of youths, whatever is to the interest of the nation I think we should support it. Mr Speaker, Sir, I have flown above Port Harcourt a number of times, I have flown above Ibuno and Oron III Constituency where you have petroleum. Incidentally it is offshore ; we never have anything from it, and I have seen the amount of gas being wasted or burnt away. But if you fly through the North-Sea where Great Britain has just started exploring oil, you will not find gas being burnt away.

If we think we have to start, then we have to start from somewhere. If the *status quo* had been that the gas had been wasted and therefore it should remain wasted, then we have not started. If the *status quo* had been that the technology of this country had to be imported, that the gas must not be utilized and must not be liquefied, then we have not started. Therefore Mr Speaker, it is my humble submission that we have to give, call it superficial if you like, directives to the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy to start doing something. It may be by importing one or two technologists, then we would here at home have been able to train five, six or ten semi-technologists. Some time ago Russia was a primitive society but today Russia is only regarded as a contemporary of America which came in as a Colony or a group of colonies of Great Britain. Today America supersedes Great Britain. Therefore we cannot expect

that since we have been importing technology from Great Britain, from Germany, from all over the world, we can not now train our own technologists

I am submitting very humbly, Sir, that the question of utilizing our own gas for our own benefit has been long overdue. It may be that the army boys had so much with contracts that such natural products as gas had to be forgotten. Therefore, it is now time for us to start to work from what we have. We have the natural gas being burnt away and therefore it is our right to make use of what we have and not to think of what we have been losing.

Mr Speaker, I support this Motion.

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel** (Degema II) : I rise to support this Motion but before doing so I would tell the hon. Members that the issue of the natural gas has been a long contemplated issue. It has gone through a very reasonable stand that this House should only find out where the delay is.

For the gas itself, the site for the natural gas has been cleared ; even by now compensation has been made ready to be paid to the owners of that place. What we are asking is, what is preventing this gas issue from coming up immediately ? Is it because of market ? If the Federal Government is going to use about five hundred billion for a gas project, she must find markets to sell it. They should find markets before going into full operation. Presently the gas company is already being formed and here in this House, we are expecting a Bill on the NNPC. The Bill is now in the Senate.

In the Bill, there are five departments and gas is a section of a subsidiary department of the NNPC. So the question of natural gas liquefaction is at the advanced stage in the country and the last government had done what they could do to establish this thing. The Motion says, *to direct the Committee on Petroleum and Energy Conservation* to take immediate steps to find out the cause or causes of the delay. When they commit this Motion to the appropriate Committee on Petroleum and Energy, we would know what the delay is, whether it is because of markets or not. We should not overflog the issue of natural gas, because the thing is already in the book, and everything is being done to establish the natural gas project in Finima town, off Bonny River, Rivers State. Thank you, very much.

**Mr I. Mac-Eteli** (Brass) : Mr Speaker, Sir, a lot of the hon. Members here have spoken in support of this Motion and I have about one or two contributions to speak about in favour of the Motion. Apart from the economic losses and the waste on the burning off of natural gas, it has a lot of inconveniences for the inhabitants of wherever these gases are being burnt off. It affects agriculture and in many cases some villages and towns pack away from where these gases are being burnt. Like the Mover of the Motion rightly said, it takes a lot of big radius in the area where this gas is burnt off and people cannot even live there. So there is the need therefore to facilitate the natural gas industry that will make these gases not to be burnt off again.

He also mentioned that these gases could be re-injected into the soil until we are ready to tap them, but I would have liked to answer the question. The danger that would be involved in re-injecting of the gases is what people are afraid of and that is the reason why it is not being re-injected because it could cause explosions. It could cause earthquakes and some other things like that. For security reasons these things are not done and that is why it is being burnt off. The only solution we have to it is to get the natural gas industries set up.

These are the few points I have for this Motion. If these industries are set up they will also enhance employment wherever they are. Thank you, very much, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker** : Let us hear from the Engineer.

**Engineer Aka Ogbobe** (Igbo-Etiti) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion. The Motion is quite clear in its objective and the directives given to the Committee are also very clear. The Committee will have in addition to investigating the cause, the opportunity to look into the whole aspect of Petro-Chemical Industry in this country. It will also have the opportunity to look into an associated industry like the Gas Cylinder Industry because you cannot actually have a proper gas industry without gas cylinders.

Somebody has talked about importing technology. I do not think there is anything wrong with importing technology. No country in this world is technologically self-sufficient including the United States because a lot of the space of technology in the United States is being manned by foreigners like the British, the Germans and so on. What is important is that in our importing technology, we shall also try to acquire our own technology. I think nobody should be afraid about importing technology.

The problem of gas waste in this country has been fully explained by the previous speakers. This House should encourage the idea of making it necessary for the Committee to investigate this cause. The Motion has assumed that there are Government plans already on hand about gas and this is true. The Government has got some gas policies but some of them are dormant. What the Committee should try to do is to resurrect these dormant policies and make sure that they are put on hand.

Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I support the Motion completely.

**Mr Speaker** : Can we hear from Mr F. N. C. Nwandison?

**Mr F. N. C. Nwandison** (Orji River/Agwu South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion in its entirety.

As a matter of fact, Gas Industry in this country should have taken off since if not for the unnecessary delay of the former Administration to set up a proper feasibility study for the industry. I know of a victim in Anambra State in the year 1955 that is, Ugwu-Oba Town in Oji River Anambra State. In 1955, there was a gas explosion in that town. The Community was evacuated for three weeks.

[Mr NWANDISON]

The explosion killed two Europeans and a few African workers there. Then the American nationals and Dutch experts were flown in to seal up the place. As far back as 1955, up till today, nothing has been done to explore that gas. When somebody was speaking here, he said the cost of exploring gas in this country would be about five hundred million naira. I disagree with that view entirely because he is not in position to tell us what it should cost.

I remember very well that it was the Shell company that took up the drilling of oil in this country and as of today, the oil industry in this country is a very big venture for the entire nation. I do not see anything wrong for the present Administration to invite foreign experts to explore the possibility of gas industry in this country. Even though the initial amount to be invested may be big, like the profit we now derive from oil industry when the gas industry is fully tapped, it will give this nation another profitable venture. Therefore Mr Speaker, I have every confidence that if the Committee on Petroleum and Energy Conservation goes into this matter, the present Administration will give it full support. I therefore beg to support this Motion. Thank you.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Mr Chukwu.

**Mr P. U. Chukwu (Ohaji Egbema Oguta) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion. In supporting this Motion, I wish to mention—

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of Order.

**Mr S. A. Shiyabola (Ede South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of Order is that the hon. Member for Ohaji Egbema Oguta (*Mr Chukwu*) does not have his *Agbada* on; therefore he is not well dressed. (*Interruptions*).

**Mr Speaker :** I understand that is how the Governor of Lagos State dresses. (*Interruptions*) Yes, go on Mr Chukwu.

**Mr Chukwu :** In my Constituency, oil is being tapped, and if you were to witness the amount of damage being done by the oil drilled in my area due to production of the gas, in fact you would have to support this Motion *in toto* because, the usefulness of establishing gas industry in Nigeria cannot be over-emphasised. You have one important matter to bear in mind. The cost of establishing this gas as has been mentioned by some of my Colleagues, is no waste. If the Federal Government is to embark upon borrowing, it will facilitate employment in the rural areas. The water is being polluted and the land being rendered infertile. If the people of the community are recruited into the gas industry, that will provide them with ways and means of livelihood. So, I am supporting this Motion *in toto* and it speaks for itself. All of us should give it maximum support.

Mr Speaker, with these few remarks, I beg to take my seat.

**Alhaji Abdulahi Mohammed (Zurmi-Moriki) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion but one thing is that the Mover of the Motion did not furnish this House with detailed

information. He did not make enough research before bringing this Motion to the House. He has not given us the actual quantity of gas being wasted. He did not give us the details of the value, its danger and its economic advantage to the nation. He only talked about pollution of water. But what ratio is the pollution of the water and value of the gas he failed to mention. He, therefore, needs to do some research and furnish the House or the Committee with more detailed information if he wants this Motion to be supported. Thank you, Sir.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo, Leader of the House, put the question.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I now move that the question be put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

**Resolved :** That in view of the fact that an enormous quantity of natural gas exists in this country; in view of the fact that much of this natural gas is being wasted even though this gas can be refined into cooking gas for domestic use which has always been in very short supply, this House directs the Committee on Petroleum and Energy Conservation to take immediate steps to find out the cause or causes of the delay in executing the liquefied natural gas projects of the Federal Government.

**Mr Speaker :** We shall now go to the next item.

#### ORDER OF THE DAY

Hon. Members, you remember this Bill was referred to the Committee of the Whole House.

Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo, please move a Motion that the House resolves into a Committee of the Whole House.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I move that this House resolves into the Committee of the Whole House.

**Mr Speaker :** Is there anybody to second the Motion?

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II) :** I rise to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

#### THE FINANCIAL YEAR ACT, 1980

A Bill for an Act to provide for the alteration of the financial Year and for the appointment of the new period of January to December as being the Financial Year henceforth and for purpose connected therewith—CONSIDERED IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE.

**The Chairman :** Let us hear the first clause of the Bill.

CLAUSE 1—(FINANCIAL YEAR HENCEFORTH TO BE 1ST JANUARY TO 31ST DECEMBER, ETC.)

**The Chairman :** Hon. Members you have heard the first clause. This is a period when we go into the full details of this Bill. So, if you have any criticisms, amendments, or anything or if it is not controversial, we will pass the Bill and go away.

**Mr F. O. Iyayi (Okpebho) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, this is a matter of procedure. I thought that before we go into the detailed examination of the Bill clause by clause, we should first of all discuss the principles of the Bill.

**The Chairman :** Yes, go on. We are dealing with the Bill in detail. Anything you want to say about the Bill please say it whether it is principle or anything.

**Mr Iyayi :** I am not in a position right now. I just wanted to draw the attention of the House to fact that before we start to analyse it clause by clause we should discuss the merit.

**The Chairman :** The sky is your limit go on. That is why we are saying that the Bill is now in the Committee, and when a Bill is in the Committee you have every opportunity to say whatever you like about it. So the Bill is here now with us and we all had sufficient notice of it. When the Bill was sent to the Committee we were all here ; so you had every opportunity to prepare for it.

**Mr Iyayi :** But somebody said that he sponsored this Bill—either the government or a Member of the House.

**The Chairman :** Do you want him to say something ?

**Several hon. Members :** Yes.

**The Chairman :** If he has nothing to say, does it mean that we throw away the Bill ? That is why we are in a Committee. If it is a straightforward and non-controversial Bill, why do we waste time on it ?

**Mr T. O. Badejo (Mushin Central I) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, hon. Colleagues, it appears that this Bill looks simple but the result of the Bill, particularly if it comes into effect, will have a sort of disadvantage in our financial arrangement. Although I am not an accountant but any accountant who is worth his salt, any auditor who knows his onion, will agree with me that once this Bill comes into effect, some financial houses will take advantage of it to our own detriment.

Mr Chairman, Sir, if we go by this Bill the next financial year will start from 1st January next year. If we go by many statutory reports particularly income tax returns and company tax returns as enjoined by Company Decree 1968, you will see that any accountant preparing financial accounts will take advantage of this Bill or this Act if it comes into effect. This is because he has about three or four months to manipulate, and this will be to the disadvantage of our own economy. My suggestion in this regard, Mr Chairman, Sir, is that on principle there is nothing wrong with it particularly when we consider our weather. Anybody who is versed in the geography of Nigeria will know on the

average that January is a hot season as well as a harvest season, or whatever it is called. By the time you make your financial provision—(Interruptions).

The Financial Year starts from January and by the time you tender for contracts and do other things it is already June and a lot of things must have been done between January and June. Then after December you can do a bit more.

I agree on principle but I will still urge this House that since this is a Bill that affects the financial activities of this country, some accountants and some financial experts will take advantage of it to the detriment of our economy. Thank you, Sir.

**Mr Samuel Gbadegesin Olaosebikan (Iwo West) :** I do not have anything particularly against this Bill but I would have loved that somebody who is the chief Mover of this Bill explain to us why there should be a change. We have been used to the financial year starting from 1st of April to 31st March for many years now. If somebody now comes to us and says that this thing is wrong, that there is a need to change this particular financial year because of certain reasons, then we would understand, but as it is now nobody has proved to us why it is necessary to change. I do not think that we should change for mere changing. So until this is proved by someone, I think I would have—

**The Chairman :** I just have a very short reply. If you go back to the back page of the Bill, you will see the explanatory memorandum. You can read this. You had copies of this thing since last week.

**Mr Olaosebikan :** All the same, I expect somebody to say something about this Bill.

**Mr Niyi Adelu (Ibadan East) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, if you look at the explanatory memorandum, with your permission I beg to read :

*The purpose of this Bill is to appoint January to December as the financial year to be henceforth observed in Nigeria but as a transitional measure, it is provided therein that 1st April to 31st December of this year shall be the 1980 financial year.*

This is where I think, Mr Chairman, is wrong. Mr Chairman, Sir, you will observe that this is a show-piece of an inefficient government. If the Federal Government had been very serious—

**An hon. Member :** Point of order.

**The Chairman :** There is a point of order.

**Mr Adelu :** What is your point of order.

**Mr V. U. Ekpo (Ikot Abasi I) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, my point of order is Order No. 47. That is, that—

*The Principle of a bill shall not be discussed in Committee but only its details.*

The Member on the Floor is discussing the principle of the Bill.

**The Chairman :** Hon. Member for Ikot Abasi I (Mr Ekpo), this is a Committee of the Whole House and we are taking it along with the second reading. We are combining the Second Reading with the Committee of the Whole House.

**Mr Adelu :** Mr Chairman, Sir, everybody knows that this government was established as from 1st October, 1979, and a Bill of this nature should have been conjectured by a very serious political party intending to form a government of the nation.

**An hon. Member :** Point of Order.

**The Chairman :** There is a point of order.

**An hon. Member :** My point of order is Order 26 (2) and (5).

**Mr Adelu :** Mr Chairman, what I am saying is that this Bill will affect a number of things, and a lot of activities in the Civil Service. It will put into a disarray quite a lot of activities within the Civil Service. The best thing would have been to let the Bill be retrospective from January 1980. We came in October 1979 and a Bill of this nature should have been presented to this House in November and by January this year we would have started a revolution of this standard. As a matter of fact, I support the Bill *in toto* because it is revolutionary and it is good but this government has shown laziness, inefficiency, and ineptitude. It is a government that is out to do nothing. If it is a Bill of kidnapping, I am sure it would have come before now.

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Bill in all its ramifications. In doing so Sir, I want to say that the Federal Government of Nigeria under the able leadership of His Excellency, Alhaji Shehu Shagari, should be commended for bringing up this Bill. *(Applause)*

Mr Chairman, Sir, this Bill should have been presented to the first Nigerian Parliament after Nigeria had become independent on 1st October, 1960, because I feel that the present financial year is based on British tradition and custom.

It has nothing to do with our history nor with our geography. This is one of the legacies of our colonial past, that whatever we found in this country after independence, we have to inherit it without taking into account our own historical background. We in this country, Sir, are aware that the period between January and April is the time most parts of Nigeria do their farming. Again between October and November is another period of intense farming especially in the Southern part of this country. If we are to adopt this British financial year, we should take into consideration the inconveniences which many farmers and even some contractors have been experiencing in the hands of financial officers of the Government.

It is only after the financial year, say about March and April, that contracts are awarded and before payments are made especially in respect of re-construction, the rainy season has already started. That is why most of our roads are not being tarred and the construction jobs are not being done on schedule. I think the idea of changing our financial year Sir, would bring relief not only to the government in terms of its administrative procedures and effectiveness but also to the farmers and to quite a number of people who have business to do with government especially the contractors.

So, Mr Chairman Sir, this Bill is not controversial and I expect our honourable Colleagues on the other side—

**Some hon. Members :** There is no other side here.

**Mr Etienam :** I expect our hon. Colleagues to support this commendable effort of a great Leader of a great nation. Mr Chairman Sir, I beg to support.

**Mr Jimoh Damisa (Okehi Adavbi) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I rise to support this Bill.

As the last hon. speaker has said this Bill has been overdue. During the Military regime somebody once mentioned it and probably because the style of our Nigerian Army is the British type, they did not want to change it. They still wanted to maintain whatever the British left behind. I think this is to commend the Head of State, His Excellency the first Executive President of this country, Alhaji Shehu Shagari, for bringing up this Bill at an appropriate time. It is not controversial and I am only surprised that those who style themselves as progressives are now raising eye-brows on this very important Bill. It is a Bill that we really have to pass because the present financial year we operate in this country has no bearing on us as a nation.

We can understand why the British people decided to observe April or March as the start of their financial year, but in Nigeria, we really need a change and the time has come. Well, we shall accept this change and it is very reasonable that the President has sent in this Bill. It is now left to us hon. Members to give it our blessing. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

**Mr Sanni Dandare Kalgo (Bunza-Kalgo) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I rise to support this Bill.

This Bill is not controversial. It is straightforward because we know that the year starts from January and ends in December. So, why can we not change our system of financial year? If we can change our system of financial year from January to December, it will be quite all right. Normally, this time of the year is what we call Christmas season and all what we have arranged for the year we normally end it in December. I see no reason why we cannot change our own financial year to December. As soon as we have changed this to December there will be no more 1980-81 financial year, it will become 1980 or 1981 financial year from January to December. So, I see no controversy in this type of Bill. This Bill is straightforward and I am appealing to the honourable House to accept it in good faith. I beg to support this Bill, Mr Chairman.

Clause 1.—(FINANCIAL YEAR HENCEFORTH TO BE 1ST JANUARY TO 31ST DECEMBER, ETC.)—*ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

**The Chairman :** Please hon. Members we are combining two parts of the procedure. So, let us go to clauses 2 and 3 of the Bill. There are no problems with all the clauses.

Clauses 2 and 3, *ordered to stand part of the Bill*  
(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair).

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, the Bill has been properly handled during the Committee Stage and we go now into the Third Reading and the passing of the Bill itself.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to report that a Bill for an Act to provide for the alteration of the Financial Year and for the appointment of the new period of January to December as being the Financial Year henceforth and for purposes connected therewith having passed through the Committee Stage with no amendments, be read the Third time and passed.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill read the Third time and passed.*

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, you will have seen the notices for today's meetings. The Special Committee on Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation is at 10.30 a.m. and that one is going on now. The Business Committee is at 12 o'clock and I am sure it is going on now. The Committee on Education

is at 1 o'clock in the National Hall and the Public Petitions Committee which is holding at 2.00 p.m. in the Senate Committee Room.

Shall we now have a Motion for Adjournment so that these Committees will start to arrange for their meeting.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10.00 a.m.

**Mr Speaker** : Is anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Shehu Umar** (Shagari) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That the House do now adjourn till tomorrow at 10.00 a.m.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 12.35 p.m.*



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Tuesday, 5th February, 1980

The House met at 10.20 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, I have seen the Votes and Proceedings of yesterday and they have been approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Committee Meetings

I would also like to say that the Labour Committee of the House has not got a Chairman yet and it would be necessary now to appoint a Chairman in the person of Mr Edet Bassey Etienam a veteran Trade Unionist. (*Applause*) Mr Etienam would be assisted by Alhaji Abubakar Abutu. I wish to say that the appointment is temporary pending further information. So, the Committee will tackle the new Bill on Labour Relations.

I would also like to inform the Members of the Defence Committee that they will be having their own meeting at 1.30 p.m. today and coincidentally the Minister of Defence will be coming to pay them a courtesy call. All Members of the Committee should try to be present and receive the Minister when he comes.

The Committee on Petroleum and Energy meeting time is 10.30 a.m. instead of 11.00 a.m. It is important that the various Committees should please deliberate as soon as possible on the matters referred to them and then bring their reports to this House because where necessary, we would propose a legislation straightaway, if their reports warrant it. All the Committees should deliberate on the matters referred to them and bring their reports as soon as possible.

We are also worried about the delay in having the report of Remuneration Committee. You see, the thing is dragging on for so long. (*Interruptions*) Order! Order!

The last time the Presiding Officers met here in Lagos, the States begged us that we should complete our job as soon as possible because they wanted to take a cue from us. As long as we delay, we also delay the State Assemblies. So, if the Members of the Remuneration Committee do not finish their work by the end of this week, by next week, we would appoint another Committee because we would not wait for them any more.

**Several hon. Members :** Yes.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of explanation by a member of the Remuneration Committee.

Explanation by a Member of the  
Remuneration Committee

**Dr E. F. Atanu** (Idah South): I am one of the Members representing the House in that Joint Committee. It is unfortunate that the Speaker himself proposed a measure like this. I think he ought to be in touch with the Joint Committee.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Speaker :** Please sit down.

**Dr Atanu :** Mr Speaker, the noise would not help us.

**Mr Speaker :** It is all right.

**Mr Amos Idakula** (Keffi): I want to say with all sincerity that even the Members of the Remuneration Committee are very anxious to see that the work is completed in time. As at now, Mr Speaker, Sir, the Sub-Committee which worked on remunerations has completed its work. The Remuneration Committee would be sitting tomorrow and I am sure that the work would be disposed of by tomorrow. So, we expect that the report would come to the House maybe latest this week.

Thank you very much.

**Mr Dagogo Princewill** (Degema I): Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to know what is happening with the House Committee because I visited the Victoria Island Flats and what I saw there was appalling. I want to know too what they are doing.

**Alhaji A. Abutu** (Ankpa South): I think we should call a spade a spade and a knife a knife. My own explanation is that we are totally disappointed. All the Ministers, all the Advisers, the nineteen States and ourselves are being held to ransom. As the Speaker rightly said, if they cannot finish their job by Thursday, we should set up another Committee. This is a job that can be done in a week.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Alhaji Abutu :** This question of inviting everybody is a form of delaying tactics and it is a deliberate attempt to deny us of certain things, which is very unfair to us as hon. Members. I do not like that system. We should finish it in time. This is a job that can be done in a week. This question of inviting this and inviting that does not help us at all. Let us concentrate on what we want. We should not bother about inviting people from the private sector. Even in America and other places, people in the private sector earn higher than people in any other place. So, we should forget that and let us concentrate on our own welfare. I feel very disappointed over the issue. I think this will not help us and the country.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you very much. Members of the Remuneration Committee, you have now seen the mood of the House. Please try and do something. The most important thing is that this is now delaying the submission of our Estimates, that is, the submission of the Estimates of the National Assembly to the appropriate quarters. This is because they will have to get our recommendations, insert

them in the Estimates before submission. Please do something because time is running against us. As I said, if after Friday nothing happens, by Monday, we would set up another Committee and finish with the matter.

Hon. Members, let us go to the Order Paper for the day. The first one is a Motion which stands in the name of Mr Ingo Mac-Eteli, but Chief S. O. Oduntan has an Amendment to make.

## NOTICES OF MOTIONS

### The National Provident Fund

**Mr Ingo Mac-Eteli (Brass)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I stand to move the Motion standing in my name :

That this House calls on the Committee on Public Service Matters to investigate the causes of the general ineffectiveness of the National Provident Fund with a view to making recommendations for its improvement as well as examining the advisability of decentralizing the National Provident Fund to all the nineteen States of the Federation.

Hon. Members, I beg to move.

**The Speaker** : Is there anybody seconding the Motion ? Yes, Mr Asuk ?

**Mr Shem E. Asuk (Bonny I)** : Mr Speaker, I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Mac-Eteli** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to briefly tell the House something about the National Provident Fund.

The National Provident Fund came in as an Act in 1961 and started off in 1962. The Fund was set up as a Compulsory savings scheme for non-pensionable workers both in the public and in the private sectors of the national economy. It was also intended to serve as security for workers at old age, invalidity, after death, in cases of immigration, in cases of unemployment, that is, if a person loses his job. It is a joint venture between the employer and the worker, contributing a maximum of ₦4 each (the employer and the contributor). The contribution is an interest accruing one, up to 4 per cent of a worker's annual contribution.

For the security aspect of it, if a worker wants to claim, perhaps because of old age or after death, or because of immigration, the whole amount that has been contributed, that is, his own contribution, the employers' and the 4 per cent interest that has accrued during the years, would all be claimed. In the case of unemployment, that is, if a worker loses his job, one would be entitled to claim his own part of the contribution after twelve months.

During my investigations I discovered from some of the workers and the top officials of the NPF that the Fund had been decentralised. But unfortunately, during the investigation, I discovered also that the decentralisation did not affect the financial control. There is no autonomy, so to say. There are about six zones in each of the States ; also there are sub-offices which serve as complaint centres. In other

words, if you have a complaint, you will lodge it in one of the six zones, and for two or three months, or for a whole year, you would not get any good reply. These are the reasons for our calling for the decentralisation of this National Provident Fund. I am quite aware that the zonal and the State offices are presently run by the NPF ; but what is not clear there is the bureaucratic work and the executive functions being scheduled at the moment. There is no autonomy in these zonal offices. We are now calling for each of these offices to have autonomy.

I would like the Lagos office to have only the policy guideline of the NPF. We know that the NPF has some problems such as the relationship between the workers and the employers. Also, there are cases where the worker's contribution is not sent to the NPF. The tendency is that there is no good relay of the accounts of the contributor. On the other hand, instead of sending the statement of account at the end of, say, six months or one year, to the contributor and the employer, the NPF would send the statement of account to the companies alone. In a case where the company does not pay the worker's part of the contribution, it means that the worker would only assume that he has been contributing, whereas his contribution is not being sent to the NPF. All these happen because of the wide range of administration. If these things were to be dealt with at State levels, a worker could easily move to the NPF office in a particular State and find out whether the contributions were really being paid in or not.

Another problem that the NPF is facing is the case of identification when a worker may wish to claim his contribution. A contributor may go to the NPF for his claim whereas the NPF may not have that contributor's photograph in the office. Sometimes, a contributor may forget his number, sometimes some contributors may have identical names, the NPF has not got a special system whereby contributors can be identified. I believe that if the NPF were to be decentralized some of these problems could easily be solved at State levels.

The other problem is the volume of administrative coverage.

The Provident Fund has about a total of 7,381 companies registered under it. It also has 1,319,251 registered workers. So, you can imagine the required capacity of the administrative set up. This thing cannot, therefore, be well administered in one office like that of Lagos where we have the Secretariat. That is the reason why I am calling and appealing to this House to support the Motion for the decentralisation of this Fund in order to ease its administration. Presently, I cannot get hold of the statement of account of the Fund. I am aware that despite the monies that have been spent or involved in investment they have over 50 million naira. So, if you bring in the investment and other things they are having over 250 million naira.

You can now see that the Fund is quite rich. It is a self-paying one. From the day it was set up till today they have not gone out to borrow any money anywhere. They have not taken subvention or

MR MAC-ETELI]

anything of that nature. They have been on their own. Therefore, there is a need for us to find a better way of administering this Fund in order to bring in more money to help the nation economically.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the advantages, as I have earlier on mentioned, if this Fund is decentralised, will be, firstly, the payment of fund by the companies to the NPF. It will attract more contributors to the Fund. Presently, only bigger companies are involved in this Fund and, in fact, every small company in this country that employs labour is meant to be a member of the Fund. So, as things stand, many times the Directors and the Managing Directors of the private companies have some fears. In fact, even the small companies have the fears to register their companies or their workers with the NPF because they are afraid of the after-effect. You can never get your money when you want it.

So, Mr Speaker, these are the reasons so far and I believe if it is committed to the appropriate Committee we may have more details. During my investigation with the contributors a lot of them requested for one thing, if it is to be decentralised, that if the Fund is free to invest monies on other businesses this money could be used for housing scheme for contributors in each State.

Assuming that the fund is giving out 1 million naira to each State, maybe one or two years will be set aside for building the houses and then the fund can ballot these houses on owner occupier basis. During my investigation, a lot of workers who are the contributors really requested that they needed this money to be invested in housing scheme to alleviate the problems that they are facing.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these few remarks, I beg to sit. (*Applause*)

**Mr Speaker :** Let us hear the Amendment so that when we finish with the Amendment we would continue with the Motion.

**Chief S. A. Oduntan (Ifo Ota) :** I beg to move the following Amendments—

In line 1, leave out from the word, *the*, to the end and insert the following thereof :

President to consider as a matter of urgency, the forwarding of a Bill for approval by the National Assembly on 'National Social Security Scheme' to replace the National Provident Fund Act of 1961, having regard to the fact that the National Provident Fund Scheme is not in consonance with contemporary international practice and that it is a device to deny the working population the right to Social Security Insurance Scheme.

I beg to move the Amendment.

**Mr Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Thomas Ekpo Etuk (Eket III) :** I beg to second the Amendment.

**Chief Oduntan :** Mr Speaker, I, first of all, like to ask the hon. Members to have an open mind on this Amendment. It is a very important Amendment because it deals with the social security of the working population in Nigeria.

May I, first of all, state the difference between the Motion and the Amendment, what the original Motion says and what I am asking you to consider. The difference is that the original Motion is asking you to consider the improvement of the National Provident Fund and the decentralisation of the Fund. Whereas my Amendment is seeking your approval.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Mr I. F. Akinyosoye (Ondo) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I draw the attention of this honourable House to Order 29 (1). With your permission, Mr Speaker, I read—

*Debate upon any motion, bill or amendment shall be relevant to such motion, bill or amendment, except in the case of a substantive motion for the adjournment of the House.*

Mr Speaker, one has to cast a bird's eyeview at the Amendment. It goes without saying that the Amendment itself seeks to substitute social security scheme for the Motion. (*Applause*)

Therefore, it is my humble submission that this is a substantive Motion and, as such, it is not an Amendment of the substantive Motion. (*Applause*)

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you, very much. I hold exactly the same view and in the circumstances, the Amendment is disapproved.

Yes, are there contributors to the Motion ? We have finished with the Amendment. It is out of order.

**Chief Oduntan :** Mr Speaker, may I say that it is a Motion which was properly put to the House and if we are not considering it, I would withdraw it for another occasion.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, it would be safer for you to withdraw it otherwise, I would rule it out of order because a point of order has been raised. What I am saying is that the Amendment is out of order.

*Amendment by leave withdrawn.*

**Mr Ogwe Kalu Ogwe (Bende) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, first of all, we must know that this Motion intends to improve the lot of the common man. I know that all of us here are not affected by the Provident Fund. None of us pays anything there. I want this to be drawn to the attention of the public so that they will know our stand here. Our stand is to protect the image of the common man and to improve his lot.

The Motion on the face of it, seeks to improve the efficiency of the Fund because the public outcry against that Provident Fund has been enormous since it was set up. The spirit with which the Fund was set up has now failed. It was not the original spirit which was the spirit to help you when you are old and when you have no other engagement in life you draw from where you were a contributor. Most of us know that this has failed. Those who have been contributing towards that Fund have never sincerely benefitted from the Fund they deserve to profit from.

[MR. OGWE]

This is why the hon. Member with his deep research has produced this Motion and I think every right thinking person in this House, since we represent the whole nation, must support this Motion and I am here to support it.

The question of leaving the Fund to be managed in Lagos, we know, is quite a cumbersome exercise. The Mover of the Motion has already said that, his investigation has revealed that decentralising it should not only be in name but in a way that the Fund will go to various States for effective management.

I think the principle of the division of labour in economics comes in here to make for the overall efficiency and nobody should go against efficiency. To improve the Fund means to improve our economic system. If I can quote the case of an old man, Pa Toyin, who was driven out of a Government House here in Lagos at his old age, you will know what it means if you have nowhere to rest your weary bones at old age, after you have contributed and when you ought to benefit from the Fund you have no benefit. You become a perennial tenant moving from one corner to the other. Even in the Government quarters, you are thrown out. What then is the benefit which you can get from the Fund which you have contributed to during your youth if you have nothing there? I think it is something lamentable and as such every Member here must give this Motion the support it deserves.

By allowing the contributors to the Fund to draw from there means that their standard of living is being enhanced. If you are able to increase your monetary power, you can be in a position to buy whatever you want provided those goods are available. If you have no money where the goods are everywhere, you cannot buy them and then you will die in poverty and the Fund will be there for fraudulent people to misuse. So, the decentralisation and finding of the causes of the inefficiency of the Fund should be recommended and, I think, every honest person should support this Motion. I whole-heartedly recommend that this Motion be supported by every hon. Member.

Thank you.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, Prince Sangha.

**Prince J. S. Sangha** (Bori I) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Colleagues, I rise to support this Motion because not only is it well-intentioned, but it also seeks to improve the lot of those who have made their useful contributions to the development of this nation. It seeks to look after their welfare when they are not in the position they were twenty to forty years ago. The area I would like to address myself specifically to is the question of decentralisation. Indeed, part of the Nemesis affecting this set-up is the bureaucratic nature of the organisation itself. So, by breaking this organisation into bits, there is the possibility of increasing efficiency but that will not come except responsibility is associated with accountability.

So, as the Motion is well spelt out here, I would like to see more effective set of organisation of this

Fund so that the old man who retires is not only encouraged to live but he is given what he deserves at the time it can be useful to him. There are cases in this country today where members of the contributors to this Scheme do not live to enjoy the contributions they have made for themselves. Rather you see a situation in which their families or some members of their families walk from Enugu to Lagos, from Calabar to this place, or from Ondo to this place, only to be thrown away by the civil servants who do not give them access. I think if such administration is brought nearer home, these people will have access not only to the centres of this scheme, but will be attended to. In effect, I am sorry to say, but I know we live under a system in which when it comes to getting what you want you ought to be able to speak a particular language.

But I am asking, Mr Speaker, Sir, that the type of decentralisation called for here must be one of responsibility with accountability. With this, I beg to support the Motion.

Thank you.

**Mr Salawu Atima** (Okehi-Isunwe) : I support this Motion as a result of my practical experience with the National Provident Fund. The ineffectiveness of the NPF centres around two points. Their accounting system is very bad. Some members of staff who have been contributing years back will find that at a point when they happen to submit any statement of account, those who joined just six months ago now have higher amounts to claim than the existing ones. This happened many times. Each time I called at their area office they always referred me to Lagos and I could not for the sake of that be travelling from Kaduna to Lagos every month, sorting out the differences in this account.

It is true that the decentralisation of the national Provident Fund will pay us better. It is not just the administrative aspect of it. I feel that if every State is charged with the responsibility, not just administrative-wise, but of the accounting as they go from office to office every month collecting cheques for the Fund, they can as well set up their own accounting system in such area in order to cater for the area they are covering. This, in fact, will also help them in settling their claims when the time comes. In fact, I have never heard of any successful claimer from the National Provident Fund since its inception. This is bad and unless the House feels that there is an effective way I would actually suggest that this scheme be scrapped off. I would say so because the experience the very poor workers have from NPF is terrible. As a result I would suggest that we should, first of all, try by decentralising all the organs of the NPF as soon as it is practicable.

Thank you.

**Mr M. G. Alo-Nwokocha** (Abakaliki East-Central) : I rise to support the Motion. Again like the last speaker before me said, I have an inside experience of the very faulty functioning of the National Provident Fund. The aim for which this Fund was started was very encouraging indeed. It was good ; it was started in good faith but the practice has, like many other things run by us, gone very

[MR ALO-NWOKOCHA]

bad especially in its organisational machinery. It is very sad to know that an old man of seventy years who was travelling from Enugu to Lagos to claim his money did not get it and had no money to go back. Indeed, he died without his people knowing where his dead body was. There are many more reasons to show why an office as important to the low-income earner as the NPF should be decentralised to the States where claimers can go conveniently to their State Headquarters to lay their complaints. Also the State Headquarters of the NPF should have all the required data to be able to function as effectively as the now malfunctioning central office.

But a question has to be asked why it is that most of the centrally organised bodies in the Federation have not been functioning very well. I think this is also an area where the Committee on Internal Affairs should go into because it is not just only the NPF that has been found to be doing badly.

With these very few contributions, Mr Speaker, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr Andrew Nwankwo** (Abakaliki North-West) : I rise to support this Motion. As the proposer of this Motion said, the original aim of the National Provident Fund was for the non-pensionable workers and we know that the non-pensionable workers normally have very little savings. When somebody has very little savings, when he is either out of job, or when he retires from service as you know, it is a terrible thing for him. Bringing the offices closer to where he will have relations and where he can travel to make his claims I think will be a very big help.

But as the proposer said, there are other problems that the worker faces. You find that some employers of labour do not really send in the money. I think what we should offer by way of improvement is that there should be a check to make sure that the NPF itself publishes the names of those employers of labour that do not send in their regular takings. Again, the NPF itself should always update its accounts so that the individual worker can come in periodically and check his accounts. It is only by updating these accounts that it would be possible for the worker to claim his money at the time he really requires it. Even if NPF is brought to the States, it could still be difficult for the worker to claim his money unless his account is brought up to date regularly and not just wait until the worker wants to claim his money before looking for his file. The file should be ready before he comes in.

With these few suggestions, I beg to support.

**Dr John E. Eburuche** (Agbaja/Uvuru) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion. In this country today when a person is out of job or retires but is not pensioned, here comes in a black out period. In Nigeria, life span is very short and you can agree with me that at the age when someone retires, he is practically incapable of finding another job as in other countries. In this country also there is nothing like social security programme. I do not think there is, and I stand to be corrected if there is one. The only thing we have that is close to it is the National Provident Fund.

If the National Provident Fund is a necessary arrangement, or a necessary organisation, it must be well organised and must function well. We have to encourage, first of all, people to be interested in the programme. Nobody will be interested if the National Provident Fund does not fulfil the purposes for which it was established, and like someone mentioned, the purpose is to provide a means of sustenance for non-pensionable workers when they leave their employment. If that purpose is not achieved, the National Provident Fund is of no use. I am not going to say, like one of the speakers said, scrap it. Scrapping is a desperate remedy where all else have failed. I think the best approach is to improve it, find a solution to it. The Mover of the Motion, I think, has hit the nail on the head Decentralisation is the key solution because if you do this, you will encourage efficiency and effective administration and you will encourage people to enroll in the programme.

There seems to be no insurance in this country. (Interruptions) There is insurance but I am saying that insurance in this country has also failed us. You can hardly get your claim without litigations. I do not know if the conditions have improved. I have not died once but I know that insurance in this country is not functioning well. (Laughter) It is a rip off. Therefore, the National Provident Fund is almost the only organisation that should take care of the retired or the individuals who have been thrown out of their jobs.

In America where you have the social security system, each time you are out of job, your quota over the years is taken into account and you are paid a certain amount weekly as long as you have put in up to twelve weeks on your job. So, I think it will be a good idea, first of all, to re-organise the National Provident Fund by decentralising it. This will encourage people to become a part of it, and will also facilitate easy and effective administration, and this will serve the functions that the insurance companies have failed to serve.

Anything that is national becomes unwieldy and there is the economy of scale, when one organisation is responsible for the management of the funds of the entire nation, it becomes unwieldy and what you call the economy of scale starts to operate. The left leg does not know what the right leg is doing any more. There is inefficiency. So, the problem of accountability becomes a big one. Where do you start to account? Sometimes you do not even know who to meet for an account. So, in order to ensure accountability, decentralisation must be strongly encouraged by Members of this honourable House.

So, with these few remarks, I wish to support the Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : The hon. Member for Maiha (Alhaji Haman Diko) is to speak now.

**Alhaji Hamman Dikko** (Maiha) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to oppose the Motion on National Provident Fund. At the moment, the National Provident Fund is contributing nothing to the employee because if

[ALHAJI DIKKO]

I employ a man for ten years he is eligible to get his gratuity and pension. Formerly, the National Provident Fund was established because of the ungraded civil servants and labourers. Now, according to the new scheme of pensions, if a worker works for ten years, he is eligible for pensions. Therefore, at the moment it is not necessary for the Federal Government to operate the National Provident Fund at all. (*Interruptions*)

Secondly, Mr Speaker, Sir, I am telling you that when I was working in an office, there was one of my messengers who died. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order! Yes, go on.

**Alhaji Dikko :** We tried our best for three years but we could not find his contributions to pay his dependants. This was because of the inefficiency of the NPN ! (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** The hon. Member for Maiha (*Alhaji Hamman Dikko*) please I want you to call the names in details, National Provident Fund, because people will mistake it for NPN. (*Laughter*)

**Alhaji Dikko :** Mr Speaker, Sir, the name of NPF is a very nice one and that is why I called NPN. I am sorry, it is NPF.

My hon. Colleagues, all of us will remember that we were civil servants before and we know the difficulties our junior staff were suffering over their contributions to the National Provident Fund. Most of the junior workers did not want to contribute because of the inefficiency of the National Provident Fund and, as I mentioned earlier, if a person dies or leaves his work because of old age he cannot get his contribution. Even the authorities cannot contribute half of what the employee contributes because in the regulations of the National Provident Fund, if you contribute one naira, your employer contributes one naira. It, therefore, means that the worker should have two naira in his account but not all the employers contribute to the National Provident Fund.

My hon. Colleagues, let us abolish the National Provident Fund in Nigeria and let us invest the money contributed in our Housing Corporations.

So, Mr Speaker, with these few remarks, I thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you. Yes, PRP, the hon. Member for Dambatta (*Mr Sidi H. Ali*), you may speak now.

**Alhaji Sidi Ali (Dambatta) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion. In supporting this Motion, I am supporting the last but one speaker more when he raised a very vital point in connection with this matter, that the contributors of this Motion have some sort of arrangements whereby they do not pay the money to the NPF. I say *F* so that it will be clearly understood. They are not paying the money, Mr Speaker, and although we do not have

figures to support each of these cases, we can give an example of a country just near us where such an issue came before the Parliament and it was discovered that one particular company, a Brewery Company, for the past seven years was owing the same organisation in that country thirty million Cedis, so that the Government had to take over the company straight away.

What happens here, Mr Speaker, is that some top men in the NPF might have an arrangement with another bigger company whose contributions would be about say, ₦2,000 a month. Now, this ₦2,000 would be accumulating for seven to ten years and you find a company who should have contributed about ₦158,000 has not contributed that money and was using it. Therefore, the Government is not gaining anything. So, Mr Speaker, first of all, I agree with decentralization. Secondly, the Committee should investigate and find out those companies who have not been paying their monthly contributions on behalf of their workers to the organisation. Thirdly find out whether there is some sort of collusion or conspiracy between the administrators in the NPF and those companies involved. If we go on we would find out that millions of Naira have not gone to the organisation as it should have been.

For this reason, as one of the hon. Members, Member for Bende (*hon. Ogwe Kalu Ogwe*) said, we here are not beneficiaries of this organisation. What we are doing is in the interest of the common people, the workers, who some of their leaders are not even fighting for, but instead, are black-mailing the legislators to satisfy their own interests. We here are the people who have the obligation to protect these workers who are suffering for not getting their money, who are suffering in getting their pension claims and so on. We would not challenge the leaders who are deceiving their members but we shall fight in the interests of these members. Therefore, the Committee should not only look at the payment to find out those big business organisations all over the country who are withholding this money, but they should recommend, if anybody has not paid for the past two years, that he should pay the interest thereon to the organisation.

With these few points, Mr Speaker, I beg to support.

**Mr Akintude Rotimi (Ekiti North) :** Mr Speaker, I beg to oppose this Motion. In opposing the Motion, I like, first of all, to sympathise with the Mover having taken pains to look into all the problems involved in the implementation of the so-called Provident Fund. First of all, I like Members to understand the intricacies involved in the execution of this scheme and then to know the objectives designed for this scheme. Furthermore, we need to understand the categories of workers who make these contributions. I am sure by the time we analyse the categories of workers who make contributions under this Fund we will realise that they are mainly people in the low income group in this country. As a matter of fact, I am sure majority of us sitting here who were at one time or the other Chief Executives, either in private

[MR ROTIMI]

companies or in the Public Service were not participants in this scheme. So, those who are really affected in this group are the low paid income group or those who are not entitled to retirement benefits. These categories of workers are mainly those that are called the daily paid workers.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No ! (*Prolonged Interruptions*)

**Mr Rotimi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I need your protection.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, have you finished ?

**Mr Rotimi :** I have not finished. The main aim of this kind of scheme, to my mind, is to secure any employee against old age. What happens under this scheme is that at the end of an employee's term of appointment he takes home a lump sum of money, part of which he contributed and his employers made some contributions, too. Paying a lump sum of money does not necessarily guarantee an old age pension for such an employee. In other words, an acceptable aim of this kind of scheme should ensure or guarantee a minimum income for any employee at the end of his career in life in form of old age pension. Mr Speaker,—

**Mr Speaker :** Point of order.

**Prince J. S. Sangha (Bori I) :** Mr Speaker, the point of order is 26 (2). Minimum wage is a different thing from National Provident Fund.

**Mr Speaker :** Please confine yourself to the subject matter.

**Mr Rotimi :** When I say minimum wage, I do not mean an employee who is still working, I am talking of old age pension. To me, Mr Speaker, Sir, I think the following should be the acceptable aims for any kind of scheme that will guarantee a future income for any retired employee. Firstly, such a scheme should aim at securing the employee against old age, unemployment and sickness. Secondly, such scheme should, at least, guarantee a minimum income.

**Mr Speaker :** Point of order. Yes ?

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II) :** My point of order is 29 (1). The hon. Member should please confine himself to the Motion. (*Laughter*)

**Mr Rotimi (Ekiti West) :** Well, Mr Speaker, can I continue ? Secondly, any kind of scheme under this Provident Fund should be able to guarantee a minimum old age income of any employee, in other words, the question of social security should be the—

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, that is all right. Let us hear an accountant.

**Mr F. A. O. Osekita (Ekiti Central) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I support the Motion in principle. But, I may suggest that it should be referred to the appropriate Committee, that is, the Joint Finance Committee and Public Accounts Committee. When anything touches on finance especially at the national level, I think, we should be very slow in making legislation because there are lots of things involved.

**Mr Ogwe Kalu Ogwe (Bende) :** Point of order.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, there is a point of order.

**Mr Ogwe :** My point of order is based on Order 29 (1) relevancy. I shall read, Sir, with your permission.

*Debate upon any motion, bill or amendment shall be relevant to such motion, bill or amendment, except in the case of a substantive motion. What the last speaker was saying was not relevant.*

**Mr Speaker :** Please, go back to the Motion.

**Mr Osekita :** Mr Speaker, Sir, my observation about the National Provident Fund is that I have had some connections with it which are based on my little experience and idea as an Accountant but not as an Auditor. Why I said this matter should be referred to the Joint Public Accounts Committee is that we need to examine the financial and accounting implications of the National Provident Fund with an aim to reviewing the system. I am sure the Committee may be able to come out with a better formula, probably it may come out with the idea of decentralising it or any other scheme on which we can legislate. This is why I said that on anything affecting finance, the system should, first of all, be reviewed before setting up a Committee which should be able to see beyond the spectacles and make a better recommendation.

Secondly, we have to consider the investments involved because the investments are not spread all over the country. If you just decentralise, there is going to be some financial implications.

Thirdly, we must know that the National Provident Fund is a joint venture involving over seven thousand companies, one million workers and three hundred million Naira. It is a joint venture. Therefore, we cannot say we can legislate on it today and tomorrow we decentralise it. A number of problems will definitely crop up. We can remember what happened when one region was broken into two. We knew the problems that arose, not to talk of when a single organisation involving about seven thousand companies, over one million workers and over three hundred million Naira are involved. The implications will be too great. So, let us pass it to the appropriate Committee for detailed study and come out with bold plans for this House to propose legislation.

Thank you.

**Mr John Fadeyi (Ila) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I think this is a very beautiful Motion. For purposes of understanding, we are not saying that the NPF is bad as such, but the point is that those of us who have had workers or relations who have contributed into the NPF and had failed to collect anything back, either during the time of their temporary unemployment, or when they are retired or when they were sick can fully appreciate the points at issue about decentralising the NPF. It is not so much the decentralisation that is involved now, but how useful the NPF itself is. It is now about 19 years old. It is very

easy to collect money, but hopelessly difficult to pay out the money.

I had a gardener who after retiring as a worker in Ministry of Works, for five years we wrote to Lagos, filled papers, swore to affidavits but all to no avail. I think it is no use at all criticising the NPF without trying to understand the working of the NPF itself. I think this House has the right to learn or to find out the real purpose of the NPF. In my own opinion, I think we must find out, in the first instance, how many people had in the past 19 years really benefitted from the contributions made to the NPF, either after doing temporary employment or after retiring.

Secondly, what does the NPF do with the millions of Naira that they have been collecting from workers for the past 19 years? If an ordinary organisation manages such NPF as a corporate body things will be different. I think there is no doubt that they have been making some investments and some good returns on behalf of the workers. Like those who have spoken before me, it is my view to find out how many organisations or companies are owning the NPF. This House or the Committee that might be asked to deliberate on this Motion should find out from the NPF the list of those who have benefitted and the list of the companies who have defaulted the organisation. Before decentralising the NPF, I think this House has a right to initiate a Bill to modify the functions of the NPF so as to be useful and not just a collecting centre for monthly dues. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Alhaji Kaltungo, can you put the Question?

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

**Resolved :** That this House calls on the Committee on Public Service Matters to investigate the causes of the general ineffectiveness of the National Provident Fund with a view to making recommendations for its improvements as well as examining the advisability of decentralising the National Provident Fund to all the nineteen States of the Federation.

### Fight Against Corruption

**Mr Speaker :** We would now go to the next item which is Fight Against Corruption. The Motion stands in the name of Alhaji Gambo and Mr Aka Ogbobe.

**Mr Gambo Alhaji** (Gujba) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name.

That in pursuance of the Social Objectives principles, as provided in Section 17 of the Nigerian Constitution and considering the fact that these objectives cannot be fully achieved without curbing corruption in the body politic of the Nigerian Society, this Honourable House reaffirms its commitment to the fight against

corruption in all its facets and hereby directs the Committee on Judiciary to investigate the causes of corruption in this country in all its ramifications and to recommend ways and means of checking this cankerworm in our society.

I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker :** Is there anybody to second the Motion?

**Mr Adamu Yerima** (Dukku West) : Mr Speaker Sir, hon. Members, I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Alhaji Gambo.

**Mr Alhaji :** Mr Speaker, Sir and hon. Members, this Motion is straightforward, it is not controversial and it cuts across all the political parties in this country. To my mind, all the five political parties have got in their programmes the eradication of corruption in Nigeria.

There are hues and cries all over the country about corruption in high places. Corruption is one of the sins which delayed development in Nigeria. In Government Departments, highly placed people are always found to be involved in one form of corruption or the other. Take, for example, our problem in the Central Bank of Nigeria. Every now and then we hear of theft and the disappearance of money in transit or diversion of foreign exchange and so on and so forth. We can neither progress nor will there be peace and justice in our country without the elimination of corruption in all our deliberations and actions.

We have given so many names to corruptions. Some call it *kick back* and others call it *ten per cent, chop I chop*, et cetera. Corruption was infused in highly placed people by foreign and big contractors in Nigeria. If we take for example the contracts which the big contractors perform in Nigeria, we would see that most of them are not up to the required standard. Last time, we talked about the Expressway from Lagos to Ibadan and most of us were against the quality of the work done there. That was one of the abuses of highly placed people. Because of the *ten per cent*, the contractor could not do the work up to the required standard. Naturally, a contractor will want a lot of profit in the work given to him. If you give a hundred million contract to a contractor, after taking *ten per cent*, he will need another *ten per cent* profit.

**Prince T. O. Olusi** (Lagos South) : Point of order. Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw your attention to a Constitutional provision in Section 274 of the existing Law and with your permission, Sir, I would read.

*Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, an existing law shall have effect with such modifications as may be necessary to bring it into conformity with the provisions of this Constitution and shall be deemed to be—*

(a) an Act of the National Assembly to the extent that it is a law with respect to any matter on which a House of Assembly is empowered by this Constitution to make laws; and



[Prince Olusi]

The point I am trying to make, Mr Speaker, Sir, is that there are existing laws in respect of bribery, corruption, abuse of office and theft which were mentioned by the Mover of this Motion. So, Mr Speaker, Sir, I think it is not necessary that the House should entertain this Motion further. (Interruptions)

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member, what you said is reasonable, but if you look at the Motion, it is asking this House to reaffirm its commitments to the fight against corruption.

**Mr Gambo Alhaji :** Mr Speaker, Sir, we cannot wipe out corruption in Nigeria by just talking. We have to take action. (Interruptions)

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of Order which we were trying to resolve. I am still of the view that there is nothing wrong in this House reaffirming its stand on the issue of corruption and I think if we can succeed in doing that—(Interruptions)

**Mr Gambo Alhaji :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I think this is a challenge. Those who are affected by this Motion will not like to contribute their quota. Last time, we were talking about the Customs Department and to the knowledge of most of us, the Customs Department is one of the most corrupt Government departments. I think those who are affected by smuggling activities—(Interruptions)

**Mr Efiom Ita Efiom (Odukpani) :** Point of Order. The Speaker is inferring that some of us are affected by corruption. (Interruptions)

**Mr Speaker :** That is the Order ?

**Mr Efiom Ita Efiom :** Order 26 (5). It reads :

*It shall be out of order to use offensive and insulting language about Members of the House.*

The hon. Member was imputing motives by saying that some of us who are involved in corruptions will not contribute. (Interruptions) That is how I understand the hon. Member. He should withdraw the statement.

**Mr Speaker :** I know when you use the word *us*, you do not include hon. Members. (Interruptions)

**Mr Gambo Alhaji :** I am talking about the Customs department. In most Customs posts, people are forced to bribe every month. So, during the month, Customs Officers go out to harass petty traders. This is one of the things which the Judicial Committee should look into.

Another point is in respect of the Nigeria Airways. Many people will agree with me that unless you bribe some of their officials, you cannot get your boarding passes quickly.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of Order.

**Mr D. O. Agi (Oju) :** I would like to refer to the Constitutional provision in Section 274, Subsection 1 (a) which has just been referred to. It says :

(1) Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, an existing law shall have effect with such modifications as may be necessary to bring it into conformity with the provisions of this Constitution and shall be deemed to be—

(a) An Act of the National Assembly to the extent that it is a law with respect to any matter on which the National Assembly is empowered by this Constitution to make laws ;

I would like to read that in conjunction with Section 15, sub section 5, of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which says :

*The State shall abolish all corrupt practices and abuse of power.*

Coming back to the requirement of the Motion which says, and I beg to read.

That in pursuance of the Social Objectives principles, as provided in Section 17 of the Nigerian Constitution and considering the fact that these objectives cannot be fully achieved without curbing corruption in the body politic of the Nigerian society, this Honourable House re-affirms its commitment to the fight against corruption in all facets and hereby directs the Committee on Judiciary to investigate the causes of corruption in this country in all its ramifications and to recommend ways and means of checking this cankerworm in our society.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, how is it against the provision of the Constitution ?

**Mr Agi :** What I intend to say here is that the provisions of the Constitution, making reference to existing laws of the land, have taken care of this particular issue, and the House is not being called upon to re-affirm. The House is being asked to accept that the matter be referred to the Committee on Judiciary and I think it is superfluous, Mr Speaker, Sir.

**Mr Speaker :** This is the only place where we have the absolute right to speak out against the ills of this society and I think the Gentleman moving the Motion is entitled to go on.

**Mr Gambo Alhaji :** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, Sir. After the Customs problem I would go on to NEPA. NEPA is one of the sick babies of the Government.

**Mr Speaker :** There is another Point of Order.

**Mr Olu Olofinlade (Ero South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, my Point of Order is that there is too much heat here. I am therefore appealing to the Speaker to allow us to remove our jackets and dress loosely.

**Mr Speaker :** We are all hon. Members. So, do those things that you know are decent. If you are feeling very uncomfortable you can go out for a minute and come back, but you cannot all just strip in the presence of the gentlemen in the gallery.

**Mr. Gambo Alhaji :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I was once a victim of NEPA which stands for *Never Expect Power Again*. I applied for power supply from NEPA and it took me about two years before I got the supply. Because of the corruption going on in that Department, my neighbour, within three months, got his power supply connected. When you apply for connection, they will always tell you that they have not got the material to supply you with the power you need.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of Order. This Motion of yours is facing a lot of opposition, even from UPN Members. (*Laughter*)

**Prince T. O. Olusi (Lagos South 3) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, may I draw your attention to Order 26 (4) which states :

*It shall be out of order to attempt to re-consider any specific question upon which the House has come to a conclusion during the current session except upon a substantive Motion for rescission.*

Mr Speaker, Sir, the relevant point is that the Mover of this Motion had made reference to the Customs, but this House had passed a substantive Resolution in respect of the activities of the Customs. At the moment, he has shifted to NEPA and we have also passed a substantive Resolution, that demands the investigation of the activities of NEPA. Therefore, what I am trying to do is to save the time of this honourable House so that we may attend to more important business. Nobody is in support of corruption but there are ample provisions in our laws and Constitution to take care of corruption which is a social problem.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you very much, Please continue.

**Mr Gambo Alhaji :** Mr Speaker, Sir, thank you very much. We want Nigeria to be a great country and we are hoping to lead all the countries in Africa. Our idea of being great will not be fully achieved without wiping out this cankerworm. I want to give my co-Mover time to say something on this Motion. Thank you.

**Mr Aka Ogbobe (Igbo-Etiti) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, this is one of those Motions on which you have so much to say but you actually do not know where to start.

Mr Speaker, corruption is, without our knowing it, the greatest social problem facing this country. What bothers me most about corruption is not so much the prevalence of this evil in our society but the acceptance by most Nigerians that it has come to stay ; and that there is nothing we can do about it. This is the measure of the magnitude of this problem and we must face up to it. Corruption has become a pseudo-secret institution in our society, openly condemned by all but secretly worshipped by many. Section 17 (1) of our Constitution states that—

*The State social order is founded on ideals of Freedom, Equality and Justice.*

We know that corruption is the enemy of freedom and equality. We also know that corruption is the enemy of justice. You cannot operate justice in the

midst of corruption. I think it is necessary that we, as the new leaders of this country in a new system, must reaffirm our commitment to fight this evil. The past governments did a lot preaching against corruption but I am not quite sure whether they did a lot to fight this evil. I want to remind everyone that corruption has been introduced into all aspects of our national life—whether you are looking for employment, whether you are looking for contracts, whether you want to cash a cheque in the Sub-Treasury or whether you want to pay money in the Sub-Treasury. In every aspect of our life, Nigerians have devised a way of extorting money from fellow Nigerians, to do the job for which they are paid.

The worst form of corruption in our society is the one perpetrated by those in official positions of power. It is the worst because first of all, these people live above the law. They use their official positions of authority to protect those who are corrupting the society. They perpetrate corruption with impunity. If you travel to Europe and America and you go into discussions with the businessmen over there, they openly discuss this question of ten per cent in Nigeria. It is a disgrace to this country that foreign businessmen now know that they can easily corrupt Nigerians. This class of people are the bed-rock of corruption in Nigeria and this Assembly is in a position to fight these people to a finish.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is needless for us here to enumerate the effects of this on our social life and on our economy. No system can work effectively in the midst of corruption. In fact corruption is gradually eroding the competence of the law enforcement agencies so much so that a lot of people are losing confidence in the Police. We all know that there are thousands of our policemen who are innocent but there are a few bad eggs who are destroying the credibility of the Police. It is necessary that unpleasant but desirable action must be taken against those people in authority so that the majority of the Police men can work in comfort and without fear.

I remember when the President of this country, Alhaji Shehu Shagari came to address this Assembly in October last year. He talked about improving the Police Force. This is a welcome suggestion, and it is necessary because the Police Force is the greatest weapon for us to fight against social insecurity. We are aware that the Police is not properly equipped. We are also aware that those policemen who are in small positions—

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of Order.

**Dr O. Ogunsiji (Egbado North) :** I wish to call the attention of the House to Order 8. which states :—

*The quorum of the House shall be not less than one-sixth of all the Members of the House.*

I notice Sir, that a quorum is not formed.

**Mr Speaker :** Clerk, please check the quorum. (*Quorum checked.*)

[DR OGUNSIJI]

Hon. Members, I understand that there is a quorum. Yes, hon. Member for Igbo-Etiti (*Mr Ogbobe*) please continue.

**Mr Ogbobe :** Thank you, Sir. I was talking about the Police. I am dwelling so much on the Police because as I said, the Police Force is the one weapon we can use effectively to fight corruption. We know that there is corruption everywhere in Nigeria. The few policemen who collect 20k on the highways are not the people actually bothering us. We are greatly concerned about those who shield the criminals and those who aid armed robbery. These people in high places aid armed robbery. They are very few but they must be flushed out of the Police Force in order that the Force could function properly.

I remember last year in Onitsha, that was in June when the wave of armed robbery was so much prevalent in the town that the people as the lawyers say, took the law into their own hands, but they did a good job.

We know that some well-known robbers were killed; even some people in very high positions and some who were very wealthy were also killed and many houses were burnt down during the operation in question. After the operation, Onitsha became very quiet. In fact, then, if you left a kobo on the road overnight, you would find it lying there in the following morning. This might be an indictment on the Police but this had to be done. This shows that we have to do something to improve the Police Force. If it means paying Policemen more money in order to be efficient we should do so. If it means we should provide the Police with more equipment in order to improve their efficiency, we should do so.

Hon. Members, I am not advocating for a perfect society. I know that as human beings, we can never achieve perfection; but we, in this House, are in forefront of leadership in this country. It is our duty to lead the crusade against this evil. Talking about corruption sometimes becomes boring because we have spoken too much about it. Now, Nigerians are looking up to us to make a change in this situation.

We are talking about employing the magic wand to sweep off corruption overnight. What is important is that we must recognise that corruption is an evil which must be fought to a finish. This august Body is the only Body that is capable of spearheading the fight. Hon. Members, we should not pretend that we are not aware of the discomfort of Nigerians because of the prevalence of corruption in the country.

I believe that we have a duty to fulfil the hopes and aspirations of many Nigerians, to protect and uphold the tenets of our Constitution. What this Motion is merely asking for is that we should have a Committee to diagonalise the causes of this evil and find a way of curing it. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Chief A. O. Imo (Ezinihitte) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, it is unfortunate that such a Motion like this has been brought in here at this moment. This is because efforts had been made by the Missionaries—the

Christian society, the Moslem society and everybody else, yet the position has not changed. In fact, the Government legislates against corruption and yet there is no positive change.

It is unfortunate that we expect Nigerians to stop corruption now. We should realise that corruption is in the blood of most Nigerians, although this is not acceptable. Nobody agrees that he is corrupt, but sincerely speaking, almost everybody is corrupt. (*Interruptions*)

**The Speaker :** No! Do not say that, Chief Imo. I would not accept that statement. Although you are free to express your views on this vital issue, when you say *everybody*, I am sure you do not include Members of the National Assembly.

**Chief Imo :** In fact, I do not refer to Members of this House, I am referring to outsiders like the Police, the workers in Posts and Telegraphs Department, and every other department in the country. (*Interruptions*) What I am saying is that instead of wasting our time here committing a Judicial Commission to look into corruption, why should we not let a sleeping dog lie? Since these organisations have not been able to do anything to stop corruption, I do not see what we are struggling for.

**The Speaker :** Please, wind up.

**Chief Imo :** What I am saying is that although corruption is not good, since it is in our blood, there is nothing I think we can do about it. (*Interruptions*)

**The Speaker :** Please, sit down, Chief Imo. Yes, Mr Wanganga?

**Mr S. U. Wanganga (Aba) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion in principle.

I know that corruption in Nigeria has become as difficult to eradicate as the disease called cancer, but since people have not given up trying to cure cancer, we should not give up trying to find solutions to corruption in Nigeria.

One of the causes of corruption is poverty. People are generally poor, therefore, they tend to be tempted by the least type of inducement. They start with small-scale corruption until they go into big-time corruption. It is then they would be looking for millions of naira. This means that people are often greedy. Just like a businessman starts with a small capital and becomes a millionaire, so does corruption grow from small inducement until people start talking of millions of naira. Then, they would want to have half the treasure of the whole country and yet they would not be satisfied.

What I want to suggest is that the cure to corruption is not in shooting corrupt people, otherwise a lot of people would lose their heads. The cure is not even in sending out an army of policemen to arrest corrupt people because unless the person who corrupts them tells you, you will not know who is corrupt. So, there is a collusion between the giver and the taker. It is difficult. The solution lies in more moral education. It is a longish solution. But

that is the only way to get the proper answer eventually because when people are educated properly on moral issues, they acquire a sense of integrity; they acquire a sense of honour and they feel insulted to be associated with certain menial or unfavourable comments. They are proud of being Nigerians and as such they try to live above the average corrupt level of society. Unless we try to infuse moral teaching in our children so that they will be able to help in the fight against corruption, this disease is bound to be in this country for a time. Nobody can imagine how long it is going to be. Nigeria is not the first country to be affected by corruption.

Those of you who have had the opportunity of reading some of the history of the European countries or America would recall that at certain stages in their development, they were very corrupt. There was a lot of corruption but as society grew and the sense of fairness was infused into the society, people started dropping some of the bad aspects of corruption and today they are not corrupt at all.

What we need to do is not to kill all Nigerians because we suspect that they may be corrupt. What we need to do is to set in Motion those aspects of the society which lead to producing better human beings. For instance, the Messenger is so poorly paid that he finds it necessary to collect fifty kobo from you to see the big man in order to supplement his income. If for instance we stop fighting by raising their living wage. (*Interruptions*)

Hon. Members, I will appreciate less interruptions. I am not advocating any particular figure. If we raise their standards of living, they will feel insulted if you give them fifty kobo. They would say, *do not worry; we will do the job*. But if they are really poor and they cannot find money for the next cup of *gari*, then the twenty kobo would be appreciated.

When it comes to contract, something can be done to reduce the degree of corruption that is prevalent today. There is a rule about tenders which nobody obeys in this country. Rules of tender should be strictly adhered to. If you apply for a contract, there may be twenty or thirty of you competing. The contract agreement will set out all the qualifications required like payment of tax, registration, and years of experience of doing a particular job. The Chief Executive should be able to pick a new tenders' board. They will have a list of those who can perform. It is necessary for them to refer to the past performances of the contractors to make sure that they give the job to the man who is experienced. In this way you can stop corruption and give the contracts to people who merit them having fulfilled the conditions.

I am speaking from experience because as the former Chairman of Aba Local Government, that was the system we adopted. With that sort of system, you will never know who will get the contract until the final moment. This needs to be tried unless you have a better solution.

Finally, Mr Speaker, I would like to appeal to hon. Members that this Motion is very important.

Even though it is difficult to cure corruption, the country is watching us as regards reactions to this Motion, whether we would join the crusade to fight it or we would think it is an irrelevant Motion. I think it is relevant and it is necessary that we support it. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Clement Erundu** (Obioma Nwwa): Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I wish to associate myself with this Motion.

As a matter of fact, we do not have to continue deceiving ourselves in this country. There is no doubt that everybody is aware that this country is corrupt. Unfortunately, I do not come up with any solution. I do not even know where to begin from. (*Interruptions*)

What I want us to consider is that the big man in our society is the architect of what we call corruption. As a matter of fact, during the discussion about Members' salaries, I happened to confront one gentleman and asked him how he felt, whether a man who spent more than what he earned should really be praised in our society. He said Mr Erondus. (*Interruptions*) He said if I happened to be earning one thousand Naira per annum and within four years I was able to put up one million Naira worth of house, then it was the goodwill of the people. In other words, he was trying to legalise bribery and corruption.

As a matter of fact, Mr Speaker, the thing has so eaten deeply into our blood. (*Interruptions*) I hope I will be protected, Mr Speaker?

**Mr Speaker**: Yes, go on.

**Mr Erundu**: We have to start from somewhere. Maybe somebody will give us a solution because in every sector of our economy, the whole thing is lying down even with the privileged N.P.F. which we spoke about some few minutes ago.

So, I have to say Sir, that when we assess our millionaires today in this country, about seventy-five per cent of them are those who had occupied one political position or the other to enrich themselves. Nobody cares to find out how they came about their money. The only thing that the society expects is only when a man will rise up and say, I donate ten million Naira for this development project and everybody will clap. Nobody cares to know how he came out with ten million Naira. This is a show-piece. Now, corruption does not lie with the low income group alone. As a matter of fact, their meagre salary is shared with the people on top. To get promotion and even to get recognition, people have to pay for their rights. They have to beg for something that they are entitled to. We should not deceive ourselves. This is a very unfortunate age, I should say. If America and other countries in Europe witness it, I, Clement Erundu, will say it is unfortunate that I was born in this age.

So, Mr Speaker, Sir, if anybody is going to stop bribery and corruption, what we need is only a change of heart. People will have to change their minds for without this, we cannot do anything. I beg to sit, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker :** GNPP. Go on quickly, we are rounding up.

**Mr Hamza M. Nganjiwa (Biu North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, we must admit as hon. Members that corruption as well as the fight against it, is a difficult task, but as the adage goes it must be done. Mr Speaker, Sir, corruption which is very prevalent in this country and which operates at the various levels, that is, from the top to the bottom of our body politic, in the economic system and everywhere else, is operating within an international system.

Corruption was brought to us right from the time we started to believe in capitalism as our own best means of economic system. Mr Speaker, Sir, capitalism has resulted in the unequal distribution of income. We have got the very few affluent and then a large number of those depressed and dejected members of the society. We have at the top very few people who are uncommitted to the welfare of those people at the bottom. Mr Speaker, Sir, until we remove this inequality in our social system, the fight against corruption will remain a difficult one, the fight against corruption will remain a cumbersome one and the fight against corruption will remain with us for ever.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the fight against corruption for which we wish to register our commitment is right there in our Constitution. We have done all sorts of things to fight against it. Public Officers have been retired and they have been punished in various ways due to their involvement in corruption, yet corruption is still very much with us. Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to say that we will be free from corruption when we believe in honesty and when we believe in service to this country without kickbacks. We can be free from corruption the very moment we remove this dangerous, social and economic system that is only advantageous to the very few people in the society—people who do not hide their feelings and people who do not also hide their secrets about how they go about spending their money because they are affluent in the society.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these few remarks, I would say that the fight against corruption is a difficult one. We must register our commitment and we must prepare ourselves as hon. Members of this country to make sure that we lay a good example for the people that we lead that corruption is dangerous and that corruption will lead us to social and economic destruction in this country.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you P.R.P.

**Mr Mohammed Lawal Na-Rogo (Karaye) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion.

It is sheer hypocrisy to say that Nigerians are not corrupt. Mr Speaker, Sir, the only remedy to this situation is the emergence of a new social order, that is, democratic humanism. Mr Speaker, Sir, I wonder how we can clean each and every segment of the Nigerian society by having two sectors of our economy, namely the private and the public sectors.

So, Mr Speaker, if these two are left to compete, I beg to say that each and every segment of these sectors would like to compete even with one another. Even at the village level, if you do not have money or materials, you are nobody. No matter how sensible you are, nobody would consider you for anything.

Mr Speaker, there are certain issues that cut deep into our hearts. There is nobody who can do anything about the ten percenters, the cement dealers and those who are engaged in the Leyland Buses scandal. It is only the emergence of a new social order in this country that can bring about the positive change in this direction.

Mr Speaker, Sir, before I sit down, I would like to point out one instance. One incorruptible Nigerian had been approached in order that he might change the course of things, but he refused. Nonetheless, some people found a way to exterminate him. I am not saying anything more than what happened to Alhaji Shugaba Abdulraman in Borno State. The man is incorruptible. They tried by all means to corrupt him and he refused and they took the only alternative way out.

**Mr Speaker :** Point of Order.

**Mr Na-Rogo :** I know there will be a point of Order on this issue. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Have you finished ?

**Mr Na-Rogo :** No.

**Mr Speaker :** Let him finish. Round up.

**Mr Na-Rogo :** I am trying to round up, Mr Speaker, but I will do myself and the electorate of Karaye injustice if I do not stand up to oppose this sort of hide and seek game to exterminate this man. If I do not do this when next time somebody is being induced to be corrupt, maybe, Mr Speaker, Sir, he would simply submit and allow

himself to be corrupted.

Mr Speaker, Sir, finally, before I sit down, I have to give this Committee one recommendation and that is the total elimination of multi-dimensional sectors of the Nigerian economy. As I have said, the economy should reflect the single sector which is the public, that is, the masses of this country should possess the factors of production. They should dictate the ways and means by which these things are going to be done.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir, though you are driving me away.

**Mr Johnson Oyedeji Opananmi (Iwo North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I support the Motion wholeheartedly and if we are to support it Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Gentlemen, I would like us to do the following things.

Sometime ago, we were told to declare our assets. I would now say that our assets should be declared in the public not in camera, not in the files, especially from the President to the last paid worker in Nigeria. I would also say that all the Banks in Nigeria should be contacted to show us the bank account of everybody

[MR OPAKANMI]

in Nigeria. If we do that, it is then we would know people who are really corrupt. We come here to shout corruption, most of us are millionaires in camera and yet we say that we are not. We are millionaires. By declaring our assets publicly, we shall know people who are really corrupt. We should do this periodically; perhaps every four years. This exercise should also include farmers in Nigeria.

**Alhaji S. A. Famuyide** (Ilesha Central) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I am contributing to this Motion on corruption. The Motion should not be controversial at all. Corruption in Nigeria is as old as the word itself. We must try hard to see that corruption is totally wiped off.

Now, I would like to point out to this House that corruption has retarded Nigeria's progress. Corruption begets dishonesty and dishonesty begets highway robbery. In the country today we are not safe because nobody is free to move about. Corruption has eaten so deep into the society. Some speakers before me have said that corruption is in our blood. I would not say that corruption is not in our blood; but roughly, 75 per cent, as I would say, of us in Nigeria today are corrupt.

**An hon. Member** : No !

**Alhaji Famuyide** : I would like to prove that Nigeria is corrupt in comparison with other countries. For example, in 1963 I was in the Holy City of Mecca. It happened that I was in a bank to cash some money. In the bank I met so many people. Immediately we heard the call to prayer, all the people and the cashier left the cash office with their money on the table. Nothing happened to their money before we came back. In Mecca, it happens in some of the hotels there that you go in by one entrance and order what you want to eat. You are given your order and you go out by another way where you pay for what you have eaten. This is honesty which we do not have in Nigeria here. I am just saying this to compare Nigeria with other countries.

I would like to refer to the recent elections in Nigeria. We all know what has been published in the papers about some people who have become Ministers today; yet they were appointed as Ministers. It is now left to us as the representatives of the people to

put things right. We must start with ourselves because charity begins at home. We must co-operate and fight corruption. We are the law-makers but we cannot implement it. There are groups of people like the Policemen who are poorly paid. Let us give them more money and give freedom of speech to the Press.

**Mr Speaker** : It is time.

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel** (Degema II) : I move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That in pursuance of the Social Objectives principles, as provided in Section 17 of the Nigerian Constitution and considering the fact that these objectives cannot be fully achieved without curbing corruption in the body politic of the Nigerian Society, this Honourable House reaffirms its commitment to the fight against corruption in all its facets and hereby directs the Committee on Judiciary to investigate the causes of corruption in this country in all its ramifications and to recommend ways and means of checking this cankerworm in our society.

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, there is only one Motion outstanding and because it is getting to time that Motion will be postponed till tomorrow.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members I move that the House stands adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

**Mr Speaker** : Is anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam** (Oron II) : I beg to second.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That this House stands adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 12.53 p.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Wednesday, 6th February, 1980

The House met at 10.35 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Mr Speaker :** The Sergeant-At-Arms, should please go and get the Resident Engineer in charge of the air-conditioners. Let him come here.

**An hon. Member :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I have a point of explanation.

**Mr Speaker :** Let us finish with this because I do not see how we can continue to work under this type of condition.

Hon. Members, before the engineer comes, let us do one or two things. I have three letters which I would like to read to the hon. Members.

**Letter from the Special Adviser, National  
Assembly Liaison**

One of the letters is from the Special Adviser, National Assembly Liaison, Doctor K. O. Mbadiwe. The letter reads as follows :

31st January, 1980

Mr E. Ezeoke,  
Hon. Speaker,  
House of Representatives,  
National Assembly,  
Parliament Buildings,  
Tafawa Balewa Square,  
Lagos.

Dear Mr Speaker,

May I seize this opportunity to thank you and all the members of the House of Representatives for the rousing reception accorded me when I made my maiden visit to the House on Tuesday, 15th January, 1980.

I sincerely hope that this is the beginning of a cordial working relationship between my office and the National Assembly.

The news of Hon. S. U. Basse's death on December 16th, 1979, also came to me as a surprise. I was deeply touched when I heard that Members of the House subscribed money to help their fallen colleague. Please permit me to join them in that act of humanity by accepting my personal contribution of ₦100.00 (One hundred Naira) towards helping the bereaved family of late Hon. S. U. Basse through you.

Please extend my condolence to the family. (Interruptions)

Yours sincerely

So, the ₦100.00 is attached to this letter.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Speaker :** The money has been given to the Leader of the House for onward transmission to the family of late hon. S. U. Basse. I hope hon. Members will in due course, through the Leader of the House, send acknowledgement to Dr K. O. Mbadiwe.

**Letter from the President of the National  
Assembly of the People's Republic of Bulgaria**

There is another letter, hon. Members, from the President of the National Assembly of the people's Republic of Bulgaria. It says :

Sofia  
December 10, 1979

Excellency,

I congratulate you most cordially, on behalf of the National Assembly of the People's Republic of Bulgaria and my own behalf, on the occasion of your being elected Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

I avail myself of this opportunity to express my firm belief that contacts and co-operation among Parliaments contribute to the rapprochement among countries and nations, and to the consolidation of peace, security and progress the world over.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

DR VLADIMIR BONEV,  
President of the National Assembly  
of the People's Republic of Bulgaria

His Excellency,  
Mr E. U. Ezeoke,  
Speaker, of the  
House of Representatives  
of the Federal Republic of Nigeria  
Lagos.

**Letter from the Ambassador of the Federal  
Republic of Germany in Nigeria**

**Mr Speaker :** Then there is another one from the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in Nigeria. It reads :

Lagos, 4th February, 1980

Dear Mr Speaker,

Let me thank you once again for the cordial welcome which you granted to the two members of the Parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany (Deutscher Bundestag) on Friday, February 1, 1980. Both members, Dr Stercken and Herr Kittelman, were indeed impressed by the vigour and decisiveness of the new Parliamentary life in the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

*As I told you during our discussions an invitation of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany has been forwarded through the Ministry of External Affairs for six members of the House of Representatives to visit the Federal Republic of Germany in order to gather first hand information on parliamentary institutions within the Federal Republic of Germany, the distribution of taxes and co-operation between the 11 Germany states and the Federation. Please find enclosed a copy of the note which was sent earlier to the Ministry of External Affairs.*

*I am confident that this invitation will further contribute towards strengthening and developing the links already existing between members of Parliament from our two countries.*

*With my best regards.*

*I am,*

*Yours sincerely,  
(Bernd Oldenkott)*

*To the Speaker of the  
House of Representatives,  
Mr E. Ume Ezeoke,  
Lagos.*

**Mr Speaker :** We have received about four of these invitations to visit various Parliaments in other parts of the world. I hope that the Party Leaders will meet in due course to sort the invitations out and be able to arrange a calendar for the visits.

#### Visit of Mohammed Ali

**Alhaji Abubakar Tuggar (Gamawa) :** Point of explanation.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, the hon. Member for Gamawa (*Alhaji Abubakar Tuggar*) your point of explanation.

**Alhaji Tuggar :** Thank you, Mr Speaker for giving me this opportunity. Mr Speaker, Sir, although there is no Motion on the Floor of the honourable House on this issue, I feel it is so important that this honourable House should think about it and probably, in some way, reach a decision. We learnt from yesterday and today's news that an American is coming to Nigeria which is a leading country in Africa, because Nigeria today plays exactly the same role America plays in the Western World. A similar role has been played by Nigeria in Africa on many occasions. This gentleman, Muhammed Ali, is coming to persuade the Nigerian Government to influence African Governments to boycott the Olympic Games.

**Several hon. Members :** Never ! Never !

**Alhaji Tuggar :** So, Mr Speaker, I think it is appropriate to say that on many occasions when things affected Africa and the African Continent, the Americans either ignored or abstained even on the Floor of the United Nations when they came to vote. (*Applause*)

**Several hon. Members :** Fire ! Fire !

**Alhaji Tuggar :** No, this is not an issue of firing, this is an issue of giving out facts.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I hope all hon. Members would agree with me that it is the wish of this honourable House that you convey our disapproval of any attempt to be swayed by the visitor from the United States. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**Mr Speaker :** Let us hear from the hon. Member from Ijebu-Remo (*Dr Obatayo Ogunkoya*).

You said it was a point of explanation ?

**Dr Obatayo Ogunkoya (Ijebu-Remo) :** Yes. We really feel concerned and I will try to say through this honourable House, that we request the President to actually ban this young man from entering the port of Nigeria today. (*Interruptions*) He should not be allowed under any circumstance to land at the Nigerian Airport.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No ! (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order ! Please, hon. Gentlemen, sit down.

Hon. Members, the hon. Member for Gamawa (*Alhaji Abubakar Tuggar*) and the hon. Member for Ijebu-Remo (*Dr Obatayo Ogunkoya*) who spoke on this point of explanation, should realise that this is a matter for a substantive Motion ; we cannot do anything about it right now.

Yes, hon. Member for Degema I (*Mr D. Princewill*) let us hear you.

**Mr D. Princewill (Degema I) :** I am sorry, Sir, you have ruled on this matter. I wanted to speak on the matter.

(*Sergeant-at-Arms entered*)

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order ! The Sergeant-at-Arms is now here. Hon. Members, please go to your seats.

Sergeant-at-Arms, we are terribly upset over the incessant power failure in this Chamber. Why is it that it is only here that we do not have the air-conditioning equipment working ? (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Enahoro :** Please, Sir, hon. Members, if you want the Engineer, I can stand in for him. I happen to be an Engineer myself. The Engineer is working upstairs right now because our pump broke down and we were only able to buy one yesterday and they are installing it now. As soon as they finish the installation the pump will be functioning and the plant will be working. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, please let me tell the Sergeant-at-Arms that we are determined to come here and work and we seriously mean it.

The Sergeant-at-Arms is warned very sternly that if by 10 o'clock tomorrow morning the air-conditioner is not working, we shall take a very serious action against him and against whoever is involved. (*Interruptions*) (*The Sergeant-at-Arms departed*).



**Mr Ogwe Kalu Ogwe (Bende)**: Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, my point of explanation, Sir, arises from a statement made by my very good friend, hon. Dikko, in his contribution yesterday. He said that if somebody worked for ten years in the Civil Service, he would be pensionable. This is not true because that Circular had been amended by another Circular, I think Circular 4 of 1977. The period now is 15 years. I am saying this because this is a Legislature and in a Legislature, you will get so many lawyers and very intelligent men as we all are here. Because of this, I do not want anybody to draw anything from what we have said and regard it is an authority if it is not amended early.

#### Deportation

There is another point of explanation, Sir, that is, with regard to paternity. The procedure where one doubts the paternity of anybody or from which country he comes is a matter of evidence. An eminent Nigerian like Chief Awolowo is not somebody who says anything and it is taken for granted. He is credited to have said that from an authority, he learnt that a list had been compiled of Nigerians who would be deported. I know Chief Awolowo is a seasoned politician and he is a seasoned lawyer. He does not say anything without having an authority thereto. I am saying that it would be erroneous if we continue with the dangerous precedent whereby somebody is challenged or is removed from this country without due process of the law. The question of whether you come from Jericho or that you were not born in Nigeria is a matter of evidence and it must be tested in the law court where people will give evidence. So, to avoid future confusion, nobody in this country should harass or harrify anybody out of this country without any due process of the law. We have sworn to it. *(Applause)*

#### Visit of Traditional Rulers from Anambra State

**Mr Speaker**: Hon. Members, please have your seats. You can see that the House today has a different colour. We have with us this morning distinguished Nigerians, their Royal Highnesses from Anambra State. *(Applause)* The Royal Highnesses came to Lagos yesterday to pay a courtesy call on the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Alhaji Shehu Shagari.

They saw the Head of State yesterday and pledged their unflinching loyalty—*(Interruptions)*

Order! Order! They said that their visit to Lagos would not be completed without coming to pay a courtesy call to this august Assembly. They are also of the view that they will be here and stay with us for some time to watch their Representatives in action. The Royal Highnesses are led by Chief J. Nwodo Ekwuloha II of Ukelue. Chief Nwodo is the Chairman of Anambra State Traditional Rulers and as you know, he was a former Member of the Eastern Nigeria House of Assembly. Also in the VIP box you will see the glamorous Igwe of Oraifite, Chief Udoh Ubaka. I will only mention a few but you will also see the Igwe of Oba, Okpoko I, Eze

Ezenwa. You will also see the Igwe of Abagana, Chief Angus Ilonze. You will also see the Igwe of Gbusiaka, Chief Ezunwa. There are quite a number of them there, but I will not waste the time of the Traditional Rulers.

**Some hon. Members**: More! More! We want more.

**Mr Speaker**: Hon. Members, I was trying to clear a point of procedure. As you know, only elected Members can speak in the National Assembly. I was trying to clear this point with the Clerk and I am satisfied that the leader of the delegation, Chief Nwodo, can introduce the Members of the delegation and speak with the leave of the House from the seat of the Clerk, Mr Olimah. *(Applause)*

#### Introduction of Delegates

**Chief Nwodo**: Hon. Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives, I have a special assignment of introducing the traditional rulers who have come to pay their respect and loyalty to the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Alhaji Shehu Shagari. We also feel, this being the highest Legislature of the land and you representing us, the various Constituencies of the land and carrying the destiny of the country, that we are morally and traditionally obligated to pay you a visit. *(Applause)*

We know we are running a presidential System of Government in which the Legislature has a measure of autonomy as distinct from the Judiciary and the Executive. We also know that it is only the Judiciary that has the competence to interpret the Acts of the Legislature. We, the traditional rulers, are, however, divorced from partisan politics. By our presence and the way we behave and conduct ourselves, we will be in a position to dilute turbulent political tension when it does arise in the country. *(Applause)*

The institution of Chieftaincy when preserved can be used for the maintenance of our customs, traditions and ensure continuity in traditional government. It is our paramount aim therefore that whatever laws you make, all of us have one objective and that is the welfare of the country. I now feel honoured to introduce my colleagues. I am not a Member of Parliament and I thank you for the permission granted me. *(Applause)*

Igwe John U. Nwodo Ekwuloha II of Ukelue—  
Leader

Igwe Udoh Ubaka, Igwe of Oraifite.

Igwe Silas Ezenwa, Obi of Awka Etiti.

Igwe M. N. Ugochukwu—Igwe of Orumba and Ahalihefe of Umunze.

Igwe J. Udoji, Oluoha of Ihiala

Igwe Angus Ilonze, Igwe of Abagana

Igwe Menakaya, Igwe of Umunnaya

Igwe Kali of Ntezi

Igwe Edward Nnaji, Odezuligbo of Nike

Igwe J. C. Ugwe, Igwe of Ibagwa Aba

Igwe Udemgaba Maduka, Okanbi II, Igwe of Isu Awaa

Ichie C. O. Nebe, Ichie of Awka.

Igwe F. O. Okwo, Igwe of Ogbodo Abaa.

Igwe Nathan Ogbu, Unafeze Neda

Igwe J. Igboji, Eze Udo of Neda

Igwe S. Ozoekwoeni, Igwe of Umumba

Igwe S. Ezunwa, Gbusiaka of Umunlobia

Igwe P. C. Ezenwa, Eze Okpoko of Oba

Igwe S. N. Alo, Igwe of Nkaliki

Okpalasianu of Enugu Agidi.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, your Highness, we would like to thank the Chiefs and the Obis, who have made it possible to visit us this morning in this House. We are really very, very grateful because they have created some kind of impression today in this House and I think it is the first one.

The Obis, the Igwes and the Chiefs, have made history today on the Floor of our Parliament and we thank them very much indeed for paying us this type of visit.

I thank you on behalf of the Members of this Parliament for coming to visit us this morning. My Colleagues, I think will agree with me that all the political parties during their campaigns to grab power relied on you. The word *grab* is the real word to use because everyone of us wanted to grab power. (Interruptions)

During the course of our campaigns we made nice speeches to the Chiefs, the Obis, the Emirs and the Obas. In fact, everywhere we went, although they were out of partisan politics nevertheless, we relied mostly on them because the stability of the country is entirely their responsibility. That is because they are with the people. We have agreed to maintain this Institution. We have agreed that this institution should be respected at all costs ; but after having reached this stage, politicians, in some States, I must say, are not keeping their word. (Interruptions)

Hon. Members, I am not excluding any Party at all. There is always something happening in one State or the other. We may hear one news from one State today and tomorrow we would hear a different news from another state and so on. I hope politicians will agree that they have to keep their promises as far as the institution of Chieftaincy in this country is concerned.

It is my belief that very soon I would be in a position to bring a Bill to this respected House on the question of the institution of our Traditional Rulers in this country. I hope and believe that you will all support it.

Mr Speaker, Sir, so as not to keep our guests waiting for long I have to say, I thank them very much indeed. I thank every Member of this House for receiving them overwhelmingly as I could see from our faces and actions. Thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker :** I do not think we would allow too many speeches on this. On behalf of the entire Members of the House of Representatives I thank your Royal Highnesses for this wonderful gesture. We appreciate the trust and confidence you have in the National Assembly. We assure you that we would be in a position at all times to discharge our responsibilities towards you and the entire country and be able honourably to discharge also the trust reposed in us by you.

This House acknowledges the unique position of Traditional Rulers of this country. I do sincerely believe that it is the wish of this House that your unique position, your enhanced position, your traditional, customary, moral and religious leadership in your various communities, will, whenever occasion calls, receive the approval and commendation of the National Assembly. We would not say too much because this place is already very hot as the airconditioner is not working. You can stay for as long as you wish and the proceedings of the House of Representatives will now continue. (Interruptions) Order ! Order !

## NOTICES OF MOTIONS

### The Nigerian Embassies

**Mr Speaker :** Please, Gentlemen, sit down. Let us finish quickly and go away because it is too hot.

We would now go to the first Motion on the Order Paper which is on the Nigerian Embassies. The Motion stands in the name of Mr Tom Egbuwoku.

**Mr Tom Egbuwoku (Isoko) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, and hon. Members, I move the Motion standing in my name :

That in view of the incessant complaints of poor treatment received by overseas students and Nigerians on overseas tours alike, from the hands of Nigerian Embassy Officials, this House directs the Committee on External Affairs to explore ways and means of making these Embassies serve Nigeria and Nigerians in the same patriotic and devoted way other nations serve their own nationals in foreign territories.

I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker :** Is there anybody to second the Motion ?

**Mr D. Princewill (Degema I) :** Mr Speaker, and hon. Members, I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Mr Egbuwoku.

**Mr Egbuwoku :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, before I give you a brief summary of my intentions for bringing this Motion to this honourable House, I would like to mention here that for the past 13 years or so when the military were in power, it was virtually difficult for people to bring their views to bear on issues of this nature.

[MR EGBUWOKU]

We are all aware of the inadequacies of our Missions abroad. This Motion is not intended to penalise anybody or any institution. Rather it intends to put before you arguments that will help us to find the root cause of these inadequacies wherever they may be found ; whether on the part of our Missions the Ministry of External Affairs or on the part of those who demand these services. I am not going to bother you with a long analysis but suffice it to say that the average Nigerian student abroad, whether sponsored by the Government or is on his own, has long lost contact with and interest in our Embassies abroad. It is not necessary to recount the individual sufferings of these students as they come to us. But I can assure you that as Members start to make their contributions on this issue we would discover that we could go on for days and days if we decide to mention individual cases.

As the prime Mover of this Motion, I would rather not want to take too much of your time on that. But it is a clear fact that Nigerians have suffered so much for the lack of interest, lack of care and lack of concern by our Embassies so much so that they begin to wonder what is the purpose for the existence of these Embassies and foreign missions if they cannot cater for the basic interest and security of Nigerians, particularly those who are in terrible need.

This again applies to our businessmen. Our businessmen have woeful stories to tell of their encounter with our missions abroad. In every mission be it High Commission or Embassy, they have Commercial Attaches, and it is the duty of these Commercial Attaches to take care of Nigerian business interests. It is their duty to give information to Nigerian businessmen ; it is their duty to advise their home government on the commercial and business practices of the various countries they are posted to. But I do not know, Mr Speaker, Sir, how much of these duties our Commercial Attaches are performing. Those who are businessmen and who have travelled out would have found that more often than not these Commercial Attaches or whatever they call themselves, just sat down there and virtually served themselves. It is becoming a club, maybe for patronising inefficiency.

Mr Speaker, Sir, we come to our traditional rulers. We have seen cases where those who are sent abroad to our missions, no sooner they depart the shores of this country than they throw away our traditions and when important traditional rulers go to our foreign missions, they are treated with contempt. This is because these officials want to show that they have now acquired a new culture and because they are living in London or America, they want to behave like Londoners or Americans. You have seen just now, Mr Speaker, Sir, and hon. Members, the glamour and colour that were brought to this House this morning when our respected Traditional Rulers came here. The whole National Assembly in unison and acclamation received these Traditional Rulers. Even if they have ill-motives, when they go back, they will tell their people that the National Assembly respected them. And now that they have received

national respect it is their duty to protect national interest too. If you are not respected you do not feel you are important. When they go abroad they are not treated this way ; rather some young men in suits walk away smartly and slight our traditional institutions. These are woes and tales one can tell endlessly.

Painfully enough, you have read or heard from those who serve this country abroad how our students die in mysterious circumstances and how our business men abroad also die under mysterious circumstances. Nigerians have produced many experts abroad but after these experts come home, for one reason or the other, when they later go back, you will hear a rumour that they are dead. We do not know how they die. The most annoying thing is that we in this country are not being properly informed of how our people die. I think it is the duty of the Embassies to find out how a student should die under the circumstance he died. In some cases they are being shot by the security forces of some of these countries. They use all sorts of reasons to hide the real meaning behind the suspicious death of our businessmen, students and experts.

I believe that when we have situations like these, the time has now come for us to find out the cause or to stand up wherever we are to see that Nigerians must be protected wherever they are. Until and unless Nigerians receive that protection which is the basic thing that keeps a country and a basic thing that makes a man say I am a Nigerian, you cannot have that pride ; and in politics it is called consensus. For a man to have political consensus about his own country, he must be benefiting not only in terms of money but also he must have that feeling of pride. This is why today, sometimes, I like to pay homage to some of our leading sportsmen and all sorts of people who have brought pride to Nigeria. By doing this, I feel that I am a Nigerian. If I am in London and a Nigerian team happens to visit there and beat the first team of England, I will be very proud. Therefore our duty in sending these Ambassadors out is to make us proud. Nigeria is the greatest African country and if you cannot make her feel proud, these Ambassadors will be the first to suffer the shame. I think we must view this issue of foreign embassies very seriously. Either we maintain the number we have now or we reduce it if that is how they are going to be efficient.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am aware that in a review of this nature, we do not have here the practitioners—the diplomats and their personnel. It will be fair to these people to say here that there are some Nigerian Embassies today in certain parts of the world that are living on overdrafts. Some banks have refused to give some of them overdrafts because the money is not forth-coming from Nigeria. When we blame them we must also find out the cause of their inability to perform. I think it is a humiliation on the part of a High Commissioner or an Ambassador to go down on his knees to beg a foreign Bank Manager for an overdraft to pay his staff.

Not only that, we used to have diplomatic mails. If you go to the Nigerian Embassy as a student, businessman or politician, and you want to find out the current development in Nigeria, you will get the

[MR EGBUWOKU]

papers of three years ago. When they do not have current papers in their hands, how can they follow what is happening? Therefore it will be a misnomer to call anybody an Ambassador, High Commissioner or Diplomat when he cannot get a feed-back from his government. I think the situation is so woeful that I have come to the conclusion that I should make my recommendations to this House for the consideration of the Committee on External Affairs. I have certain ideas in my head and I think something has to be done. I think I can go on straightaway.

The first thing is that we are not going to be interested in platitudes. Nobody is going to stay here in this House and pass a Motion that our foreign Embassies should be improved. This Motion that I am moving is a Motion that must be followed up by the Committee on External Affairs. In other words, the Committee must make it quite clear that henceforth, Minister or no Minister the Committee on External Affairs is the spokesman of the nation in the area of External Affairs. Therefore we will open our ears to all protests and petitions wherever they come from. They should direct them to the Committee on External Affairs and then we will probe them and take immediate action. That is, if there is no satisfactory answer from the Ministry of External Affairs, the Committee should be alive to its responsibilities.

Before referring this Motion to the appropriate Committee, I think, it is better for us to hear from all sides. I am therefore, suggesting that apart from talking with the Minister of External Affairs and the Permanent Secretary, we should also interview our Permanent Representative in the United Nations and some Ambassadors whether retired or still in service. I think the time has come for us to do something concrete. If need be, the Presidents of the Students' Unions in United Kingdom, America or Germany (in fact Presidents of Students' Union in countries where we have large concentration of Nigerian students) should be brought here. Let us get out from them what is happening, so that we can have adequate information from them.

Mr Speaker, Sir, as I said before, I do not want to take too much time of this House. I would not do so because it is very hot. This Motion is necessary because I feel that wherever there is any Nigerian he should be looked after. We should take practicable steps to protect them once and for all. It is a Motion that goes beyond the mere interest of protecting our business men. It is also a Motion that will improve Nigeria's image in the proper perspective the way we want it, a great Nigeria, and a great African Leader. So, hon. Members, support this Motion to you. If you find it is not suitable, your decision will be going to abide by. I think this Motion is not controversial.

move.

Mr O. Olowu (Ikale): Our presence here is to make the work of any Civil servant who is a professional, an insecure, neither should we make our presence the performance of our duty here an embarrassment to any worker. The Motion as it

stands looks like a censure on the Ministry of External Affairs. We should at all times consider the fate of workers who will be affected by our Resolutions.

I also want to make it quite clear that we do not owe more duty to our students in foreign countries than we owe to students within Nigeria.

Mr Speaker: There is a point of Order.

Mr T. O. Bob Manuel (Degema II): My point of Order is Order 26 (2).

Mr Speaker: Hon. Member for Ikale (*Mr Olowu*) please continue.

Mr Olowu: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. On a matter like this a Member's opinion does not necessarily indicate how he is going to vote. We are free to debate an issue very thoroughly.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the explanation given by the Mover of this Motion is more elastic than the Motion, as it appears before us. That is the simple reason why we want to ensure that our students abroad receive treatment which makes them feel quite at home wherever they are. In that respect, the Motion is acceptable. But my point is that, those who are Nigerians and who are staff of Embassies are also entitled to protection during the tenure of their office. We should at no time make things difficult for them. They should not feel uncertain of tomorrow.

Mr Speaker, Sir, this Motion has already been explained by the Mover and it should be subject to the suggestion which I have given, that in passing it we do not want to make the job of officers or Ambassadors insecure. They should feel quite safe wherever they work. Sir, I am saying that the Motion requires the support of every Member of this House (*Interruptions*) I am therefore urging Members of support the Motion.

Mr O. Akinboro (Oke-Ona/Owu/Gbagura): Quite honestly, I think that this Motion is non-controversial. It is really in the interest of all of us not just the students alone because, as you know, at one time or the other, we also travel. We also have children who will at one time or the other travel. Some of us have children who are now studying in the United States, or Europe and in the Far East; in fact, anywhere you can think of in the world. I support this Motion and I commend it to you hon. Ladies and Gentlemen.

In supporting it Sir, I would make the following suggestions. If you graciously approve the Motion, I would say that we recommend that memoranda be submitted by Students' Unions abroad. You see, we cannot say we should travel abroad, or that the Student Leaders should all come here. If the Committee is going to meet then we can get the addresses of these students and ask them to send their representatives here to give evidence so as to let us know what their difficulties are. They themselves as you know, can make tangible suggestions that could be of great help for future purposes.

Secondly I would suggest that from now on a copy of the *Hansard* of both Houses should be sent to our Embassies abroad to furnish them with

of the proceedings of these two Houses. They will be in a position then to know what is going on not only in the country but also in this august House. I make this suggestion because as you know, this House is very important and the supremacy of the Nation lies in this House. As far as I am concerned, we are the equivalent of the defunct Supreme Military Council because powers are now vested in us. I think that an institution that can make laws is really a supreme organ if we know how to play our game. And of course, we know that where we are united, we can make and unmake, this being a Legislature.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these few suggestions, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, we have in the Gallery a distinguished American in the person of Mr Andrew Young. (*Applause*)

Yes, hon. Member for Tangale-Waja North (*Mr Poloma*) please, go on.

**Mr Nuhu Poloma** (Tangale-Waja North) : I rise to support this Motion, and in doing so, I have to state the following facts.

The conditions of our Embassies abroad are very deplorable. At one time we discovered the abusive usage of Diplomatic Mail Bags. Diplomatic Mail Bags are supposed to be used for carrying essential and top secret government documents but some embassy officials go to the extent of converting these bags to some dangerous uses. This gives this country a very bad image abroad.

We have also read in various papers all over the world of parking and driving offences.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of Order.

**Mr Dagogo Princewill** (Degema I) : My point of Order, is Order 26 (2). The hon. Member is deviating from the Motion on the Floor and he is introducing irrelevances. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Please, hon. Member from Tangale-Waja North (*Mr Nuhu Poloma*) confine yourself to the substance of the Motion on the Floor.

**Mr Nuhu Poloma :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I shall go on to say that the problems which most Nigerians experience overseas are due to the nonchalant attitude of our Embassies. Many of our students suffer in various parts of the world because money is not sent to them in good time. Some civil servants visiting countries overseas on Government mission, find it impossible to see our Ambassadors abroad. I had been a victim of this. I was, at one time, a Government official on a Government mission to a foreign country. I visited our Embassy in that country and presented my identity card to show that I was a visitor on a Government mission. I requested for transport to enable me carry out my mission. Our Embassy refused me a vehicle ; instead I got a vehicle free from the Ghanaian Embassy in that country. (*Interruptions*)

Hon. Members, I can tell you here that many Nigerians are victimised even in some of our sister-African countries with their property confiscated. They were eventually deported from these countries and our Ambassadors in these countries virtually do nothing in this respect. Yet, we continue to say that Nigeria is the biggest and the most formidable country in Africa. Whereas, if such a thing happens to any U.S. citizen in any country in the world, the U.S. Government would retaliate immediately.

I have to say here that our Ambassadors have outlived their usefulness in most foreign countries. For example, an Ambassador has been posted to a particular country for about fifteen years now and as a result, he has got chains of companies there. He regards his official duty over there as a matter of routine. Governments have changed hands at home time without number while this Ambassador continue to remain in that particular country permanently. He has lost contact with the present policy of the Government in the country. Therefore, if we change these Ambassadors from time to time, in keeping with the Government in power at a particular time, then we would have an up-to-date policy being executed in the foreign countries.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to support this Motion in all its entirety.

**Chief Stephen Ikpoku Alete** (Ikwerre/Etche I) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I stand to support this Motion.

There is no doubt that our Embassies are very inefficient. This is not in dispute at all. Most of us here, if not all of us, had at one time or the other been students overseas. I was one. We have all had our experiences with these Embassies abroad. Even after returning home either as professional or as businessmen, we have had our second or third experience with our Embassies. So, I am not going to spend too much time on confirming that our Embassies are inefficient. That is obvious.

What I am going to concentrate upon now identify the causes of this inefficiency after what shall suggest means of curing it. In that I would go straight to identify some of the inefficiency of our Embassies.

First, I would attack the procedure of the quality of men and women who are employed at our Embassies. (*Applause*) We have found out that ulterior motives of people who want to work at our Embassies, they have upset the system of the quality of men and women who are employed at our Embassies. Instead of getting the best man our Embassies. Instead of getting the best man who are well-trained and who know their job, they send people who are not trained at all. This is the inefficiency.

How does this cause inefficiency? First, if somebody who does not know his or her job goes to our Embassy, he or she cannot be expected to do the job. Secondly, when they go there as unqualified and therefore, do not know their job, they then realise their deficiency and they would then make up for this deficiency over there. How do they make up for this deficiency? You find

[CHIEF ALETE]

the staff of our Embassies do become students in some of the institutions in the countries where they are supposed to be representing the interests of Nigeria. (*Applause*)

Now, coming back to the deficiency in respect of the performance of their duties, you find that they realise that they are found wanting in many things. So, they want to make up for these things. As somebody has rightly said, we have Business Attaches in our Embassies. Their duties are to look after the affairs of Nigerian businessmen and Nigerians in general. All you find is that these officials become businessmen themselves, in which case, they have their own personal interests to cater for. How then do we expect them to serve Nigeria in the capacity in which they have been sent? Therefore, there is what we call divided loyalty. This means that these officials no longer serve Nigeria as they ought to do, instead they are serving themselves. The resultant effect is that our Ambassadors have chains of businesses and companies all floated from the countries where they are sent to serve as Ambassadors. Afterwards, they would come back home and make good for themselves. How do you expect them to be loyal to Nigeria?

**Mr Fola Omidiji** (Egba Alake) : Point of Order !

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, what is your point of Order ?

**Mr Omidiji** : Mr Speaker, Sir, since the Mover of this Motion has kindly requested that the Motion be referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, I suggest that further debate on this Motion be suspended.

**Mr Speaker** : What section of the Standing Orders is that ?

**Mr Omidiji** : It is Order No. 31 of the Standing Orders.

(*Mr Speaker reads through the Standing Orders*)

**Mr Speaker** : That Standing Order does not apply.

**Mr Omidiji** : I am sorry, it is Order No. 30. (2) Sir. It reads :

*The debate on any such motion shall be confined to the matter of the motion.*

**Mr Speaker** : That is what he is doing. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Alete** : Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Before I was rudely interrupted, I was trying to define some of the causes of inefficiency of our Embassies overseas.

As I was saying, when there is divided loyalty, you do not expect people to be efficient and my contention is that some of the officials we sent have neglected their duties to serve their personal interests. This is one of the causes of their inefficiency.

Now, I am going to suggest what should be done to alleviate some of these problems created. In the first place, I have mentioned that some of our officials, instead of doing their work, they leave it

and become students which is a fact. I will then outline that as from now henceforth, anybody who has taken any job anywhere overseas in our Embassies must never be registered in any Institution as a student or for any other course at all. If he has to do that, he should return home and then go and do his course. What we sent him there for is not to go and study but to do his work and do Nigeria great.

I would also suggest that as from now henceforth, no Ambassador must, while in the course of his duty overseas, try to form companies and engage in businesses while he is there. If he does, he is being disloyal to this country and he should be dealt with as such. Thank you, very much.

**Mr Speaker** : Mr Njoku.

**Mr A. N. Njoku** (Isiala Ngwa) : Mr Speaker, Sir, in supporting this Motion, I hold the view that all our Ambassadors and High Commissioners are not as bad as you have made them this morning. I quite agree that some of them are bad. I had been fortunate to meet a few of them who are just too good, but the problem with our Embassies abroad, I would say, starts right from home here.

For instance, if one takes a trip to the External Affairs Ministry here, one would find that the building in which they are performing is an eyesaw. In fact they are occupying twelve floors but I would not be surprised if you would have to climb from the first floor to the twelfth floor. By that time, those of them who sweat like myself, would be too lazy to do any job in the office. This applies to some of our Embassies abroad.

For instance, in Washington, some of you who will be going there very shortly will find that our Embassy is quartered in a building which is far better than what we expect an ordinary businessman to occupy. I think this is a credit to our Ambassadors and High Commissioners abroad. This does not mean that nothing better could be done. One solution, I think, in supporting this Motion is that from now henceforth, all Ambassadors and High Commissioners should be politicians. (*Applause*)

I am saying this from a conviction since they are more exposed to the country and more attuned to the aspirations and policies of the political parties in power. They have an eye on contesting election one day. Bearing this in mind, any politician who is either an Ambassador or a High Commissioner will always be willing to give a good account of himself so that he will be popular and will be able to win an election into one House or the other.

Civil Servants are only interested in securing their tenure of office. They are too sure that they could move one day from one country to another. Many of them do not bother about how they perform their duties. Once they are sure that if they outlive their periods in the Civil Service, they are qualified for their retirement benefits and they have time to negotiate for businesses and other things when they retire. They do not care who comes in to the office. In fact, by the time a visitor from Nigeria is entering

[MR A. N. NJOKU]

the office you would find that he is arranging for his next business visit and this makes it impossible for him to give a good attention. But a politician, like I said earlier on, is always cautious of what is happening at home here. He is aware that he has a party which has elected him to that position ; he is aware that the party has a foreign policy which he must execute and bearing that in mind, his first loyalty will be to the party and eventually to the country.

But I want to assure you, Sir, that a civil servant's first loyalty is to the Civil Service Rules from where he takes his instructions and not to the country. So, with this contribution, I support the Motion in its entirety.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Alhaji Sidi Ali.

**Mr Sidi Ali (Danbatta) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I consider this Motion one of the most important because it touches the very security of this nation.

First, I mentioned security because the Embassies abroad are in a better position to misdirect or direct any home government towards any danger that is coming to us or any good that is facing us. It is always impossible for anybody to defend our Ambassadors and foreign service officers. I was fortunate to be an Information Officer in one of these Embassies. Mr Speaker, Sir, I can tell you that things that went on were so bad to the extent that such things could not be reformed.

Somebody was saying something about a student Ambassador and foreign service officers who registered as students. In this House some sixteen years ago, the late Chief Akintola the Opposition Leader, got up here and mentioned a Nigerian Ambassador, who as the High Commissioner in London, was then studying law instead of doing foreign service work. *(Laughter)* Mr Speaker, Sir, the late Chief Akintola was over-ruled on this and then this went on. We have cases of this nature, where people completely leave their duties and do something else. Why was Nigeria not properly informed about what was happening in Zambabwe ? The reason is simple. The Nigerian Ambassador in Tanzania, the place from which we could get this information, is married to an English woman. Therefore, the Tanzanian government did not take him seriously and it did not help him. So, the information which should have come to our government did not come. *(Applause)*

Mr Speaker, everybody knows what has just happened in Afghanistan. What has happened in Afghanistan was that the Afghanistan Ambassador in Soviet Union conspired with the government of the Soviet Union and misinformed President Amin that two engineers were coming in military transport. Instead about 100,000 Air Force men went there and killed him, over-threw his government and installed a puppet regime. The reason why I give you this example is that if an Ambassador in a foreign country is not loyal to a government at home, he can easily cause trouble which will take many years to correct. *(Applause)*

Mr Speaker, Sir, I think the question of this foreign service is serious because our government has fumbled and has made so many mistakes. For example, we sent somebody on a delegation to London and he spent 37 days supposedly to get a report for the President about what was going on between the Patriotic Front Leaders and the British Government. This man brought his report and the President honestly and sincerely accepted the report. He quickly removed the embargo on oil with the belief that the British Government would honour their words not knowing that the country had been misinformed to the extent that today, we are laughing jackals of the world. This is because our foreign service officers have failed to present the true facts to us. Mr Speaker, I think this is very important in the sense that so many mistakes are being made.

For example, anybody who listened to the 9 o'clock news yesterday would be very sad if he or she has the love of this country at heart. What happened yesterday was that an agreement was signed by the American Ford Foundation and the Federal Government of Nigeria. Diplomatically, the Ford Foundation should sign an agreement with an Assistant Secretary of the Ministry of Education not with a whole Minister of the Federal Republic of Nigeria sitting down with the President of the Ford Foundation. The Foundation is equal to any organisation in Nigeria. The head of that organisation is therefore not equal to our Minister of State. Mr Speaker, that is why I feel that our Committee on External Affairs should sit down properly and deal with the Minister of External Affairs because the matter of protocol is very important. We cannot sit down and see anybody look down on our country.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you.

**Alhaji Sidi Ali :** For example, Mr Speaker, this morning but for the intervention of one hon. Member here, Mr Andrew Young would have marched to that seat without your being informed.

**Several hon. Members :** Shame !

**Alhaji Sidi Ali :** Some civil servants were bringing him in before somebody said : *No, you should inform Mr Speaker before he could take a seat, that is an honourable place. He should go up there and sit like anybody else.* Nigeria is not a client state. We are not an extension of any country. So, Mr Speaker, I think we must be very serious about our ways and preserve the independence of this country. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker :** Alhaji Sidi Ali, that is all right. Thank you very much.

Yes, the hon. Member for Minna North *(Alhaji Idris Ibrahim)*.

**Alhaji Idris Ibrahim (Minna North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I must say that this Motion which is before this House is very important. I think it is time Nigeria decides to vet all Members of the Diplomatic Corps or Nigerians that go out to serve the country outside. This is because whatever behaviour a member of a Nigerian Embassy portrays outside goes a long way to reflect the dignity and respect of this country.

[ALHAJI IDRIS IBRAHIM]

As other hon. Members have spoken, some overseas students, particularly private students, have been maltreated by the respective Embassies of Nigeria outside the country. I would say with due respect that there are people here who had gone out of Nigeria on private visits, and the last place they would visit would be the Nigerian Embassy. You see, when you go there, you will not get the treatment that you are supposed to get as an outsider.

When the Leader of the House and myself travelled to Washington in the United States of America, we made it abundantly clear that our visit was private and that we did not require any protocol. Of course, for courtesy sake we wanted our Embassy in Washington to know that we were there. We did not want them to read about our being in Washington on the pages of newspapers.

Before we went over, I telephoned Washington from London on the understanding that transport would be arranged for us. The Ministry of External Affairs had told us that we would be met at the Airport. When we got to Washington, there was nobody to meet us at the airport. On the following day, the Ambassador, of course, sent us his usual apology, telling us that he had already packed bag and baggage because he thought possibly we were going to re-call him.

The country that I have particular experience of is Britain. Nigeria is number one offender of the British Laws, particularly in connection with parking. We top the list of all other Embassies because we misuse the diplomatic immunities given to Nigeria outside and we seem to take these things for granted. Also, if you look at the Nigerian Embassies outside, you will find that most of the people working in them are much more interested in doing private business than doing the actual embassy work they have been sent to do.

There had been an arrangement for overseas students whereby the Crown Agents paid remunerations and school fees of all the students that were under scholarship. When the Crown Agents told you that your salary was going to be in the post on a particular day, you would get your salary on that very day. That was when the Crown Agents were handling the matter of disbursement of allowances and school fees to students. But ever since we decided to withdraw our money from the Crown Agents and handle the things ourselves, we are well aware that the money that has been sent by the State Governments to different Embassies outside is being used temporarily by the get-rich-quick Nigerians for business. The External Affairs Committee of this House should therefore, as a matter of urgency, sit down and explore ways and means of stopping this sort of practice.

There was a case of a Nigerian Ambassador who was caught with drugs in his suitcase. There was a case of a Nigerian Ambassador who was caught selling secret information on Nigeria to a foreign country. Selling of secret to a foreign country is the one that I am particularly concerned about. As legislators, we are going to be used to carry out subversion against

our own country. If anybody succumbs or gives himself to any foreign country to subvert his own country, it is the responsibility of this honourable House to bring that particular person to order. I, therefore, hope, particularly in this regard, that our External Affairs policies must be reviewed. The last Speaker cited an example of where we quickly lifted the embargo on oil for Britain and that oil finally found its way to South Africa.

The Speaker and myself had the honour of receiving the Members of the Ford Foundation. When they introduced themselves in the first instance, they said that they were representing the Ford Foundation. Later on, during the course of our discussion they said they were in-between the Ford Foundation and the American Government. So, I was left, in a noble way, to decide what these people were actually after. They had come to lobby that Nigeria should have diplomatic relation or diplomatic representation in or in South Africa. What I am saying is that we have the American and British Embassies in Lagos. We have the American and British Consulates in Kaduna, we have the American and the British Consulates in Ibadan, and we have the American and the British Consulates in Kano. With these people living in Nigeria, the information they pass out about Nigeria is not the information of the correct things that they see in this country.

I do not see any purpose that Nigeria or any African country will achieve by opening an Embassy in South Africa where the black man whose interest you are trying to protect has no right to enjoy the privilege that you are enjoying as a black man (*Applause*). I, therefore, find it completely out of point that to allow members of our Foreign Embassy who are supposed to be sending us the facts of what is going on in other countries of the world, particularly to the National Assembly, whereby they will be unable to perform effectively so that we can sit down, make laws and pursue policies that are acceptable to the generality of Africans in this country.

Mr Speaker, to round up, I hope that the expression being made by Members on this Floor does not make anybody, and I repeat, does not make anybody, a communist, a capitalist, a socialist or a welfarist. Whatever terminology you give it does not matter. The desire to make Nigeria remain a non-aligned nation should not be misconstrued to mean that we are going communist. Hon. Members, I would implore that we give this Motion the support that it requires. I believe that the Committee on External Affairs will have a job to do to put right those things that have been done wrongly before. Thank you.

**Mr Jimoh Damisa (Okehi Adavbi)** : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I beg to move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*



[MR JIMOH DAMISA]

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That in view of the incessant complaints of poor treatment received by overseas students and Nigerian on overseas tours alike, from the hands of Nigerian Embassy Officials, this House directs the Committee on External Affairs to explore ways and means of making these Embassies serve Nigeria and Nigerians in the same patriotic and devoted way other nations serve their own nationals in foreign territories.

### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr Jimoh Damisa** (Okehi Adavbi) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the House do now adjourn till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

**Mr Speaker** : Is anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Agya Agbujoro** (Wukari) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That the House do now adjourn till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House accordingly adjourned at 12.12 p.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Thursday, 7th February, 1980

The House met at 10.30 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Committee Meetings

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, Members of the Special Committee on the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation will meet at 11.00 o'clock in my Office. I had tried to circulate the letters received from the firm of Chartered Accountants. The firm of Chartered Accountants concerned is coming at 11.00 o'clock this morning to meet them.

The Committee on Labour is meeting at 11.00 o'clock in Committee Room 4. The Business Committee will also meet as usual at 12 noon. Further, the Committee on Public Works will meet at 1 p.m. Finally, the Committee on Banking and Currency will meet at 2 p.m.

Personnal Explanation

Shugaba Affairs

**Mr Debo Akande (Ibadan North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, two weeks ago, it was you Mr Deputy Speaker, that said you were going to see the President of Nigeria together with the Leaders of the various Political Parties in respect of the deportation of Alhaji Abdulrahman Shugaba and that you would make a report to this House. We have not been reported to and it is over a week now. We would like to have that report, Sir. Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. (*Applause*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** I believe that the Political Party Leaders that I led to see the President of Nigeria on the deportation of Alhaji Abdulrahman Shugaba were asked to give to all their Members a full report of what transpired with the President. I believe one or two Political Parties have done that, but I do not know what the other Political Party Leaders have done.

Hon. Members, at the time we saw the President, the decision to appoint a Tribunal to investigate this matter had not been taken. This decision has now been taken, that the matter is going to be investigated by a Tribunal. I do not see therefore, how it would be worthwhile for us to continue to deliberate on this matter. This is the reason why the Party Leaders were asked to brief their Members on what the President discussed with them.

Distinguished Visitors Anambra State

**Alhaji Muhammed Kabir Umar (Kaduna South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of explanation is on what happened in this House yesterday and the day before, first in connection with the appointment of the Chairman of the Labour Committee and second on the address to this House by the Leader of the Traditional Chiefs from Anambra State. The point I want to make, Mr Speaker, Sir, is that—

**The Deputy Speaker :** The appointment of the Chairman of the Labour Committee was announced by the Speaker using his prerogative as the Speaker and I believe if there is anything to the contrary, it is best discussed outside this House.

**Alhaji Umar :** Well, Mr Speaker, I agree with you. But on the address of the Leader of the Traditional Chiefs from Anambra State, I would like to place on record that a precedent has already been created. I hope, therefore, that from now on Traditional Rulers from any part of this country, if they visit this august Assembly, will be allowed and treated equally. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Drafting of Bills

**Mr Rowland Owie (Orhionmwon) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, it is surprising that whereas Members were able to make arrangements to have a health clinic for themselves in less than two weeks, it has not been possible for this Assembly to be able to make arrangements even to get part-time Lawyers to help draft Bills. If you think of it, it seems that Lawyers are now scarce, that is, Lawyers are more difficult to get than Doctors. If other people look at it, they will think that we are just thinking of ourselves alone and that is why we made arrangements for a Health Clinic and we have not thought of having Lawyers even on part-time basis to help draft our Bills.

We come here to debate Motions everyday, but if you look at the Benches they are virtually empty. This is because most of us think that we are wasting our time by talking about Motions and Committees. For example, if you look at the Order Paper for today, we are asking the Committee on Science and Technology to think of the desirability of restoring the two-tier system and so on and so forth. If there is a Committee with a Chairman who knows what he is doing, he should be able to think on his own and think exactly what he is going to bring to this House for consideration. They should not sit down there and think that they are Chairmen and Members of Committees. They should get in touch with the various Ministries and find out the problems and bring them here, but, I regret to say, it is the other way round. We come here and talk about something and refer it to a Committee which means that we come here and spend the whole day to think for a Committee that a Chairman is presiding over. The Chairman of a Committee is expected to be versatile in his own field. So, Mr Speaker, I think it is important that you look into this urgently.

The second point, Mr Speaker, is on the Appropriation Bill. March 31st is the end of the current Financial Year. At least, on the 31st of March, the President of this country must deliver a Budget Speech to the whole nation. I do not see how one month will now be sufficient for the Appropriation Committee of both Houses of the National Assembly to look at the Appropriation Bill, reconcile differences and enact it into law. So, I think by now the Executive should be told to quicken up so that the Appropriation Committee can take off.

The third point, Sir, is that it is better that we should have to take action now otherwise we may find that we cannot form a quorum if we continue at this rate. From next week, most of us would not like to come here and waste time. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member, on your point of explanation, I have no doubt in my mind that this honourable House has, to the best of my knowledge, been very busy with its responsibilities. We have given some of these things to the different Committees to handle and they are doing just that. There has never been a day that we have come here in the morning without forming a quorum and I believe this trend is going to continue until we leave here.

The suggestion you have made is already being taken care of. We had 14 legal draftsmen that graduated some three or four weeks ago, but out of these none agreed to go into the Civil Service or to come to the National Assembly. They have all gone to the Private Sector.

**An hon. Member :** Quota system.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Shall we go to the Order Paper for the day? The first Motion on the Order Paper is the Restoration of the two-tier system in Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology. It is in the names of Mr Paul Mshelia and other hon. Members.

**An hon. Member :** Point of explanation.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Point of explanation on what? We are going straight on to the Order Paper, please.

**An hon. Member :** Mr Speaker, Sir,—

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member, you have not been recognised; there is a Member on his feet before you, please.

**Mr M. I. Gumawa (Gabasawa) :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, hon. Members, please allow me to express my feeling.

**The Deputy Speaker :** What is your point of explanation?

**Mr Gumawa :** About Mr Speaker's announcement in connection with Shugaba's deportation. (Interruptions) I think it is high time Mr Speaker—

**The Deputy Speaker :** Could you sit down please? (Interruptions)

### Shugaba's Deportation

**Mr Gumawa :** Mr Speaker, it is high time we started to face the realities of the situation in this House. We have demonstrated a sense of honour and responsibility on this question of Shugaba's deportation. The question of Shugaba's deportation and some other matters which are very important and which need to be discussed and resolved in this House are being dodged, one way or the other, on the grounds that Party Leaders have met, Party Leaders have discussed this or that. The House can no longer continue to be left in suspense on such matters that we need to know about. We cannot just be relying on what has been done. Mr Speaker, Sir,—

**The Deputy Speaker :** All right, hon. Member, will you take your seat please? Mr Paul Mshelia, please let us go on to the Order Paper for today.

### NOTICES OF MOTIONS

#### Restoration of two-tier System in Technical Education

**Mr P. Mshelia (Biu South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name and the names of my Colleagues :

That this House directs the Committee on Science and Technology to investigate the desirability of restoring the two-tier system (OND and HND) in our Technical Education system, with a view to bridging the gap created by the arbitrary introduction of the single-tier (NND) in our Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology.

I beg to Move.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion?

**Mr S. A. Oduntan (Ifo/Otta) :** I beg to second the Motion.

**Prince J. S. Sangha (Bori I) :** Point of Order, Sir.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Point of Order on what?

**Prince Sangha :** Executive action has already been taken on this matter.

**Several hon. Members :** Sit down ! Sit down ! (Prolonged Interruptions)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Mr Mshelia go on.

**Mr Mshelia :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am conscious of the fact that many hon. Members are not conversant with the subject for debate. Some may in fact feel that this matter should be considered by the Committee on Education, but I submit that this is a technological manpower development matter. I am also conscious of the fact that all the Research Institutes, all industries and all Technical Establishments are the employers of the products of Colleges of Technology and Polytechnics. It is therefore appropriate for the Committee on Science and Technology to consider this matter in order to lay the necessary emphasis that will provide a realistic, functional and qualitative Technical Education system in the country.

[MR MSHELIA]

Mr Speaker, Sir, the situation in the Colleges of Technology and Polytechnics before the introduction of the NND programme or the single-tier system should be narrated to this honourable House. Prior to the introduction of the NND programme, the Colleges of Technology and Polytechnics produce different categories of technical manpower in the country to suit our economic needs. The Trade Centres, the Vocational Training Centres, the Technical Training Schools in the States, contribute towards technical manpower development; but the Vocational, Technical and Trade Centres produce only artisans and craftsmen. According to the two-tier system, such products from the Craft Schools or Trade Centres that are good go to technical institutions and those good students or products go to Colleges of Technology and get two types of certificates depending on the aptitude of a particular student.

According to the old two-tier system, students that were enrolled into Colleges of Technology would graduate after two years and they would be awarded what was known as the Ordinary National Diploma. The very good ones among them proceed to the Higher National Diploma. According to the two-tier system, students that are exceptionally good only go for the HND. Those who could not make it but who just passed end-of-course were given OND and they could make career with it in industries. This is the category we call technicians and the technicians so produced could remain in industries and sustain the industries.

The very good ones who are admitted for HND are in fact technologists and these are the people who work more closely with the engineers in the system. But something happened just after the commencement of the academic Year in September 1977. There was a Circular from the Federal Ministry of Education to all Institutions in the country telling them about the introduction of the single-tier or the NND system. This introduction of the NND created series of demonstrations and frustration in the minds of the students in such Institutions. So, as it is now stands Mr Speaker, there is no single Institution in this country that can claim to be producing technicians because according to the Circular from the Federal Ministry of Education, the NND programme is the same as the HND programme. It means that the NND holders are the technologists which the new system is producing.

Therefore, if the new system is producing NND and it is aimed for technologists, then where is the Institution in this country that is producing technicians? This is the gap that we are talking about. This is the vacuum created in the system which will be detrimental to the effective take-off of technology in this country. The new NND programme did not go unchallenged. Institutions challenged it, well-meaning Nigerians challenged it, but somebody was determined to make sure that NND took off. Even the Technological institutions concerned were not consulted. If you allow me, I will quote some of the statements of Technological institutions in the country.

At a meeting of the Heads of Technological Institutions held in Enugu at the Institution of Management and Technology to discuss this NND programme after it had created frustration, the Council consisting of thirteen Rectors or Principals of Colleges of Technology met and decided as follows :

*It deprecates strongly the lack of consultation prior to the issue of Circular on the present proposal by the Federal Government. It is satisfied that had such consultations been held the embarrassing and the near breaking down repercussion that followed would have been avoided. It further went on to say that the Council strongly believes that there will be need at all times for the output of technicians at the equivalent of the present OND level in our economy because with the present Institutions now producing higher level technicians or technologists at higher diploma level, a man-power vacuum would result at the equally important low technicians level between the technicians and the technologists. Therefore, the Council recommends that provisions should continue to be made for technicians output at this level.*

It shows, Mr Speaker, hon. Members, that the introduction of the NND was without the proper consultation with the Institutions concerned. I submit that this gap created in the technical manpower level is not in the interest of the economy of this country. Technicians, if we accept their role in the society, must be produced in sufficient quantity to sustain technological activities of this country. But here we can see how the new system or the single-tier system is being run in the country. The NND as it is now, is producing nothing but technologists and I would quote, Mr Speaker a portion of the syllabus of the NND. Please permit me to quote. The syllabus says :

*To train students in the design of machine elements and to expose them to the application of Engineering principles, to design problem and to train them in the use of design standards.*

The products of the course will be employed as development technologists in manufacturing industries and consultancy services. As such, under this broad subject heading, the NND in any discipline be it mechanical, electrical or whatever it is, must be conversant with the normal role of vibration of the system with more degree of freedom in that particular design, say in mechanical engineering. This level is really the technological level and not the level of technician that is learning how to carry out the routine maintenance of machine or instrument or whatever it is.

Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members this is a serious national issue because this gap affects the technological take-off of this country. We need the necessary technological bases to effectively carry out our take-off. The role of technicians in the system is very important that we cannot assign that role to the artisans or the craftsmen produced in the Craft Centres or in the Vocational Training Institutions.

I submit that this vacuum is serious and it should not go on. The students challenged it and they

[MR MSHELIA]

were upheld by the High Court. The directive as regards this NND Programme had made it with a retrospective effect. This means that students who had earlier enrolled for the OND and HND programme were affected and when the students challenged this policy or directive from the Federal Ministry of Education, the Court upheld their case. With your permission I will quote. This was at Ibadan High Court between students of Ibadan Polytechnic and the authorities over the introduction of the NND programme. The judgment reads :

*Judgment is therefore entered for the plaintiffs—*

*(i) that the students admitted by the Polytechnic in September 1977 for the 2-year Higher Diploma and who passed the necessary examinations at the end of 1978-79 academic session are entitled to be awarded the Higher Diploma of the Polytechnic and not the Nigeria National Diploma.*

*(ii) Although the Government can by legislation (Decree or Edict) turn a man into a woman for legal purposes I decline to grant an injunction in this case having regard to the sanctity of this judgment unless it is reversed on Appeal.*

*(iii) May I observe that our Institutions of Higher Learning must now appreciate that their students are not to be taken for a ride. Commissions of Inquiry into disturbances in our Institutions of Higher Learning and White Papers thereon would be fruitless efforts unless the institutions themselves do not act as fools who trespass where angels fear to tread.*

Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, as of now, that is the state of the whole thing. The students who complained and who took their cases to the High Courts in Ibadan, Kaduna and elsewhere had this sort of redress. We should not depend on High Courts to really help in solving some of the problems created by Government directives or policies. As long as that gap remains and as long as we have no technicians trained now, the technological development of this country is really affected and should not go without somebody calling attention to this very big gap. I submit also that every gap that exists in this country calls for Nigerians to struggle for technological development to take off.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Alhaji Rabiu Shuaibu Ringim. You are the next person to speak but we have Dr Atanu who would be attending the Special Committee meeting on NNPC. Could you, please, allow Dr Atanu to make his contributions before you do? I now call on Dr Atanu to speak.

**Dr E. Y. Atanu (Idah South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, this Motion deals with the structure of technological education in this country with all that it means for our economic development. I want to state first of all that this Motion is not a hasty reaction to the recent moves made by technological students in this country who last Monday visited several offices trying to put their case through. In fact, it was contemplated well in advance of that action. In Addition, I want to state also that when Alhaji

Shehu Shagari was the Presidential candidate of the NPN, he promised that he would reverse the situation when he assumed power, and by the Grace of God, he is now the President. What we are trying to achieve is to remind him of that promise and ask him to go ahead with the implementation of that promise.

**The Deputy Speaker :** There is a point of Order. Order what?

**Mr Olu Olofinlade (Ero South) :** My point of Order is Order 26 (7). The hon. Member is using the name of the President of this Nation to influence the House. *(Interruptions)*

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, Dr Atanu, please continue.

**Dr Atanu :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. In continuation, I want to say that in order to put this Motion into its proper perspective, we want to look at it from the start and from the historical context. When the issue of educational planning took shape in this country in the last twenty years, we remember the name of Professor Eric Ashby, the chairman of the famous Ashby Commission, which made the recommendations for the various strata of our educational level. One of his important recommendations was that the nation had to take urgent steps to make available trained high-level manpower to man the economy. That was the emphasis that this country had pursued all the time. He made recommendations for the lower level of education but after some time we discovered that there was some incongruity in our educational strata as well as the pyramid of education. His recommendation led to the establishment of new Universities or the conversion of the then Colleges of Arts, Science and Technology in Ibadan, Zaria and Enugu into Universities. In the middle sixties however, greater realisation was made of the rule of technological institutions as regards Colleges of Technology which were aimed at producing the middle-level manpower needed to man the economy which was a new and developing industrial economy. The high-level manpower is the type of manpower that is suited mostly to an already developed industrial economy. For our own which was at the beginning of this development, it was realised that the middle-level manpower was most essential to its development. Therefore, the thought of creating Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology came into serious consideration. So, the Polytechnics were set up mainly to complement the Universities in producing the middle-level manpower needed to man the economy.

I also want to draw the attention of this House to the basic difference between the products of the Universities and the products of the Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology. The engineers which the Universities produce are supposed to be different from the Technologist which the Polytechnics produce. The engineers, by definition and by role, are designers. They design the theoretical and structural patterns which the Technologists then apply or implement to construct the material that that design represents. So, there is a basic difference.

[DR ATANU]

The designer is different from the person who implements. The Technologists can therefore be looked on as the field engineers.

For complementarity, it is important to have two sets of people working in the economy so that you do not leave a vacuum such that after a design has been made, there is nobody to implement it. The old OND/HND structure represents this thinking, in the sense that it produces a technologist. In addition, one of its greatest advantages is that you have two levels of technology which conceptualise a middle level technology or an intermediate level technology and a higher intermediate level technology before you come to the high level technology. One of the advantages of the old structure is that it breaks the technological training into two phases. So, when a student goes into this programme, he has a breathing space, first from his point of view, to consider financing his programme. After doing the OND for two years he can go into the field, work and earn money so that he can finance further education.

He can also take care of his social and family responsibilities. In addition, it also makes allowance for those who do not want to operate at the higher level of technology or the higher intermediate level of technology to operate at the lower level of technology. The period between the OND and HND provides time for the technologist who has obtained the OND to gain industrial experience so that he can then determine whether or not he should go in for the HND. By the time he goes in for the HND, he has attained sufficient experience to be able to operate properly and understand the basis of what he is doing.

In addition, if a student wants to withdraw from the technological programme after he has started, he has only two years within which to make up his mind. If we make it four years, it becomes more difficult for him to retrace his steps. Looking at it from the point of view of the economy at large, you find that if we allow someone to go through a period of four years, we will delay his entry into the economy. It is like somebody investing money in a business, if he has to wait ten years before his investment starts yielding returns, that is a disincentive to go into that business. In the same way if you have to wait for four good years before the technologist you are training can get into the economy, it is also a waste. It means you have not properly programmed your business. I think we will be gaining a lot more if we can feed in people at this level every two years rather than four years. Also the structure allows input into the work force at two different stages, that is, as I have said the intermediate and the higher intermediate levels. So, the investment under the old system is likely to bear greater fruits than under the new system.

In the new system, we have a situation very close to the university system because if you look at the programme that the first speaker read out, he talked of the technologist as a designer of this and that. A technologist is really not a designer; he is an implementer of a design that is conceived by the engineer. So, it is none of his business going to learn designs; if you are teaching him design work, he might as well go to the university. You are merely

representing the university system in the new system of NND, whereas the old system allows you to properly train a technologist for the purpose he is meant to serve. Also if you allow somebody to go through four years at a stretch you are building up his system of expectations. Therefore, when he comes out he wants to be treated as an equal of the engineer from the university. He could, if his production is at the same level. But he need not be because what we have is that our engineers have become Managers and pen pushers in the offices. Because of the expectations we have built up in them, they are considering themselves along with those who have received literary and mere scientific education. Therefore, if we want the technologist to play the role he is trained for, we must devise a system which gives him sufficient reward for his role so that we can retain him at the level of his function for a long time. In this respect, I believe that what we must do, is first of all, create incentives for him in terms of remuneration, social and psychological rewards. The aim should be to produce a technologist who is contented with the role he is playing and who considers that the role is important. He can get this by giving him social rewards and psychological boost to his ego.

Therefore, if we are going to retain a technologist to play the vital role which our economy needs him for, we must break up this system to help him to adjust. We must do everything that is necessary to reward him for what he is doing. It is because you think that it is when you are called an engineer that you get a return or recognition for what you are doing, that the technologist wants to go to the higher level. But if you will reward him sufficiently he will want to remain a technologist, either operating at a lower level or at a higher level. If you do not give him that chance, he is bound to crave for further education all the time which not all of us can really afford because of the economic and financial pressures it puts on us.

From this point of view, Mr Speaker, Sir, I think that this House has to give the Executive the encouragement it needs to push ahead with the programme in order to return to the old OND/HND system. This is because it offers this country a better salvation for the economic advancement that we want and for the growth of our industrial enterprises. Thank you.

**Mr Rabi Shuaibu (Ringim) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, a lot has been said by the first and second speakers. So, I will try as much as possible to confine myself to the directives sent to the technical institutions for the implementation of this system. I will also speak on the reasons given by the Federal Ministry of Education for the introduction of a single-tier system in our technical education.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with your permission I wish to read a Circular letter from the Federal Ministry of Education :

*On the 1st September, 1977, the Federal Ministry of Education issued a Circular Ref. No. SLE/102/Vol. 11/427 directing all the Polytechnics and Colleges*

[MR RABIU]

*of Technology in the country that the two-tier system or the OND/HND shall be replaced immediately by a single-tier system NND. And the institutions should rationalise the entry qualifications by lowering the standard to enable more intakes and to discourage the Colleges from competing with universities. That the old Diploma, that is the Higher National Diploma holders and the new Diploma, that is the Nigerian National Diploma holders are eligible to pursue degree courses in our universities.*

Mr Speaker, Sir, the reasons given by the Federal Ministry of Education for the introduction of this system are as follows :

1. To increase the quantity and the quality of the output of technicians.
2. That the Ministry is very concerned that the students are being prepared for higher qualification and that the A/Level and College Diplomas are entry qualifications for the courses.

Mr Speaker, Sir, now coming back to the question of quantity and quality, if the Federal Military Government wanted to increase the quantity and the output of technicians, I think the Federal Military Government should have made funds available to these institutions to build more classrooms, workshops, hostel accommodation and also to recruit more lecturers in order to cope with the high demand. Unfortunately, Mr Speaker, to the best of my knowledge no such assistance was made to these institutions by the then Military Government. On the question of quality, I am sorry to say that we cannot talk of quality after lowering the entry qualifications and also reducing the duration of the course to a period of three to four years.

Now, coming back to the question of students being prepared for further qualifications, I feel that there is nothing bad about students being prepared for further qualifications. There are many Nigerians who obtained their qualifications from foreign countries and who are Members of the highest decision body making in the country, that is, Members of the National Assembly, Ministers, University Dons, doctors, engineers and others to mention just a few. Now, we are talking about these students or the university students who are trained in this country by Nigerian lecturers and also in Nigeria. The fact that Polytechnics are competing with universities is no crime. I do not see any crime in Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology competing with universities, because this is the practice in many advanced countries of the world. For example, in the United States and Great Britain, there are many Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology that offer post-graduate courses. Therefore, I see no reason why the Nigerian Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology should be an exception.

Mr Speaker, I would also say that the eligibility of the old Diploma holders and the new Diploma holders to pursue degree courses in our universities, I think, is a wrong decision and it is financially unworthy. This is because by the time these people

finish their National Youth Service Corps assignment they are all eligible to start on a salary of Grade Level 08. If we really want to save this country from its continued dependence on foreign experts and in its effort to achieve early political emancipation, I would call on this honourable House to give this Motion all the necessary support it deserves.

I beg to support Thank you. (Applause)

**Mr M. K. Umar** (Kaduna South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to associate myself with what my co-Movers on this Motion have said. I would also like to say that we should not forget the importance of technology in this country. If at all we are going to make a land-mark, we should, without any doubt restore the two-tier system into our Colleges of Technology. We have read in so many newspapers the decision to revert to this two-tier system. If Mr Speaker would permit me, I would like to quote the suggestions made by the Chairman of the National Manpower Board, Professor V. Ejomaoh, in one of the meetings held in Lagos sometime in January last year. The Chairman's speech was in the *Nigerian Standard* of 13th February, 1979 and it runs thus—

*The Chairman of the National Manpower Board, Professor V. Ejomaoh at a conference on National Manpower Development in Lagos advocated the restoration of OND (Ordinary National Diploma) in our Technical institutions. One couldn't agree with him more.*

Also during the convocation ceremony of Kaduna Polytechnics, the Rector of the Polytechnics in his address said—

*The first term of the 1978-79 session was not a stable one because students continued to nurse their grievances against the Federal Government's new Nigerian National Diploma single-tier programme replacing the OND/HND two-tier programme. The instability reached its climax in March 1979 when the students staged series of boycott of classes culminating in a violent demonstration on the main Campus on Thursday, 8th March, 1979. A number of students and police officers were seriously injured ; property estimated at over ₦30,000 was damaged and a number of students were arrested.*

Mr Speaker, Sir, I think, we should not allow this sort of situation to continue in this country. The Rector of the Kaduna Polytechnics went on to say—

*on this same platform last year, I remarked that the single-tier NND programme would erode the gap between technicians and technologists. Several suggestions were made by well-meaning Nigerians including the Chairman of the National Manpower Board on the training of technicians alongside the technologists. Regrettably, no concrete steps have been taken by the Powers that be towards solving this problem. I cannot help reopening the issue if only to point out again the inherent danger in ignoring the seriousness of the vacuum which the present hours of the OND programme may create in the immediate future.*

Mr Speaker, Sir, I quote these few things so that my Colleagues would be able to know the feelings of the people who really matter as far as this type of system is concerned. Fortunately for us, this one-tier system has not been backed by a Decree which makes its abrogation very easy. We are practising democracy and obviously we are duty bound to express the feelings of the generality of the people of this country. If at all, we are to make any progress, we have got to realise that we are not duty bound to accept or to continue to implement the one-tier system.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to ask my Colleagues to support this Motion whole-heartedly and with a minimum of delay that the restoration of this two-tier system should take immediate effect, if I am to use the words of the former Military Regime. Mr Speaker, I would like also to call upon my Colleagues to support this Motion. This Motion has not got any party leaning but it is in the interest of the masses of this country.

I would also like to associate myself with my Colleague, Dr Atanu, when he said that this Motion was not moved or motivated by the statement issued in some of the dailies which is credited to one of the Political Parties. This Motion was moved because of the fact that it is in the interest of the masses and therefore regardless of what is being said in the pages of the newspapers, we are duty bound to continue to serve those who elected us in the best interest of this nation.

Mr Speaker, with these few remarks, I call upon my Colleagues to support this Motion in its entirety. Thank you.

**Dr M. D. Ukpong (Abak)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion.

In supporting this Motion, I really have to thank its Movers. This is because up till 1978, a number of students, not only in the Eastern States, approached us in the University, during Seminars and Symposia, asking us to bring pressure to bear on Government to change the system. That was because the system was not realistic to our pressing technological needs.

As a matter of fact, I think the substitution of the two-tier system with the one-tier system was too erratic because adequate job was not done to find out what effect it would have on Nigerian Students.

I am going to talk not as a technologist but as an educationist. If we want to have a system of education, we really have got to have a feasibility study to know what type of effect the system of education introduced would have on students. We should not just introduce any educational system that would not be meaningful. It appears to me that the Military Authorities did not do adequate job to know what disadvantages the NND would have on Nigerian Students. For instance, although there are many engineers in this country, our own educational system should place more emphasis on the practical aspect of it. The OND/HND was the only means that provided the real technicians of the lower and upper-middle type who had to put the design of the engineer into practice.

Sometimes we talk about qualitative type of education, but we have to talk about utilitarian type of education. This is because the quality of education is determined by the type of utilitarian effect it has for the people and for the society. You cannot determine the quality without any practical effect.

This Motion cuts across party and ethnic lines. It is essential. It is the type of Motion that is in the interest of all our people. In fact, it does not need too much technicality in discussing it. One thing I want to point out is that the Committee on Science and Technology does not determine the policy on education. I would like us to suggest that the Committee on Education should undertake this matter. Since it is the view of all Nigerians, and indeed the view of this honourable House, that we should revert to the two-tier system, the Committee on Education should be empowered to make a report within the shortest possible time to include in the educational policy, that the Colleges of Technology and Polytechnics be allowed to award the OND and HND as it was the case before now.

Since I am not a technician but an educationist, I feel that we should not allow any foreign system of education to over-ride our own interest. For instance, in the Northern States, there are quite a number of educational undertakings. The system of education in the Northern States should therefore be able to satisfy the needs of those States. In the Cross River State, there are also quite a number of educational institutions. The type of education there should therefore be designed to take care of the domestic environmental aspect of their economy.

I am appealing to this honourable House to accept this Motion, and to include it in the educational policy, that the Colleges of Technology and the Polytechnics in this country should be allowed to revert to the two-tier system. This is because the substitution was very erratic and without adequate feasibility studies in order to determine the advantages or disadvantages it would have for this country.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr Mathew Olubode Oni (Obafemi/Owode)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion.

I am supporting this Motion because it is good for the country. I am also supporting it because technical education is deteriorating in this country. Further, I am supporting it because the so-called NND has not been accepted in the Nigerian market. This is a question of the producer and the buyer. The buyers which constitute the economy, have rejected the NND programme. A test has been given it and it has failed.

It is very necessary for us to consider our economy. It is also very necessary to consider transforming this country into an industrial nation. If we need to grow, there is no doubt that technology must be given priority. If we want to solve the economic problems of Nigeria, we need to manufacture everything we require, if possible. At the moment we import everything we require to the extent that we are



[MR ONI]

mere consumers. We are not even good repairers. This is because of the nature of technology we are having in this country.

I thank the sponsors of this Motion because they have a very good gesture, and they have come out to solve the problem we have been facing in the past. A court in Ibadan, Oyo State, has proved that the NND is not fit for the country, and as such it has ruled that the OND and the HND should be reinstated. In actual fact, the Ibadan Polytechnic had, at a time, awarded the OND and HND after the instruction had been given. So, also did the Kaduna Polytechnic. I have contacted some of the Rectors of the Polytechnics in this country and discovered that it is their wish that the OND and HND should be reinstated.

Now, I have a recommendation to make. I recommend that a child in Nigeria starts his education at the age of six. He enters an elementary school and spends six years. From there, he attends a Secondary School and spends another five years. He then goes on to a Technical College or a University that is, he spends one year doing his Preliminary and another three years to graduate. But, in Nigeria a Technologist spends four years in a Technical College. A Technologist spends six years in an elementary school; five years in a secondary school; and, at the moment, he spends four years in a Technical College. There, he gets the NND. From this pattern, hon. Members, you will see that there is no Intermediate Technologist.

Now, we need Artisans, Technologists and Senior Technologists. My recommendation, therefore, is that after spending six years in an elementary school, we could have a Trade Centre whereby five years are spent to produce Artisans. After that, if the Artisan intends to stop there, he can get his promotion and rise to any level. From there, if he intends to enter a Technical College he does so and spends two years coming out with an OND. If he still has the appetite to continue, he can spend another two years to have an HND. If he wishes to continue from there, he can graduate and get his Masters, that is post-HND. With this type of system, in another two years, we would have bridged all loopholes on Technology. We would have got Artisans, Intermediate Technologists, Technologists and Senior Technologists. But at the moment, if a child intends to enter a secondary school with six years in a primary school he can enter and spend five years. From there, he can still choose either to specialise in Technology, Education or in any other field. He can spend two years in a Technical School, graduating with an OND, another two years with an HND and finally two years post-HND.

It is very necessary at this point to upgrade our Ministry of Technology and give it the power to award post-HND Certificates. With this, there may still be Technical Schools and Universities awarding M.S.C. degrees and doctorate degrees in Technology. At the same time, these Colleges of Technology could award Masters degrees and if the graduands intend to go further, they could get their doctorate degrees from the Technical Universities.

With this I beg to urge all of us to please support this programme and give our Technical Education a boost. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Anybody speaking against the Motion ?

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**The Deputy Speaker :** Is there any point for us to waste time on this Motion ?

**Several hon. Members :** No !

**The Deputy Speaker :** Will somebody put the Question ?

**An hon. Member :** A modification, please.

**The Deputy Speaker :** A modification of what ! No.

**Mr Jimoh Damisa (Okehi Adavbi) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, may I move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

**Resolved :** That this House directs the Committee on Science and Technology to investigate the desirability of restoring the two-tier system (OND and HND) in our Technical Education system, with a view to bridging the gap created by the arbitrary introduction of the single-tier (NND) in our Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology.

### Guarantee of Foreign Loans

**The Deputy Speaker :** Motion number two on the Order Paper is on the Guarantee of Foreign Loans by Mr Sam O. Alu.

**Mr Sam Alu (Afikpo) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name which reads thus :

That this honourable House directs the Committee on Banking and Currency to investigate the existing system of guarantee of foreign loans and foreign assistance for import substituting and export oriented industries and to recommend ways and means for speedy processing of such loans for rapid industrialisation and dynamic agro-economic growth of this nation.

I beg to move.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr S. S. Aliyu (Nasarawa) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Alu :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I believe that a Motion like this is very important. This Motion, when you look at it carefully, reflects the spirit of many Members because in a number of Motions including the one we have just passed, we have expressed the need for this country to be industrialised. We have emphasised the need to carry industries to the rural areas. We have also emphasised the need for uniformity in the distribution of amenities in this country.

Now, there is nothing in this Motion that goes against any existing law, for example, the Indigenisation Decree. This Motion indeed seeks foreign loans in two categories. One is called approved status, that is, approved status for a foreign investor who wants to come into this country as a private investor with a private or a State Government to invest in an industry which he is guaranteeing. The other one is the guaranteeing of foreign loans. This is in respect of State Governments, Government parastatals or companies where Government has controlling shares.

There is nothing whatsoever that contradicts any of our laws. Rather this Motion wants to create the atmosphere or a favourable condition in which foreign loans can flow freely without distortion in terms of distribution so that our new industries can blossom in all States, not just in a few States.

That is the purpose of this Motion, Mr Speaker.

Now, there are some of us here who might think that because of our concern over our foreign reserve, that foreign loans might tend to cut deep into our foreign reserve. That is certainly not so. When you borrow money, you start to pay interest and in the case of foreign loan, you repatriate it after you have fully utilised or started to utilise it for the purpose for which you borrowed the loan. Take for example our dependence on the expatriate manufacturing concerns such as the Automobile Industry or any other industry as of now which tend to deplete our foreign exchange earning. Now, there is one thing also I should point out. These foreign loans must conform with our Plan Programme. Therefore, if we say that for our Plan Programme we want X industries and we want to expend X amount of foreign exchange, we can then go and borrow money from outside and build the factories. After we have built the factories, of course, we will begin to produce what we envisaged to produce. At that point in time, we will begin to pay back and as we are paying back, we are cutting off that dependence on foreign exchange. If we continue to produce, eventually that particular dependence will be completely eliminated. That is the purpose of this Motion.

Now, in a poly-ethnic society like Nigeria with deep social and cultural diversities, the practice of federalism must be a co-operative one particularly with this American system of Government that we have chosen. The ingredients that are necessary to achieve the smooth functioning of such co-operative federalism must indeed be what our national energy must be directed to achieve. Unfortunately, hon. Members, in the past thirteen years of Military rule, the application of co-operation to effect the operation of federalism has not been properly shown, and one area that is clearly shown is the way we distribute our resources, for example, the loans and the industries. If you take the census of industries that have been established in this country for the past number of years—

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member, I think I must read your Motion to you again because you seem to be wandering out of your own Motion.

You are talking of directing the Committee on Banking and Currency to investigate the existing system of guaranteeing foreign assistance for import, substituting and export oriented industries.

**Mr Alu :** Mr Speaker, Sir, what indeed I am trying to do is to arrive at the main kernel of my Motion. I am not in any way digressing because essentially, Mr Speaker, what the Motion is after is to direct the Committee on Banking and Currency to investigate some misapplication of the guidelines in the appropriate Ministry which is the Ministry of Finance. Therefore, it is apt for me to narrate the misapplication of whatever is the existing guidelines if there is any. That was why I was saying that for the past several years certain industries, in fact, certain States have become so much sick with too much of enjoyment of Federal guarantee of foreign loans.

The reason for this Mr Speaker, is that there is no defined guideline, that is, the guideline that tells a foreign investor the terms and conditions which he must fulfil in order to obtain the guarantee in the Ministry of Finance such as the approved status. Now, this lack of clearly defined guideline tends to make the officials in the Ministry of Finance to be very discretionary in their approach. This discretionary tendency in the approach leads to the subjective way of judgment and subjective way of judgment leads to discrimination. The Ministry of Finance which is handling such very important policy matter as to how you are going to administer foreign guarantee, has no properly defined guideline to follow. You begin to run around, and therefore, in the end you become very plainly discriminatory. This is particularly the case, Mr Speaker, with the approval of guarantee to the State Governments.

**Prince T. O. Olusi (Lagos South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of Order is 26 (2). The point, Mr Speaker, Sir, is that the Mover of the Motion is not keeping to the substance of the Motion. He is wandering into industries and discrimination. We expected him to tell this honourable House the existing system and to direct our attention to the flaws which he has noticed in the system. That is the point. Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Mr Alu, I think the hon. Member for Lagos South (*Prince T. O. Olusi*) has made a relevant observation and this is what I was trying to bring you back to earlier on.

**Mr Alu :** Mr Speaker, Sir, when this Motion was being conceived, I practically made every effort to see everybody that I could possibly see in the Government. There are no defined guidelines. Now, if you start going up the ladder, from Central Bank to the Ministry of Finance and you ask questions, nobody will tell you. There is no written guideline and that is the crux of this Motion. The Motion wants the Committee on Banking and Currency to make it possible for the Ministry of Finance to come up with clearly defined guidelines. In fact, this is what the Motion is all about. When these guidelines are drawn up it will be possible because we need to industrialise—

**An hon. Member :** Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** There is a point of Order.

**Chief Yomi Akintola (Ogbomoso Central) :** The Motion contravenes the Central Bank Act of 1958.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Have you got the Central Bank Act of 1958 ?

**Chief Akintola :** I think I have it, but it is not impossible for the hon. Member, Sir to have a copy. Actually, what is required is a Bill because this is part of the things that are included in the Central Bank Act of 1958. There is already a guideline whereby foreign loans are guaranteed. It is available and you can always have it. The hon. Member is not prepared at all for the Motion.

**Mr Alu :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not know whether you have ruled on this because the hon. Member for Ogbomoso Central (*Chief Akintola*) can put his case across and state what guidelines he knows exist but on this point of order I have made sufficient research and I have asked for information. Let him tell us, if he knows, what the guidelines are as contained in the Act of 1958.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member for Afikpo (*Mr Sam Alu*) just let me finish with the point of Order of the hon. Member for Ogbomoso Central (*Chief Akintola*).

When there is an Act or a Decree on any particular Motion, we have ruled that this must be produced. Unless Chief Akintola can produce this Act to us, all I would advise is that the hon. Member for Afikpo (*Mr Sam Alu*) should try as much as possible to make this House understand exactly what he is trying to achieve by this Motion. So far, he is talking of guarantee of foreign loans and foreign assistance and Section 16 of the Constitution has spelt out the economic objectives of this country. I do not see exactly how this Motion sets out to differ from the requirements of Section 16 of the Constitution.

**Mr Alu :** Mr Speaker, Sir, now you find in our Constitution, Part 2 of the Second Schedule—

**An hon. Member :** Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, what is the Order number ?

**An hon. Member :** It has no Order number Sir. The hon. Member is not well dressed. He is using an handkerchief for a tie.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member for Afikpo (*Mr Sam Alu*) please continue.

**Mr Alu :** Mr Speaker, the Motion seeks to direct the Committee on Banking and Currency to investigate the system of guarantee of foreign loans. From my own finding which necessitated my bringing up this Motion, I found out there is no defined guideline. Mr Speaker, Sir, you were referring to our Constitution which states—

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II) :** Point of Order, Sir.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, what is your point of Order ?

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel :** My point of Order is Order 29 (1). If you permit me I shall read :

*Debate upon any motion, bill or amendment shall be relevant to such motion, bill or amendment, except in the case of a substantive motion for the adjournment of the House.*

Now, the Motion before us as raised by the Mover is a Motion that seeks the Committee on Banking and Currency to investigate the existing system of guarantee. He is here telling us that there is no existing system according to his own investigation. So, how do we now reconcile the existing system and the non-existing system ? That is my point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Your point of Order is taken.

**Mr Alu :** I think the problem in this Motion is with the Business Committee because in the original Motion, Mr Speaker, there was the clause *if any*. As I am explaining now, (and I think it should be clear) there is no existing system. This was what necessitated the Motion. It is up to the Committee to make this discovery themselves.

Could I go on Sir ?

**The Deputy Speaker :** Mr Alu, could you please round up your Motion ? The point you are making now is that the Business Committee, in bringing your Motion, did not bring the actual Motion you moved and still you went ahead to defend your Motion.

**Mr Alu :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to suspend the Motion. You must take into consideration the intention of the Motion. The intention of the Motion was to investigate a certain problem and I clearly stated it in my original Motion. I would have to suspend the Motion and then bring the words *if any* to be included as originally intended.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to suspend the Motion and take a new date. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** We have to put it to the House whether it is the wish of this House that you suspend this Motion.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**The Deputy Speaker :** Mr Waba, you are a Member of the Business Committee. Can you tell us why you omitted *if any* from the Motion ?

**Mr A. A. Waba (Askira Uba) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, in fact I deliberately delayed my going to the Business Committee. From what we have seen, in fact the hon. Member is not even prepared to defend his own Motion. Besides, you will all bear witness that we have a Calendar prepared, given out almost two weeks ago. He has seen all the wordings and he stood up before this House shouting and quivering here and there.

Several hon. Members : Ah ! No ! No !  
(Interruptions)

Mr Waba : All right I withdraw that. I am sorry I do not mean any harm.

The point at issue is this ; Members had earlier advised him that this was not a Motion, and that he should speak on Motion for Adjournment but he insisted that he would put it as a Motion.

The Deputy Speaker : The Chairman of the Business Committee is at a meeting at the moment. The Business Committee is supposed to be meeting now. Please, the Mover of the Motion has demanded that he wants to suspend the Motion.

Several hon. Members : No ! No !

The Deputy Speaker : So, that is all. The Motion is hereby suspended.

*Motion by leave suspended.*

The Deputy Speaker : We now go to Motion No. 3.

#### Post Offices

Mr E. C. Ebo (Mbanda East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name.

That this House directs the Committee on Communications to investigate and recommend the feasibility of providing a fully equipped Post Office in each Federal Constituency throughout the Federation.

I beg to move.

The Deputy Speaker : Anybody seconding the Motion ?

Mr Olaiya Fagbamigbe (Akure) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

Mr E. C. Ebo (Mbanda East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, in moving this Motion, we are trying to put into effect the distribution of Federal services to all the Federal Constituencies, in Nigeria. This is yet the beginning of such Motions and we shall do so to reflect the Federal character in allocating such services.

We are all aware of the importance of communications system in any developing economy. We are also aware that under the Third Development Plan, the Federal Government made a fantastic provision for communications development to the tune of ₦1.3 billion. We are equally aware, Sir, that in our respective Constituencies, we have not seen the effect of such fantastic provision. Therefore, it becomes very necessary, Sir, that the Members of the Assembly owe it as a duty to the electorate to ensure that the purpose of making such a provision is achieved.

If we look into the development plan, Sir, you will find out that there is no sufficient rationale in determining what particular area should have what. You will see a jumbling of names of various places which will be very difficult for the people of this country to determine whether such names are from Imo State, Anambra State or Oyo State. So, you

pick village names and put there, that you will provide such and such services but in the implementation, you find out that those services are not provided. Perhaps, Sir, it may be that such names and such fantastic provisions have been put there with a view to setting aside the money without necessarily giving the services to the people. You find out that because of failure in planning and implementation, nothing is moving in this country—the telecommunications system, the postal system, the Telex and Telegraphs. There are no services, whatsoever in the Constituencies.

My own Constituency is called Mbanda. It is not even there but it is a Federal Constituency. They have mentioned in that Plan Mbanda as the Headquarters of that place. The Headquarters is called Umueleme and if you follow the implementation of the plan, they came to a stage when they said they had suspended provision of such services to Local Government Headquarters knowing fully well that many Local Government Headquarters came in there for the first time from such areas that were left out. Then it surprised me about what the Federal Government was doing. You know that a chain is as strong as its weakest link. If we make fantastic provisions for certain areas neglecting a greater portion of Nigeria, we are not doing any good to the political system because those that we have left in the dark will be behaving ignorantly. They will not be following what we are doing. So, you find out that there is disparity in the communications system.

Sir, this Motion will not require too much debate because what I really intend to do is to make it possible for every Constituency in Nigeria to receive what it is entitled to. Therefore, it is a matter of being liberal to everybody. In which case, even if you have got postal facilities in your area, I can assure you that you have not got all the facilities. The equipment is not complete ; you have not got the trained personnel. The type of staff you have there may be are those that are so decadent because they have not been given the facilities for personality development. They have not been receiving the orientation, their promotion prospects have been retarded, they are frustrated, they have been on Levels 2, 3, 4, for so many years to the extent that they are not interested in giving the services.

This Motion, Sir, intends not only to make the Committee look into the provision of infrastructures in all the Federal Constituencies but also to make sure that the boys who are not now employed are employed. We have got many boys who have left school roaming about the streets looking for employment that is not there. Yet, there is the possibility of just making a little adjustment and creating those facilities and the facilities for the necessary training are there. But we have not exploited them fully because people who do not understand what we should do are in charge.

It is the business of this Committee to look into this and create employment opportunities for our boys and girls and create promotions and incentives in that department so that people will be happy to go there. Then, they will have the satisfaction for

[MR E. C. EBO]  
working there. Let us create those promotion prospects and make those who are retarded to go a little bit higher by giving them little training, departmental training, professional training. There is need for linking these colleges offering these professions with some of our universities in Nigeria,

Let us also make arrangements to see that we can telephone anybody from any part of Nigeria without necessarily coming to Lagos or going to Enugu to do so. If you are in your Constituency, you should be able to telephone the National Assembly and hear what is going on there. You can be sent for through telephone that so and so is going on and therefore you have to come back and you will come. If you want to send a message to your Constituency, you can just move out of the Hall here and telephone your Constituency and they will tell you what is happening there. You do not need to board an aeroplane to your town in order to find out what is happening there. You do not need to go there and overload traffic in order to know what is happening in your own Constituency.

The same thing applies to our various offices in our respective places. You do not need to drive to the places to know whether your office is functioning or not. But the telephone system is not working. This is unfortunate. You will find out also that it is the same thing with regard to our telegrams. Up to this stage, we are using the outdated Moss Code system when there are modern systems and modern techniques of doing these things. Nigeria is not moving as fast as some other countries might wish that Nigeria should be moving.

My dear hon. Members, I am appealing to all of you to make it possible for all corners to benefit from the Posts and Telecommunications system of this country. You know that it is something that is responsible for change and it is an instrument of change. When the system is working, you can communicate not only with the people of Nigeria but also with your business partners overseas in confidence. When this system is working, you will find out that even those who sometimes engage themselves in doing mean things, seeing that there are prospects for development and progress, will change and do some good work in the interest of this country.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not believe in making fantastic provisions for the purpose of paper work as was done in the Third National Development Plan. I crave the indulgence of this House to empower the Committee on Communications, not only to provide a minimum of one Post Office, fully equipped for every Federal Constituency, but also the State Constituencies can have sub-Post Offices. Their Local Governments can have well-equipped Postal Agencies. Nothing is so excessive in making such provisions. The only thing is that the Committee has to do some work in making arrangements for the training of staff for their stage to stage movements so that when you train this cadre they will rise from that lower level to the other.

You will find that it is in this department that you have people in Level 01 for 20 years. Some people are even still receiving something lower than Level 01 for the past 20 years. It is in this department

that if somebody is promoted to Level 02, he is regarded as a big man. It is for this Committee to make it possible that nobody in this department should be on anything less than Level 03 because if you put somebody who is very hungry to handle a very important mail that contains something attractive, you are really tempting him. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member, I must direct you to your Motion which says—

That this House directs the Committee on Communications to investigate and recommend the feasibility of providing a fully equipped Post Office in each Federal Constituency throughout the Federation.

It has nothing with salaries and so on.

**Mr Ebo :** Yes, Mr Speaker, the main Motion is not on salary structure. I am saying, Sir, that the welfare of the P & T workers will contribute a great deal to the improvement. This is one of those things they have to investigate to find out how we can— (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** The welfare of workers is outside the responsibility of the Committee on Communications.

**Mr Ebo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, the welfare of workers is not outside their responsibility because we have power to legislate on anything. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Your Motion is directing the Committee on Communications. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Ebo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I therefore move that this House directs the Committee on Communications to investigate and recommend the feasibility of providing a fully equipped Post Office in each Federal Constituency throughout the Federation.

I beg to move.

**Mr Garba Isyaku (Minijibir) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion on the Floor of this honourable House. In supporting this Motion, I should like to make the following comments.

Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I am sure all of us would see the importance of opening, at least, a postal agency in each of the Federal Constituencies in the Federation. I am sure most of our Members have been affected by not having a postal agency in their Constituencies. During the last recess some Members were recalled to attend some meetings; but unfortunately only a few Members got their own letters while the others did not. It was only when some Members came back that they knew about those meetings.

I am sure hon. Members will support this important Motion wholeheartedly because, as of now, we are all cut-off from our Constituencies. They do not know which position we are, whether we are safe in Lagos or not. We cannot communicate or inform them fully about what the House is doing in respect of their welfare. I think, therefore, hon. Members, that this Motion is not controversial. It should not take us much time to discuss it since the Committee

on Communication will investigate and recommend to the honourable House the possibilities of establishing these postal agencies.

Alternatively, Mr Speaker, Sir, I would advise that the Committee on Communications should advise that postal agencies should be established throughout the Local Government Areas or Local Government headquarters so that when the allocation for Local Governments will be made, the building of intended post offices should be included in the grants for Local Governments. Thus, we would start from the grass-roots.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I beg to support the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Let us hear from the hon. Member for Ethiope South (*Chief P. A. Gbiniue*).

**Chief P. A. Gbiniue** (Ethiope South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to contribute to this Motion. This Motion is not controversial. In fact, the live-wire of any economy is the postal system. We are all aware that in this country the communication system has yet to be developed to a standard commensurate with the development rate going on in the country. In most cases, some of the Federal Constituencies so to say measuring by units have no effective postal system. The result is that when letters are posted at one end it takes three to four weeks to get to the other end. This is because there is no full-fledged postal system.

What this Motion seeks, therefore, is that in every Federal Constituency there should be established a full-fledged post office. This means, in effect, that the communication in that area would be provided with all the technical knowhow and necessary equipment for easy communication. I think this is a very important Motion and does not require the wisdom of Solomon to say it a hundred times before every Member of this House should support it. I, therefore, urge all Members to view this Motion with seriousness and support it without hesitation. I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr A. Okon Eddy** (Ikot Ekpene I) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion. In supporting this Motion, I not only support the House to direct that the Committee on communications should investigate and recommend the feasibility of providing a fully equipped post office in each Federal Constituency throughout the Federation, but I also wish the Committee concerned to recommend to the Government to provide the proper equipment to all the existing post offices throughout the Federation.

Why I say this, Mr Speaker, Sir, is that most of the post offices established in the State of my origin, the Cross River State, lack what we refer to as telegraphic print. For example, if we want to despatch any telegram from Ikot Ekpene to Lagos, this telegram must pass through Uyo or Aba before it is transmitted to Lagos here. This would take a very long time before reaching Lagos. For instance, I despatched a telegram some time last year to Lagos here but later on, I discovered that the telegram took over two months to arrive in Lagos. This

means that the system is not working. At the same time, most of the post offices in the country are not permitted to do overtime.

**The Deputy Speaker :** There is a point of Order.

**Mohammed Lawal Na-Rogo** (Karaje Kano) : My point of Order is Order 26 (2). We are discussing the issue of establishing new post offices in each and every Federal Constituency of this country. We are not discussing the efficiency or the mechanism of post offices.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Your point of Order is noted. Speak on, Mr Eddy.

**Mr Eddy :** For example, most of the post offices are not permitted to do overtime. The effect of this is that if a letter is posted in one of the post offices in the Cross River State it will not leave the post office until after one day. This is because the three post offices in the Cross River State are not permitted to do overtime. These post offices are in Uyo, Calabar and Ikom. If a letter is posted at 12 noon in Ikot Ekpene, this letter will not leave Ikot Ekpene until after one day. So, if most of the existing post offices are permitted to do overtime, it would be possible for us to have our mail being delivered in time.

With this short contribution, I support the Motion. Thank you Mr Speaker.

**Alhaji Mamman Dikko** (Maiha) : Mr Speaker Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion a hundred per cent. May I say that in the whole of Gongola State, we have only four postal agencies, that is in Mubi, Yola, Jalingo, Takum and Hong.

**The Deputy Speaker :** That is five instead of four. (*Interruptions*)

**Alhaji Dikko :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to tell you that in my Constituency I posted a letter on the 18th of October, 1979, and up till now the person to whom I sent the letter has not got it. The communication system in this country is nil, it needs to be rehabilitated, especially the Posts and Telegraphs Department. There is one Postal Agency somewhere—I do not want to mention the name—I went there to buy a stamp and they told me there was no stamp. This happened because the Post Office is not equipped. Mr Speaker, Sir, the matter of Post Offices is a very, very important one in this country. So, I hope hon. Members of this House will support this Motion fully because, we shall bear the brunt of the inefficiency of the Post Office.

With these few remarks, I beg to warm my seat.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Is anybody speaking against the Motion?

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Some hon. Members :** Yes !

**Mr Oluwole Oyatoba** (Oyo South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I am speaking against this Motion.

**Several hon. Members :** Shame ! Shame ! (*Interruptions*).

**Mr Oyatoba :** By the time I speak for two minutes, you will agree with me that this Motion is untimely. During our campaigns, we heard so many things about ITT contracts. We have not, as far as this National Assembly is concerned, asked for the progress or the dimension of such contracts. *(Interruptions)*

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Oyatoba :** I am not against the ITT please, the ITT is part of the communication system. I am not speaking against ITT ; I can assure you.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member, there is a point of Order.

**Chief P. A. Gbinije (Ethiopia South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, the Gentleman is talking out of order, and I refer you to Orders 29 (1) and 26 (2).

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member for Oyo South (*Mr Oyatoba*), please confine your observations to the Motion.

**Mr Oyatoba :** I would like us to be well informed about the problems of the Ministry of Communications before we start making suggestions about the programme they should follow. All our Ministries are very able and they have programmes they want to execute. We shall be in a very good position to advise them if we, as Members of the National Assembly, know what their programmes are. Already, a lot of money is being spent towards improving communications in this country and we have not yet known how much of this job has been done. I am sure we have at least three different projects which are being handled : one by Kabel Metal, the other one directly by the Ministry of Communications and the third one by the ITT. I am therefore very sure that our government is doing its best to improve the communication system in this country.

I would like to spend time on the improvement of the distribution of mail in the country especially in capital cities rather than emphasising the building of well equipped post offices. There are no problems in small towns but there are problems, say, in Enugu, Port Harcourt, Calabar, Sokoto, Kaduna, Sokoto, Kano and Ibadan. If you post a letter in Lagos today they would not get it in Sokoto in two weeks time. My home town is only about 100 miles away from this place and I posted a letter there but it was not received until after eight days. Therefore, I am saying that our problem is that of distribution of mail rather than that of building Post Offices.

I beg to sit.

**Mr Efiom Ita Efiom (Odukpani) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I know that whether you want qualitative education or food and shelter, you need good communication. I know that if you want to improve industry, you need a good communication system. I also realise that our Postal Services are so poor, our Post Offices are inadequately staffed and equipped. I know that the building of more Post Offices at least one per Federal Constituency will land us in building at least 200 Post Offices in the country

during these four years. This will disrupt the programme of any government which did not, in fact, have in mind the desire to increase the number of Post Offices. Why I am opposing the Motion is that we can improve the existing Postal Services to a very good standard rather than providing a fully equipped Post Office in each Federal Constituency as the Motion suggests.

We should improve the existing ones and possibly start with well equipped sub-post offices where there are none in each Federal Constituency. I do not want us to be carried away by emotion or sentiment as far as this Motion is concerned. I know that everybody would like to have a well equipped Post Office in each Federal Constituency. In my Federal Constituency, with four State Constituencies, we have not got a Post office.

Realising the problems and the difficulties involved, and the delays that will follow, a sub-post office in each Federal Constituency which has not been in existence will enhance our communication efforts. It is one thing to pass a Resolution and it is another thing to implement it. You do not need an electric switch before all the post-offices are erected.

Well, I oppose this Motion and I call on all the Members to think twice before they say, yes or no. We do not want to be subjected to a situation of confrontation. The Resolution on the extension of date for the old Currency Notes by the Central Bank which we passed in this House is still very fresh in our memory. We did pass it, but it turned out that when the details were given, it was impossible to extend the date and here we are today, the old Currency Notes have gone. Let us agree on those things which are possible and easily practicable. Let us not put up gigantic proposals which will embarrass the Executive.

Mr Speaker, I beg to sincerely oppose the Motion. *(Interruptions)*

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, it is getting to one o'clock and if Members are so keen on this Motion, we can carry on till 3 o'clock.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**The Deputy Speaker :** A lot of people have been raising their hands to speak. Hon. Members, the House is fully airconditioned today, and this is the last Motion on the Order Paper. There are Members that have indicated their wish to speak on the Motion for Adjournment. Even if I put the Question now, it still requires that we resume at 3 o'clock. Some Members want this Motion to be carried on with till 3 o'clock, while others want the Question put now. Do you want us to put the Question now ?

**Several hon. Members :** Yes.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, Mr Damisa.

**Mr Jimoh Damisa** (Okehi Adavbi) : I move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That this House directs the Committee on Communications to investigate and recommend the feasibility of providing a fully equipped Post Office in each Federal Constituency throughout the Federation.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr Jimoh Damisa :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the House do adjourn till tomorrow at 9 o'clock.

**Prince J. S. Sangha** (Bori I) : I beg to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That the House do adjourn till 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 1.00 p.m.*



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Friday, 8th February, 1980

The House met at 10.05 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, the Committee on Public Service is supposed to be meeting by now. Tomorrow, as you are aware, 16 Members of the National Assembly will be leaving for the United States and they will be away for approximately two weeks. I have not got the list now but the Clerk of the House of Representatives has gone to bring the list of the names of those going. I would only like to wish them a very safe journey on behalf of this honourable House. We hope they will be back safely.

We have only one Motion on the Order Paper for today.

**Mr Debo Akande (Ibadan North):** Point of explanation on the Business of the House.

**The Deputy Speaker :** On the Business of the House ?

**Mr Akande :** Yes, Sir. I will not waste your time.

**The Deputy Speaker :** I hope not otherwise I will drop the hammer on you. *(Laughter)*

Business Committee

**Mr Akande :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am getting worried about the Business of the House as is being arranged and fixed by the Business Committee. I have refrained from mentioning this but after talking to a number of hon. Members, it appears that we all share this concern. The Business Committee, in my opinion, is rejecting outright Bills, Motions and Papers filed with it. I am not sure it is within its own competence or jurisdiction. The Business Committee is to prepare the Business of the House. When an hon. Member puts in a Bill or a Motion, it is for the Business Committee to fix it and bring it to the House which will then decide to accept considering it or rejecting it.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is getting to a stage that I would like to draw the attention of the honourable House to the way it is going on because I may have to put in a Motion.

**An hon. Member :** Excuse me, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker :** No, this is not subject to debate please. The Chairman of the Business Committee is to speak.

**Mr S. M. C. Ihekweazu (Nkwere/Amaigbo) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am the Chairman of the Business Committee. I must say that the Business Committee and the way it operates, sometimes, has to be explained to certain people. It is not always easy for the Committee to meet the personal demands of several hon. Members. Right now, the Business Committee has over 540 Motions all of which need to be brought before the honourable House. It, therefore, falls on the Committee to try to screen some of these Motions and bring them up depending upon their substance or relevance to the interest, maybe of the nation or of the special interest of the Assembly. We do not stay there just to champion the particular interest of anybody ; we try not to do that. Most of the time, we try to make sure that we present Motions and Bills that have special relevance.

In referring particularly to the last speaker, I must say that, with due deference to him, he has tried to subject the Committee to a number of pressures which we have tried to resent. I do not think it is proper or fair. I must remind hon. Members that the Business Committee is not a Post Office. You just do not throw in Motions and expect them to re-appear in the House within a matter of time or something of that nature. We do some screening and it is part of the duty of the Business Committee. I know we primarily go there to arrange the Bills and what date the matters will come up, but some people come in now and they want their Motions to appear the next day. They want them to take precedence, and all that. I do not think it is fair.

There are some instances where people by virtue of their positions are consulted by other friends on Motions as to what to do. Instead of giving them good advice, they turn round and put in something they call Bills just to steal the show from the original Movers of those Motions. These matters come to the knowledge of the Business Committee and you do not expect us to condone quite easily. I would please like to assure the House, Mr Speaker, Sir, that the Business Committee is very, very conscious of its duty and that even though there may be delays here and there, I think for now, we are doing our best. Thank you, Mr Speaker. *(Applause)*

**An hon. Member :** Point of explanation.

**The Deputy Speaker :** I do not want the work of the Business Committee to be turned into a debate. I remember there was an assignment given to the hon. Member for Ibadan North (*Mr Debo Akande*) as regards the drafting of a Bill on Parliamentary Privileges of Members of the National and State Assemblies. This was because he pointed out an omission in the Constitution about the Parliamentary Privileges which should have been entrenched in the Constitution. Due to one particular happening, hon. Members expressed concern that that clause was necessary in the Constitution in the interest of hon. Members. I do not know whether that is the particular Bill he was trying to get through the Business Committee because we had an instruction that the Bill be brought in as quickly as possible. It should take precedence over any other Motion that is with the Business Committee.

I believe that the hon. Member for Gamawa (*Alhaji Abubakar Tuggar*) made an observation yesterday. I do not know whether he still wants to continue with his observation on the last Motion on the Order Paper of yesterday which is on Post Offices and Ministry of Communications.

The Chairman of the Business Committee is saying that he has got over 500 Motions in front of him. After our 16 hon. Members have gone to the United States and are back, they will understand that whatever Motion that a Member brings, it is the responsibility of the Speaker to sit down and allocate or send all the different 500 Motions to the Committees. It is the Committees that will decide whether those Motions have merit or not. The responsibility of the Business Committee will be to fix in Motions on particular days for debate in the House. (*Applause*) I do not know whether the House must have to pass a Motion or Resolution to this effect. Thereafter, we will stop wasting our time on the Floor of the House because majority of these Motions are ill-prepared most of the time. If we can cut away this, this should make our Committees as active as possible. I think we should do away with incidents like the one we had yesterday on the second Motion because no home-work was done on it.

**Alhaji A. B. Yahaya** (Ilorin East) : Point of explanation.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Yes, what explanation do you have to make, Alhaji Yahaya ?

**Alhaji A. B. Yahaya** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to seize this opportunity to appeal to the Speaker to try and get the Business Committee to push forward the Motion which I have forwarded on this particular question.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Have you done so already ?

**Alhaji Yahaya** : Yes, the Motion is in the pipeline.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Well, the Chairman of the Business Committee should take note, please.

Now, let us go to the only Motion before us and dispose of it straightaway, because there is no airconditioner in this House. The Motion stands in the names of Mr J. O. Iwuagwu, Mr S. A. Olaewe, Alhaji H. Dikko and Alhaji I. Hong.

## NOTICES OF MOTIONS

### Medical Services

**Mr Jonas O. Iwuagwu** (Mbano West) : Mr Speaker, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name and others—

That in pursuance of Section 17, Subsections (1) and (3) (c) and (d) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1979, and in view of the gross inadequacy of medical services in all the rural and remote areas of this country, this House directs the Committee on Health to seek the means for establishing one Cottage Hospital in every Federal Constituency throughout the country. I beg to move, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Yes, is there anybody seconding the Motion ? Yes, Mr Etienam.

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam** (Oron II) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Iwuagwu** : Mr Speaker, Sir, the Motion is brought under Section 17, Subsections (1) and (3) (c) and (d) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. If I may read, Mr Speaker, it says :

(1) *The State social order is founded on ideals of Freedom, Equality and Justice.*

(3) *The State shall direct its policy towards ensuring that—*

(c) *the health safety and welfare of all persons in employment are safeguarded and not endangered or abused ;*

(d) *there are adequate medical and health facilities for all persons.*

Mr Speaker, Sir, it has been giving me a lot of concern that the Federal Government, both in the past and at present, has made no effort whatsoever to provide medical facilities for the people of this country. Most of us here come from very remote areas where there are no medical facilities, not even clinics.

The Federal Government has been neglecting its responsibility as the father of the people of this country. We provide ourselves with food ; it would be very difficult and very expensive for us to provide medical facilities by ourselves. Drugs are exceedingly expensive, but we do not mind paying some money as long as we have medical facilities. We find that the medical or the para-medical people, like the quack doctors and the patent medicine dealers, are the people who are very rich. I have nothing against them as long as they do not kill people. Of course, there are many instances of unnecessary deaths from the hands of these patent medicine dealers and the quack doctors.

It is against this background that this Motion is being brought to urge the Committee on Health to look seriously into the ways and means of establishing Cottage Hospitals in each of the Federal Constituencies in the country.

The objects and reasons for bringing this Motion to this House are, firstly, that the Federal Government has not been participating in the curative aspect of health in Nigeria. The Federal Government has only involved itself in the preventive aspect of it. Thus it is impossible for the Federal Government to prevent the enormous diseases that are rampant in this country. Therefore, the best thing to do is to go into the curative aspect of it.

The Federal Government has always involved itself only with Teaching Hospitals. This is not enough. Teaching Hospitals are not for everybody because they are far and remote from the rural areas. It is on record that there is no Federal Government hospital anywhere in Nigeria apart from the Teaching

[MR IWUAGWU]

Hospitals. Again, this is not enough. Money has always been budgeted for the Ministry of Health; only God knows to what end the money is being put.

The State Governments alone cannot afford to provide all the medical necessities of the people in Nigeria. The Federal Government, with its might and the fund at its command, can definitely come in and help the States in providing these Cottage Hospitals. I believe it is much better to commit the Federal Government to specific things in order to avoid unnecessary frivolities like the FESTAC '77.

I have tried to do a bit of costing of these Cottage Hospitals. These Cottage Hospitals can contain about twenty or fifty beds, and I have been authoritatively told that none of them would cost more than ₦500,000. These Cottage Hospitals would provide the most basic medical facilities. They could eventually be up-graded whenever the Federal Government establishes the proposed Teaching Hospitals in each of the States of the Federation. In fact, a few of them could be up-graded to supply patients for the work of the Teaching Hospitals. These projects, spread over the next four years when we are still here, will not cost the Federal Government too much money. That is the most important aspect. At the most, the projects would come to about ₦250 million which, I believe, we can recover from oil in about a week or less. (*Interruptions*)

Now, Sir, I must stress that the Health Committee must do its home-work as quickly as possible so that this job could immediately be pursued, commenced, and finished before we face the electorate in 1983. I believe that a lot of us would like to come back here.

I beg to move.

**Mr S. A. Olaewe (Ado Igbesa Ipokia):** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, this Motion has been ably moved by my co-Mover.

A cottage hospital, if you look at the word *cottage* very well, you will find out that the word does not sound very well. A cottage hospital suggests that it is an hospital intended for certain areas of the country. A cottage hospital, in my own opinion, cannot be sited in Lagos. Well, this does not mean that I am saying medical services, as contained in this Motion, are not for urban areas, but I am trying to state that the people in the rural and remote areas are the people I have in my mind in supporting this type of Motion. A cottage hospital is not of a big standard. It is an hospital of very moderate standard with three wards of fifteen beds each and some conveniences which, if I have your permission to enumerate, I can state from my own record.

A cottage hospital, Mr Speaker, is an hospital with three wards of fifteen beds each. It is going to have about 45 beds altogether. It has out-patients Department, Delivery Section, Dispensary, Theatre, and Consulting Rooms. Then, other facilities to be

attached to such a hospital should be a Mortuary, Incinerator, Kitchen, Laundry, Power House, Ambulance garages, overhead water tanks and gate-house. It is going to be manned by a Medical Officer who will occupy a three bedroom flat with boys' quarters, a Nursing Sister to occupy a three bedroom flat with boys' quarters and two Nurses to occupy a Type "C" building having just two bedrooms and a sitting-room.

**The Deputy Speaker:** There is a point of Order.

**Mr David Agi (Oju):** I am pointing to Order 29 (1). The hon. Member is defining a cottage hospital, but we are debating whether or not the Motion is relevant for sustenance. Thank you.

**Mr Olaewe:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. We need to know what we are going to decide upon before we take a decision.

Now, I have said that there should be nurses. There should be generator operator and vehicle driver who should be provided with accommodation too. Now, there should be access roads. I am stating all these facts because among the hospitals already existing the value of each in 1970 was not above ninety-six thousand Nigerian pounds and that is about ₦200,000.

Mr Speaker, Sir, if these things will cost between ₦300,000 and ₦400,000 now according to my own calculation, the provision of cottage hospitals in all the Federal Constituencies is within the capability of the Federal Government.

Mr Speaker, Sir, majority of Nigerians live in the rural and remote areas and the thing they lack most is medical care. Well, many drug peddlers now operate in the rural areas because they know the facilities are not there. They have now abandoned the urban areas where there are few hospitals. As a result, people die in the rural areas due to lack of medical care. Some States, about five or ten years ago, felt concerned about the lack of medical facility for the people and they tried to establish some district hospitals to be supported by some Health Clinics. They had done all these but they were not able to cope with the demand because they had no money for it. Well, some urban areas have fair medical facilities. During my investigation, I discovered that not less than 10 per cent of the Members of this honourable House who come from the rural areas said they had little or no medical facilities in their own areas. Naturally, this is the hon. Members' Motion. So, without much argument, I doubt if there are many Members who will say that they have adequate medical facilities for their own people. Mr Speaker, Sir, I want this House to let the President know that if he intends to fulfil his promises as contained in pages 2 and 5 of his Maiden Speech to the National Assembly that he intended to wage war against ignorance, diseases and poverty, this is an opportunity for him to let the people of the remote parts of this country feel that he is really working for them.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have said something about the cost and structure of the type of Cottage Hospital that I have in mind. I gathered all those during my

investigation that the Federal Government for many years past had been trying its best to provide medical facilities for the people of this country. During 1975-80 National Plan, they had recommended to the States that they intended to establish comprehensive health centres and primary health centres as well as health clinics. This project was to be carried out by the States and later the Federal Government would bear about seventy *per cent* of the cost while the States and the Local Governments concerned would bear about thirty *per cent* of the cost. The extent of the achievement is not up to fifty *per cent*.

Mr Speaker, Sir, a primary health centre is quite different from the Cottage Hospital I have in mind. A primary health centre as designed by the Federal Government is a preventive health centre. If a comprehensive health centre is located in a division, they intend to support it with about four primary health centres and each primary health centre is supposed to be supported by about eighty clinics. A primary health centre is nothing more than a ten-bed hospital. So, naturally patients from the eighty clinics which are serving a very large number of people cannot be allowed to be sent to a ten-bed primary health centre. So, in effect, it is only a Cottage Hospital with about forty-five beds that can cope with such an arrangement.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I think hon. Members who intend to contribute to this Motion have to search their own minds first of all before they say what they want to say. As a man from the rural area, I know where the shoe pinches and I will never say anything contrary to this type of Motion. The people in the rural areas in particular are looking up to their Representatives to bring something home. When we talk about air-conditioners in Lagos or Kaduna or somewhere else, an ordinary man in the rural area is talking about the basic demands of life like the health centre and other things. Mr Speaker, Sir, this is my contribution on this matter. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Thank you.

The hon. Member for Maiha (*Alhaji Hamman Dikko*).

**Alhaji Mamman Dikko** (Maiha) : Mr Speaker, since we came here, we have never got a very important Motion as this one. Hon. Members, this Motion is very important to all of us. I hope that you will co-operate without opposing the Motion.

First of all, the Federal Government is spending a lot of money on the hospitals that are meant only for the urban areas and not for the rural areas. As my Colleague has said, the Ministry of Health is spending a lot of money on the Teaching Hospitals that are mainly for the urban areas ; so, it is high time the Federal Ministry of Health built Cottage Hospitals in each of the Federal Constituencies in the Federation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I will give an example in my Constituency. The distance between my Constituency and the nearest hospital is ninety-four kilometres. If something happens to a resident in another part of my Constituency, he has to be taken to the Cameroon

Republic. You must have read in the Newspapers of November 18 that my people requested the State Government to give them their own Local Government. They mentioned that if a pregnant woman wanted to deliver, we had to take her to the Cameroon Republic for treatment which is ninety-four kilometres from my Constituency. I know that this applies to all Constituencies in the rural areas. Also, the State Government cannot build a Cottage Hospital in each of the Federal Constituencies in the State without getting full aid from the Federal Government. An area with a population of one thousand people should have a Cottage Hospital.

Mr Speaker, Sir, this Motion should not require a long debate as it is a very important Motion. I do not think there is any hon. Member here who knows the sufferings of our people in the rural area who will oppose this Motion.

**Mr Ogwe Kalu Ogwe** (Bende) : Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes.

**Mr Ogwe :** My point of Order, Sir, is based on Order 66 (1) ; Sub-section 2 is also applicable. If I may read before I continue :

*The House shall not, except upon the recommendation of the Governor-General now President, proceed upon any bill, motion, amendment or petition which, in the opinion of Mr Speaker or other person presiding, makes provision or requests that provision should be made for imposing or increasing any charge on the Consolidated Revenue Fund or other public funds of the Federation, or for altering any such charge otherwise than by reducing it or for compounding or remitting any debt due to the Federation.*

My point of Order, Sir, is quite relevant. The opinion of the Speaker has not been expressed and the House has not been informed whether the President knows about the intended increase. Since the process has not been undergone, this Motion should not be entertained. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member, you do not read your Standing Order in isolation of the Constitution. If you look at Section 270 of the Constitution, the provision of the Constitution overrules what you are pointing out.

Hon. Member for Maiha (*Alhaji Hassan Dikko*) please continue.

**Alhaji Dikko :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Well, as I have said earlier, this Motion is very important and we have never discussed any Motion which is to the benefit of inhabitants in the rural areas as this one. Although I am not a doctor, I have tried to delve into it a little. So, hon. Members please I am advising you to support this Motion. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**Alhaji Iiyasu Hong** (Hong) : Mr Speaker, this Motion, standing in my name and in the names of other Members, is for all of us here. It is not a controversial Motion and it needs the support of all members.

[ALHAJI HONG]

The reason for bringing this Motion is that if this country wants to bring health-care to the people we have to provide cottage hospitals in the rural areas. From my observation, most patients die on the way to the General Hospitals, especially in cases of measles which have complications and cases of malaria which have convulsion, *et cetera*. These patients need to cover a short distance to get to the nearest hospital; but to convey them to a general hospital which is about one hundred or two hundred kilometres away, may result in the person dying on the way. So, the only solution to this problem is to provide a cottage hospital within a distance of twenty or thirty kilometres from each general hospital. There are some cases which need the attention of doctors and which cannot be treated in clinics or dispensaries in the rural areas. They need the attention of doctors who can give something like drip, fluid, intravenous injection or, in some cases, observation. There are also so many reasons for fainting which a doctor can examine and find out; but if the distance is far, the patient will die on the way.

So, if we want to bring a proper health-care delivery to the people, we need Cottage Hospitals throughout the Federal Constituencies in this country. I wish all Members will support this Motion because it is not controversial at all. Mr Speaker, I beg to sit down.

**Mallam Hassan Gambo (Mayo-Balwa)**: Mr Speaker, I rise to support this Motion. In supporting it, I wish to say that cottage hospitals are very important in this country.

As we see to this, at the same time, we should remember that we lack manpower in all the hospitals we have. In some Constituencies one has to travel about two hundred kilometres to the hospitals and when one gets to the hospital in spite of the distance, sometimes there would be no drugs to be given to the patients. If these cottage hospitals are located nearby where one can get at least APC, it will help the patients.

Hon. Members will agree with me that sometimes general hospitals are not located to prevent deaths but to cure diseases because many people still die in hospitals even though the hospitals are near their houses. We have to consider the distance. Sometimes an hospital may be about one hundred kilometres away from a Constituency. The problem then is that some Constituencies have no roads during the raining season. Take, for example, my Constituency which is Mayo-Balwa. It is located between Yola, Jalingo and Numan and each of these hospital is about seventy to eighty kilometres away. In my Constituency there is no clinic; we have a dresser there anyway and this dresser deals with wounds only. To put this Motion in a better way, I would say the Federal Government should establish, at least, a clinic in all the Federal Constituencies in the country.

With these few points Mr Speaker, I urge the honourable House to pay more attention and support the Motion.

**Alhaji Garba Musa (Jibiya)**: Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members this Motion is very, very important and for anybody who is here as an hon. Member actually, I believe this is a Motion he will wish to see through because we know the problems of our Constituencies.

Mr Speaker, Sir, in making my contribution to this Motion I would say that the government promotes education by building schools in all our villages. I also hope that the government will, in the same way, be able to build cottage hospitals in all the rural areas of this country. So, Mr Speaker, Sir, I hope everybody will support this Motion. Thank you.

**Mr Emmanuel Ejoh (Port Harcourt I)**: Mr Speaker, I have listened to the Movers of this Motion and I have always believed that if you have got to complete something you do not have to do what you cannot complete. In this country we are used to make-shift arrangements. Most of those who have spoken here have not told us how they are going to staff these hospitals. I can assure you now by giving the House an example of what happens in my own State. The last Administration built about 12 to 15 hospitals but right now not more than four are functioning because the rest cannot be staffed. This is a waste of public funds.

I am pretty sure that the Rivers State is wealthier than two-thirds of the States that are represented here. If the Rivers State cannot afford to staff those hospitals, what will happen to the other States. Most of them are worse off. (*Interruptions*) What I am suggesting to this honourable House is that we have to really plan and start first with the establishment of dispensaries. This is because we would be able to train auxiliaries to carry out some functions. The next phase will then be clinics because, by that time, we would already be planning to have doctors to back up the scheme. We cannot throw away millions of naira (about 250 million naira as I understand); that is a lot of money. Once we build these clinics and they are not manned, are they of any use?

**Some hon. Members**: Yes.

**Mr Ejoh**: Maybe most Members are contractors and they want to build clinics in their places. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Yusuf A. Amoka (Okene)**: Point of Order. Order 26 (6) says:

*No Member shall impute improper motives to any other Members.*

He has just said that the reason why Members are supporting the Motion is that maybe some of them are contractors and are looking for jobs. He should confine himself to the point under discussion.

**The Deputy Speaker**: That is a valid observation.

**Mr Ejoh**: I withdraw that statement. I would like most Members to really understand that I do not say that these clinics are not something good for the country, but what I am trying to say is that it should not be right now.

[MR EJOH]

We have almost 450 Constituencies here and we would need an additional 450 doctors plus the present doctors and hospitals that are in existence. I would also like to inform most Members that without the Youth Corps doctors, most hospitals in most of these areas we are talking about would not be functioning by now. (*Interruptions*) I would like Members to look at this point in arriving at a decision on the matter.

Thank you, Mr Speaker. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker** : Please allow Members to make contributions without interference.

**Mr T. C. Amasiatu (Oru)** : I share the view that this Motion is the most important and relevant to the aspirations of the common man and the people of this country. (*Applause*) It is the most important because it borders on life ; every other thing is secondary.

I believe that the most important thing to any nation that is conscious of its obligations is to ensure that its nationals are healthy. Hence the old adage goes that *a wealthy nation is a healthy nation*. I do not see the rationale and the profitability of any government whatsoever and wherever it may be found to delight in white elephant projects without any serious regard, for that matter, for the health of the nation.

It goes without saying and there is no gainsaying it that a lot of people die just because there are no hospitals close to their homes. There are reports in the newspapers showing where people die on their way to the hospitals. In some cases people get sick in the night and it will take about thirty minutes or one hour to get transport to hospitals 50 or 80 kilometres away. By the time they get there, they are dead. You will see pregnant women delivering by the road-side because there are no hospitals, clinics or maternity homes around.

In this age and time, if the only thing Members of this House can succeed in doing is to build a hospital of any size in each Constituency as a contribution by the Federal Government, during our tenure of office, I think, we shall have some credit. Take, for example, contracts involving about 80 million naira which this country wasted for the benefit of very few people in an attempt to provide telephones that never work. This country is estimated to have about 80 million people. If 80 million people share 80 million naira, each person in Nigeria will get 1 million naira and if about 300,000 people in my Constituency get about 230,000 million naira, we shall have got hospitals everywhere. (*Applause*)

Take another example of these fly-overs. Two or three of these fly-overs will give us 250 million naira and that will do for all the hospitals we are envisaging. (*Applause*) Therefore, Mr Speaker, hon. Members, it is my prayer that this House gives its utmost support to this Motion because if we have not got any life we can not think of the economy, we cannot think of sports and we cannot think of any social thing at all.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr Michael J. Akpabio (Uyo II)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion. As a rural man who comes from a rural area I was voted for by the rural inhabitants of my Constituency. This is a very important Motion in my own calculation. The importance of health care to all cannot be over-emphasised. I think it would be sheer hypocrisy for any one to say that one is not from the rural area or for one to say that one has had sufficient health care in one's rural area.

In some States of this Federation, we find some hospitals located very far away from the rural inhabitants. Like my hon. Colleagues have already said, these rural inhabitants have to travel so many kilometres to get in touch with the hospitals for their health need. Mr Speaker, Sir, Nigeria is a very great country, we have been told, and we are quite aware of that. It is great in that we have all the time been concerned with showing off our greatness. The Trade Fair Complex is an example, and the FESTAC is another example where millions of naira were dumped. Yet the masses of this country had not the slightest health care or the Government did not show any concern towards the health care of the masses of this country.

Right now, the present Administration has come out to guarantee or promise good health and shelter. I think it would not be complete for one to have food and shelter and yet no sufficient medical care. I am, therefore, appealing to all the members of this honourable House to look at this Motion very critically and give it all the blessings it deserves. If one wanders into the rural areas of our country, one would be surprised to find a good number of drug peddlers and these unfortunate inhabitants in the rural areas can only avail themselves of the prescription given to them by these drug peddlers—the quacks. As a matter of fact, we are all aware that many of our rural inhabitants die as a result of taking these drugs—drugs that are not prescribed by qualified physicians, drugs that are being given out by people who are not trained in the art of prescribing drugs or even diagnosing ailments.

If cottage hospitals are set up in some rural areas, it is my very strong belief Sir, that the incidence of death arising from maybe self-medication which our people avail themselves of would be much minimised. Some time ago, we read in the newspapers that a couple died because they were trying to search for pregnancy which did not come or which refused to come. I believe, if there had been hospitals close by, they could have availed themselves of regular medical attention. They could not have resorted to quacks. I would not say that herbalist are not very good. In fact, they have actually come up to supplement the lack of medical facilities in most of our rural areas.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am contending very seriously that we should give this Motion the blessing it deserves. It is for the benefit of our people. It is for the benefit of our fathers and mothers at home. It is for our own benefit too. In fact, when most of us get home we find it very difficult to satisfy our people. It is not just a question of merely giving

[MR AKPABIO]

them drinks but we are so sad to see that most of our people are very sick. They have no medical attention whatsoever, no hospitals to take them to. The few dispensaries available are so insufficiently equipped that they do not even have the qualified personnel. In most other cases there are no dispensaries, no Maternity Centre, no Health Centres and the State Government, with due respect, Sir, may not be in a position to cope with the very high demand for medical care.

So, Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, this honourable House should support this Motion and give it the blessing that it deserves.

**The Deputy Speaker :** I now call on Mr Sule Lamido.

**Mr Sule Lamido (Birnin Kudu) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support every letter, every word and every comma of this Motion, because like somebody has said, he who wears the shoes knows where it pinches most.

May I tell you that in my Constituency, we have a population of about three hundred thousand people. We have got only one General Hospital, about three dispensaries, no more no less. The access roads to these places are virtually non-existent. If somebody in one corner of my Constituency happens to cut his leg while farming, his only salvation is to look around for the bark of a tree, scrape it and paste it on the wound and then wrap it with leaves ! This is the pathetic and lamentable situation of the people of my Constituency.

I do not believe in coming here, pretending and portraying myself as coming from an area which is civilised because this is the only opportunity where those Nigerians have the chance to get their own problems voiced out in this august House. This lack of health care in my Constituency has to a large extent contributed to, and encouraged the emergence of quack doctors. You find an ordinary farmer going round the market to look for discarded syringes, and after crushing APC tablets, he would put it into the syringes and go round to inject people. As a result of this people die here and there due to this lack of health care.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have always tried to portray the feelings of my Constituency. Apparently, some people think that all areas in the North, because of the window dressing of the urban centres, have got everything for themselves. But, please may I use this opportunity to disabuse and purge the minds of the people who think that we have it so good up there in the North. They would not know that we are living under the most primitive and inhuman conditions in the North. The majority of the people there are certainly not regarded as Nigerians by virtue of their own health care. If you go to some villages, you will find that some people are stinking due to this sort of lack of health care. Most of the dispensaries are either ill-equipped or the staff are not there. The money is not available and this is too demanding on the Local Government or the State Government.

It is only the Federal Government that has the might to come to the aid of these States. It is only the Federal Government which can cope with the building of the infrastructure, the training and the supplying of drugs. So, I am certainly appealing to every Member of this House to please support this Motion. Thank you very much.

**Mr Z. Momodu (Etsako) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, the matter in question is asking the Committee to pray the Government to establish a cottage hospital in all Federal Constituencies of Nigeria. It is a matter of concern to all of us who live in the rural areas. So we cannot over-emphasise the importance of good health in our areas, for health is wealth. Whatever we might have and whatever we intend to do, without good health there is nothing we can achieve ; and so it is very important that all of us rise to support this Motion.

We are supporting this Motion here but how far are we going to pursue this matter realistically ? We have not taken into consideration our financial resources. It is easier to say things here than to do them and so before we go any further, we have to pray that this Motion does not die a natural death in the Committee. We pray it goes to the proper quarters which should ensure its successful implementation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is not my intention to talk all the day without making valuable contributions. If you look into the sections referred to by the Movers of this Motion, you will find that they are the same words used during the French Revolution of 1688. They are beautiful words but how we are going to implement it is what we should think about.

Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I thank you, very much for giving me audience.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, we have had constant aircondition failures in the National Assembly and as a result we asked the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Works to come and explain to us why this thing is happening. We have a representative from the Ministry of Works who has turned up accordingly to put us in the picture. I do not know whether we should dispose the Motion before we take on the official. (*Interruptions*)

**Several hon. Members :** Let us dispose the Motion first.

**Mr Damisa Jimo (Okehi Adavbi) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

**Resolved :** That in pursuance of Section 17 Subsections (1) and (3) (c) and (d) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1979, and in view of the gross inadequacy of Medical services in all the rural and remote areas of this country, this House directs the Committee on Health to seek the means for establishing one Cottage Hospital in every Federal Constituency throughout the country.

**Mr Abubakar Tuggar** (Gamawa) : Point of observation.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Yes, point of observation on what ?

#### Faulty Air-condition Plant

**Mr Abubakar Tuggar** : Mr Speaker, Sir, a day or two ago the Sergeant-at-Arms was made to address this honourable House. This afternoon it appears, you are again telling us that another official has come from the Ministry of Works and probably may be allowed to address this House. I do not think this is proper. This kind of thing should be dealt with by the appropriate Committee of this House ; we cannot have this House addressed by every Tom, Dick and Harry.

**The Deputy Speaker** : I think the observation of the hon. Member for Gamawa (*Mr Abubakar Tuggar*) is a very, very valid one. The House Committee should deal with this matter. Where is the Chairman of the Committee ? Is Mr Adigwe here ?

**An hon. Member** : No.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Are there any Members of the House Committee here ?

**An hon. Member** : Yes.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Well, the Members of the House Committee should go with the official to my office and have a word with him please.

**Several hon. Members** : Mr Adigwe is here now.

**Mr S. A. Shiyabola** (Ede South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, point of explanation.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Your point of explanation is on what please ?

**Mr Shiyabola** : It is about the same thing, Sir.

**The Deputy Speaker** : That has been disposed of.

**Mr Shiyabola** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I have an important thing to say please. I think you said a few minutes ago that the Permanent Secretary was invited to this place. Even though the hon. Member for Gamawa (*Mr Abubakar Tuggar*) said that the Committee ought to have done so, I want us to note that the Permanent Secretary is not here. If the Permanent Secretary is not here, that is an insult on this House.

**The Deputy Speaker** : The letter that was written to the Federal Ministry of Works was addressed to the Director of Public Works and not

to the Permanent Secretary. It was addressed to the person who is responsible for seeing that these air-conditioners work and this is the person that is here to answer our question. Obviously, if we invite the Permanent Secretary he will come here personally and, of course, he will be accompanied by officials who actually do the job who will explain to us.

**Mr M. K. Umar** (Kaduna South) : On the Motion on medical services which has been supported by everybody in this House, we have a lot of medical doctors in this House. It is disappointing that not a single one of them contributed to this Motion. When we come to talk of medical facilities, they will start to say that you are not a doctor. I think, it is high time we took note of this sort of thing. Thank you. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker** : Well, on your observation, I would say that the medical doctors decided to keep out of it, maybe for personal reasons. They will allow you to build the hospitals then they will do the work for you. (*A letter was handed to the Deputy Speaker*).

Hon. Members, I am sorry to delay you here. Somebody who is not a Member of this House, Mr Harold Egwuonwu of 93 Orodu Street, Ajegunle, Lagos, walked into the Assembly and handed a letter to the Chamber Attendant who brought the letter to me. I believe it is the responsibility of the people at the door there to only allow Members and the staff of the National Assembly into the Assembly.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr Jimoh Damisa** (Okehi Adavbi) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, before I move the Motion for Adjournment, I would thank the entire Members for exercising patience under this horrible condition in which we find ourselves for the past five or six days. It is almost time for us to close for the day.

So, I now move that the House do adjourn till 10 o'clock on Monday morning.

**Chief Yomi Akintola** (Ogbomosho Central) : I rise to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That the House do adjourn till 10 o'clock on Monday morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 11.37 a.m.*



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Monday, 11th February, 1980

The House met at 10.10 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENT

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, I would like to report that 16 members of the National Assembly, led by the Speaker, left for the United States on Saturday, 9th February, 1980. They will be away for two weeks.

PRESENTATION OF PUBLIC BILLS

National Electric Power Authority

(Amendment) Bill 1980

A Bill for an Act to make provision for the reconstitution of the Board of Directors of the National Electric Power Authority, presented by Mr Mahmud Aliyu (Yola); read the First time, referred to the Committee on Mines and Power.

Nigerian Coal Corporation

(Amendment) Bill 1980

A Bill for an Act to make provision for the number of persons to constitute membership of the Nigerian Coal Corporation, presented by Mahmud Aliyu (Yola); read the First time and referred to the Committee on Mines and Power.

Nigerian Mining Corporation

(Amendment) Bill 1980

A Bill for an Act to make provision for the number of persons to constitute membership of the Nigerian Mining Corporation, presented by Mr Mahmud Aliyu (Yola); read the First time and referred to the Committee on Mines and Power.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

The Nigerian Enterprises Promotions  
Decree

**Mr S. A. Adeagbo (Ero North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name—

That in furtherance of the economic objectives contained in Section 16 (2) (c) of our Constitution and the need to promote active indigenous participation in all aspects of the economy, this House directs the Committee on Industries to ascertain the extent to which Schedules 2 and 3 enterprises as well as enterprises under Section 7 (i) of the Nigerian Enterprises Promotions Decree, 1977 are allotting their Nigerian workers, not less

than 10 per cent of the shares of the enterprises as required under Section 8 (ix) of the Decree. I beg to move.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, when I saw on the Order Paper Motion No. 1, I observed that under Schedules 2 and 3—Enterprises—the Member was saying that the House should direct the Committee on Industries to ascertain that enterprises under these Schedules as well as enterprises under Section 7 (i) of the Nigerian Enterprises Promotions Decree, 1977 were allotting their Nigerian workers, not less than 10 per cent of their shares as required under Section 8 (ix) of the Decree.

Schedules 2 and 3 are not directing us to do anything and Section 7 is the only one dealing with the allotment of 10 per cent of shares. He is referring to Schedules 2 and 3 of the Enterprises Promotions Decree which have nothing to do with allotment of shares. In order to do this, the hon. Member will have to move the suspension of Standing Order No. 24. With this, he can amend his Motion.

Mr Adeagbo, the House does not know what you want to do.

**Mr Adeagbo :** Mr Speaker, Sir—

**The Deputy Speaker :** Mr Adeagbo, you may sit down. I told the Acting Clerk of the House, Mr Ojo, at 8.30 this morning when I saw the Order Paper and the hon. Member for Aniocha (*Barrister G. N. Uwechue*) seemed to have made the same observation.

**Mr G. N. Uwechue (Aniocha) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, it is not exactly the same observation. My observation is slightly different.

My observation, Sir, is that the Motion ought to be amended so as to reflect the true nature and implications of the Decree. The impression given by the Motion and particularly the paper which was circulated by the Mover of the Motion last week was to the effect that all enterprises in which aliens are participating, that is, Enterprises in Schedules 2 and 3, were duty bound in law to allot 10 per cent of their shares to the Nigerian workers. This is not the law. The law requires only affected Enterprises, that is, to say, Enterprises which, say in Schedule 2, where they should have 40 per cent but have 60 per cent by aliens, out of the shares to be transferred, that is, out of the extra 20 per cent to be transferred, to give 10 per cent to the Nigerian workers. In other words, where an enterprise involving alien participation, has 40 per cent for aliens in accordance with the law, then there is no need in that particular enterprise to transfer any shares to the Nigerian workers. My intention was to move a Motion to amend this particular Motion so as to bring out the true nature of the implications of the Decree.

If I am allowed to move this Motion orally, and if we can waive the Standing Orders requiring me to give one day's notice, then I will move this Motion. I will ensure that the Motion is very properly brought. I am seeking the leave of this House to suspend the Standing Orders so as to allow me to move an Amendment orally to this Motion so that we can deliberate on this one.

**The Deputy Speaker :** To do this as I have said, we have to suspend Standing Order 24.

**Mr Adeagbo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, at this juncture, I would love to suspend my own Motion rather than accepting an Amendment.

**The Deputy Speaker :** All right. So, it is your wish that the Motion be suspended and the Business Committee to decide when the Motion would come up again.

**Mr Adeagbo :** Thank you very much.

*Motion by leave suspended.*

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member for Akwanga (*Mr J. Y. M. Mallo*), the main Motion has been suspended. So your Amendment too is suspended.

Yes, Dr Ukpong.

**Dr Ukpong (Abak) :** Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Point of order on what ?

**Dr Ukpong :** The Motion has not been seconded and any Motion that has not been seconded is not properly before the House. Suspension should be on a Motion that has been properly placed before the House.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Before the Motion was seconded, I brought this matter up through the Mover of the Motion that the Motion was not in order. I did not allow it to be seconded before I made the observation. As the Motion stood, it needed a substantive Amendment before it could stand. So, he has decided to withdraw this Motion in any case.

We go to the next Motion.

#### Vehicle Basic Allowance for Workers

**Mr Eddy Nkem Nweke (Nkanu) :** Unfortunately, my co-Mover is not around and I want to go ahead with the Motion. I rise to move the Motion standing in my name—

That this House conscious of the need to promote the welfare of workers and to enable them enjoy the car loan facilities now provided by Government, direct the Committee on Public Service Matters to study promptly, the desirability of granting to workers motor basic Allowance as well as such other facilities and concessions that would minimize the burden inherent in the repayment system.

I beg to move.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Who is seconding the Motion ?

**Mr G. I. Anukwuem (Ihitte Ubome) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to second the motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, Mr Nweke.

**Mr Nweke :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, it is my pleasure to bring this Motion to the Floor of this House. To refresh your memory, some time in November, the President of the Federation, Alhaji Shehu Shagari, restored car loans to the Nigerian workers. I would very much want the House to join hands with me and say many thanks

to the President for having realised the sufferings of the workers. It is not always every time we tell the President to do this and to do that, but each time he does them, we should be grateful and give many thanks to him.

Secondly, the need for this basic allowance is what you must have to understand. To start with, this is not a new innovation ; it had been existing. The workers of this country had been enjoying these facilities up to a time when the Military felt that the Nigerian workers should no more enjoy the facilities for reasons best known to them. Luckily, the President has come to the aid of the workers but I think it escaped his memory not to restore the basic allowance. During my investigations, the workers of this country said openly that car loan without a basic allowance was almost meaningless to them because the burden had not been completely removed. Take for example the workers on Grade Level 07, that is, the stage the workers start getting their vehicle loans and allowances. A worker on Grade Level 07 is on a salary of ₦2,832 *per annum*. If you break this down, every month he earns ₦236 a month. If he desires a vehicle loan, he is given ₦3,600 at the interest rate of .5 *per cent*. He pays this money back in four years and every month what he pays is what you get if you divide ₦3,600 by 48 plus ₦1.50k interest. He will be paying ₦76.50k every month to offset the loan granted to him for the car. If he earns ₦236 a month and you subtract ₦76.50k he returns home with ₦159.50k with the car. We can now see the need for the basic allowance. The tax has not even been deducted. He will still pay tax on this very figure. You will agree with me that this amount of money will not carry any Nigerian worker who owns a car, family and other dependant throughout the whole month.

But if the basic allowance is given to him, he could go ahead.

First of all, how much is involved in basic allowance ? It is only about ₦50, for those on Grade Level 07 to Grade Level 17. In other words, the allowance we are asking for is just ₦50. Like I said earlier on, if a worker is given ₦50 basic allowance, he would be paying back ₦26.50 instead of ₦76.50. So, instead of going back home at the end of the month with ₦159.50, he would go back home with ₦209. With this amount of money, he can keep on going.

As I said earlier, workers' interest in this country must be handled carefully. To start with, who are the workers ? They are clerks, teachers, typists, labourers, top executives and the junior ones. Their welfare must be, first and foremost, in our minds. All the hon. Members here will agree with me that almost all of us made one promise or the other during our electioneering campaigns. I know that most of us made a promise to see to the welfare of workers. Some of us even promised that car loans and basic allowances would be restored to workers. Now that the President of Nigeria has restored car loans we should ask him to remember that these workers should be given basic allowances as their entitlement so as to lessen their financial burden.

In order not to waste too much of your time, I have to sound a note of warning to the President of the Nigerian Labour Congress, who has threatened over the radio, in the newspapers and almost everywhere, that he would drag Nigerian workers into a dispute if the Government and Parliamentarians failed to meet workers' demand. The NLC President can rest assured that we are doing our best to improve the lot of Nigerian workers. In this regard we know that the NLC President is not acting in the best interest of Nigerian workers. At best, he is only trying to make sure that the workers return him to his elective post at the next election. Nigerian workers should not take him seriously because the Executive and the Legislative arms of the Government are doing their best to make sure that Nigerian workers get their legitimate entitlements.

In order to give others a chance to do justice to this Motion, Mr Speaker, I have to conclude by saying that Nigerian workers, at all levels, should not be neglected by anybody; they should be given their entitlements. With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

**Mr I. U. Chima (Ezza):** Mr Speaker, Sir, I associate myself with this Motion, but in doing so, I have some observations to make.

The Mover of this Motion tried to demarcate the levels between which car loans could be given. To my own understanding, incentives should be given to all levels of workers, from Grade Level 01 to Grade Level 17. It is not only car loans that should be given, but other incentives should also be given to workers according to their monthly earnings. If a worker is entitled to a bicycle, it should be given to him together with the appropriate allowance. This would create some incentive and remove domestic and economic burden. For instance, nearly all the roads in the country are bad. If a worker is given a car loan without the allowance with which to maintain it, all the maintenance expenses would fall on his monthly earnings. In which case, the worker may not be able to meet up.

In supporting this Motion, I would say that allowances should be given to workers. We should realise that some other States are making this move already. For example, the Kaduna State House of Assembly has passed a Motion to the effect that allowance should be given to all categories of workers in the State. So, what this Motion is seeking is to remind the Federal Government that allowances should go along with car loans.

With these few remarks, I strongly support this Motion.

**Mr Peter C. Okeke (Agwu North/East/West):** Mr Speaker, Sir, in supporting this Motion I want to call the attention of this honourable House to one fact; and that is, that before the military regime Nigerian workers were given vehicle loans which were paid back within a period of six years. But this time, the President restored car loans and denied the workers basic allowances.

Secondly, the President has asked workers to pay back car loans within four years instead of six years. I am now appealing to this House to support this

Motion because asking workers to pay the loans back within a period of four years without car basic allowances is a sort of punishment. If we want workers to enjoy the car loans, basic allowances must be restored so as to alleviate their burden. If we ask them to pay the loans back within four years, the amount they would be paying back monthly would be too much and they have no other means of livelihood. Therefore, it is better to give a worker a car to ride and also help him to maintain it than to give him a car and starve him.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I support the Motion. Thank you.

**Mr Mohammed A. Yelwa (Yauri):** Mr Speaker, Sir, this Motion on basic allowances is not a controversial one; it is a straightforward one; it seeks the welfare of workers in general.

Personally, I feel that the Motion should go along with the question of car loans. Up till now, the President's stand on the provision of the car loans is not clear. The terms have not been spelt out. I think this Motion should have come together with the question of car loan itself, especially when the matter is still to be referred to the Committee on Public Service. I would suggest that the appropriate Committee should suggest a guideline for car loans as well as basic allowances. The two should come together; they are interwoven.

So, Mr Speaker, with these few remarks, I recommend that the Motion should be referred to the appropriate Committee. Thank you.

**Mr Audu Mbicho (Gwoza):** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I wish to say something about this Motion. Really, car basic allowance is necessary but Mr Speaker, this Motion should have included motorcycle allowance, bicycle allowance and other allowances. Mr Speaker, of course, Civil Servants have been suffering about transport. Without the restoration of car loans, Civil Servants will suffer a lot. I support the President for realising this suffering and for restoring car loans.

Mr Speaker, Sir, concerning basic allowances to be restored, the Committee should decide to increase the amount paid before which was fifty naira per month and which is not now adequate because some people cannot maintain their cars with fifty naira. If they are to maintain their cars and repay the loans given to them, Mr Speaker, it means their salary cannot maintain them for the month. Therefore, Mr Speaker an increase should be made in the motor basic allowance, motorcycle allowance and bicycle allowance. Again, mileage allowance should also be restored.

Mr Speaker, with this suggestion I beg to support the Motion. Thank you.

**Mr Isyaku Gumawa (Gabasawa):** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion. In supporting the Motion, Mr Speaker, I wish to make a few comments.

It is clearly understood that the Nigerian worker today is suffering. This suffering is imposed on the worker mainly by inflation which the Government

MR GUMAWA

is unable to curb up to now. What the Nigerian worker was buying some fifteen years ago for fifty pounds or one hundred naira, today two hundred naira cannot meet that expenditure. So we can see that the rate of inflation is by far outstripping the rate of increase in salaries and wages of Nigerian workers.

Not only that, the scrapping of allowances and stopping of wage and salary increases, that is, the freeze on wages and salaries, brought about some hardship to the Nigerian worker. There are bans on the importation of goods, bans on this and that which contribute to the suffering of salary earners in general. Businessmen, especially the strong ones, who can import and export, simply, do not suffer any hardship; they do not experience it; they do not even know what is happening. The Nigerian worker who depends solely on his salary and possibly the minor allowances we are talking about now is suffering. He therefore knows that to live in Nigeria today is not a simple thing.

So, we have to look at this Motion seriously and make sure that we do not only support it but also use all the available means at our disposal to ask the Government to look into the welfare of Nigerian workers. Mr Speaker, when we look at the meagre salaries that Nigerian workers are earning, especially from Grade Level 07 downwards, we just have to sympathise with them. There is nothing one can do other than take a bribe. Honestly speaking, policemen especially and people of that category are sometimes compelled by circumstances to take bribe. So, government has to restore these allowances and come out with a clear policy. Government should come out clearly and make provision whereby a minimum wage would be clearly defined for Nigerian workers. *(Interruptions)*

Well, Mr Speaker, to go back straight to basic allowance—

**An hon. Member :** Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Who is raising a Point of Order ?

**Alhaji Abubakar Abutu (Ankpa South) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, my point of order is order 26 (2). The hon. Member is talking of bribe and a minimum wage. He is deviating from the original Motion that is on the Floor. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member for Gabasawa (*Mr Isyaku Gumawa*) the subject under discussion is motor basic allowance. You should therefore confine yourself to that subject.

**Mr Gumawa :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Basic allowances are not just allowances without reasons. I think the Mover of the Motion is trying to make the House realise the need and importance of restoring basic allowances. The need and importance of restoring them therefore have to be made quite clear. It is among the reasons why I have started to mention the evils brought about through the scrapping of these allowances. Therefore, Mr Speaker, I think all the necessary explanations to make Members see the importance of making these allowances possible are necessary. That is why I have to mention some of these difficulties and the reason why they have to be eliminated.

Mr Speaker, with these few comments, I beg to support the Motion. Thank you.

**Alhaji Yusifu Nadabo Gaya (Gaya North)**

Mr Speaker, hon. Members, in supporting the Motion I would like to make the following contributions. Car basic allowance to Nigerian workers is something that is not controversial and should be a legitimate right. Looking at how Nigeria is now, the expense of running a car has gone up to the extent that somebody earning a salary cannot run a car easily. Secondly, if you go on to the service station where you used to spend twenty-five naira out of the fifty naira you were given, you will find that you will now spend between eighty and one hundred naira. As for the motorcyclists who were given ten naira per month, the cost of servicing their motorcycles monthly now is between twenty and thirty naira.

Now, the prices of spare parts have doubled, if not trippled. Again, the worst thing is that the spare parts are even scarce in the country and most of the vehicles coming into Nigeria are refashioned in a way before they are sent to us, we being a developing country. Therefore, the Nigerian Government should give an order that anybody or every worker who has been granted an advance to purchase a vehicle must be given a sufficient allowance to maintain that car, otherwise if he is not given that allowance, he would be running the risk of taking out of his salary, which is meant to feed his family with, some amount to maintain the car. This will leave his children in hunger.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to recommend that car basic allowance should not be less than one hundred and fifty naira for those on grade levels 07 and 08, one hundred naira for Grade Levels 09 to 12, and fifty naira for those on the higher Grade Levels.

**Mr D. Princewill (Degema I) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, this Motion is not a controversial one. The point is that the Government that has granted car loan is aware that it has to give car basic allowance to run the car. In my own opinion Sir, this Motion is pre-mature. In that respect Sir, what we are saying is that the Government which lifted the ban on car loan to workers, is also aware that it cannot only grant car loan, but it must also grant car basic allowance in order to alleviate the suffering of the workers.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the problem is not only that of car basic allowance. We, of the NPN are aware of the problem—*(Interruptions)*. Mr Speaker, Sir, we are aware of the problems of the suffering masses. We are going to cater for not only the workers but also every other citizen of Nigeria. *(Applause)*

Mr Speaker, Sir, when we unfold our plans, it will be seen that it would not be necessary for workers to agitate for car loans because sooner or later we shall go into public transportation in order to alleviate the suffering of workers. If even you have got a car, it is not possible, Sir, for you to carry your car—*(Interruptions)*

**Mr J. A. Abiona** (Ifelodun East) : Point of order. Order 26 (2). The speaker is becoming irrelevant. We are dealing with car basic allowance and he is talking of public transportation. He has to confine himself to the matter on the Floor of the House. Thank you, Mr Speaker. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker** : Mr Princewill, please the Motion under discussion is on motor basic allowance. Please direct your points to this.

**Mr Princewill** : Thank you, Mr Speaker. The point I am driving at is that these things are interwoven. (*Interruptions*) Transportation, car basic allowance and ownership of car are all the same thing. If we improve the lot of the working class, and if we improve public transportation, possibly, it would not be necessary for one to carry his car to work. If that is the case, as it is taking place in other parts of the world, then car basic allowance would be irrelevant.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the workers have suffered for a long time. It is also our desired policy to improve the lot of the workers not only by giving them car basic allowance but also by improving the housing condition of workers, thereby—(*Interruptions*)

**Mr David Adelu** (Ibadan East) : Point of order. Order 26 (2). It seems to me that the Speaker on the Floor is trying to campaign for the NPN in this House and this is very wrong. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker** : Mr Princewill will you continue please.

**Mr Princewill** : Thank you, Mr Speaker. The point is that the lot of the working class and indeed of every other citizen in this country is the responsibility of the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and we are prepared to shoulder that responsibility. In this regard, Sir, we are fighting inflation in order to improve the lot of the working class. We have set forth the Green Revolution and we are aware, Sir—(*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker** : Hon. Member, will you please confine yourself to the subject under discussion ?

**Mr Princewill** : We are aware that the Operation Feed the Nation has been a dismal failure and we are now—(*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker** : Mr Princewill, will you take your seat ? (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam** (Oron II) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Colleagues, I rise to support the Motion. In doing so, Sir, I would like to appeal to this honourable House not to ignore the economic and social implications of the car loan issue in contributing to the debates on this Motion.

As hon. Members are well aware, the car loan issue came up in this country for serious consideration in 1978 and a Panel of eleven Members representing the various sectors of the economy was appointed in April of that year. It completed its assignment in December 1978 and submitted its report to the Military Administration. Mr Speaker, Sir, it was a pity that the car loan issue was mishandled by the last Military Administration.

I was a Member of that Panel and it may interest this honourable House, Sir, to know that what the Military Administration implemented was a minority report of two people and the majority of us in that panel (nine of us) recommended quite a number of measures. In fact, we proposed seven options to the Government, one of which was that the car basic allowance and the loan should continue. This was because we did not consider ownership of a car in this country, at the present stage of our development, a luxury.

It is quite a necessity having regard to the present situation in our public transportation system, and the fact that urban cities in this country are so congested that without personal ownership of cars, responsible officers would not be able to attend to their duties effectively and efficiently. I would like this honourable House, in considering this matter, to call on the present administration to publish the report of that Panel. I think this would give the Nigerian public an opportunity to assess the situation very objectively. I am aware, Sir, that the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has done something about the car loan issue.

**Some hon. Members** : Tell us ! Tell us !

**Mr Etienam** : You are quite aware of what the President has done. I want to say, Sir, that there are other issues which should also be given further consideration in this matter. You very well know, hon. Colleagues, that the issue of foreign exchange, that is, the effect of further importation of cars into this country, was also a vital issue when this matter was being considered. The question of the new social order which we intend to introduce in this country to our new crop of civil servants was also a fundamental issue. That is why I am appealing to this House to ignore sentiments in considering this matter.

During the period of six months or so which this Panel sat, we had the opportunity of hearing from the workers themselves their various views on this issue. We had a group of workers who were in the majority and were very strongly opposed to the continuation of this car loan. We also had a group of workers especially those from the universities—the Youth Corpsers from level 08 and above—who also supported the continuation of the car loan to workers. I want to say, Sir, that the granting of loans to workers to buy cars of their own is an incentive.

**Mr Adewara Toyin Lawal** (Ifelodun) : Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Yes, Order number what ?

**Mr A. T. Lawal** : Order No. 26 (2), Sir, I think this House is not ready to listen to the report of the car loan panel which was set up in 1978. The issue at stake is to discuss car loan and basic allowance and not the report.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Mr Etienam, will you continue, please ?

**Mr Etienam** : Mr Speaker, Sir, we cannot discuss the issue of car loan and motor basic allowance in isolation of the measures already taken either by the former Military Administration or the President of this Republic. The President has already taken

[MR ETIENAM]

some action to alleviate the suffering of workers who are entitled to car loan. I think it is the responsibility of the various industrial unions to open up negotiations with their various employers on the conditions and mode of benefiting from the action which the President has already taken. I think this action of the President took into account the state of the nation economy of this country. We cannot out of mere sentiment decide here that motor car loan should be given to every Dick, Tom and Harry because we want to play to the gallery.

The point I am making, Sir, is that the people of this country—the workers themselves—may understand what is involved because it is more than saying give so much or guarantee so and so bank loan for workers to by cars. After all we do not manufacture sufficient number of cars in this country. Certain categories of cars are being imported into this country. That is the aspect I would like this honourable House to consider; also the economic implication and the effect of this on our foreign exchange position.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Mr Basse, will you confine yourself to the subject under discussion, that is, motor basic allowance and not importation of cars?

**Mr Etienam:** Mr Speaker, Sir, I think there is nobody in this House and in particular, there is nobody in this administration who is opposed to the idea of granting car loan to the workers. The basic allowance and car loan go together. I think the issue of basic allowance is an issue which could be negotiated upon between the industrial unions and the employers of labour. This depends on the nature of work of the group of workers who are entitled to the loan. If you are a technical officer and your duty involves going round, well, that is a matter which your union can negotiate with your employers.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Can you round up, please?

**Mr Etienam:** What I am saying is that, first of all, we should commend the efforts which have so far been made by the Government to alleviate the suffering of the workers in this respect. I want to use this opportunity to appeal to workers not to allow anybody or any political party to use this car loan issue to incite them against this government. The greatest honour the workers of this country will do to the memory of their late brother and leader is to declare a period of industrial truce in this country.

**The Deputy Speaker:** There is a point of order.

**Mr Fola Omidiji (Egba Alake):** Mr Speaker, Sir, the speaker on the Floor of the House is a former member of the Nigerian Labour Union and he is now saying that some people are using them. I want to ask whether he has been used.

**The Deputy Speaker:** What point of Order?

**Mr Fola Omidiji:** Order No. 32 (1).

**The Deputy Speaker:** Will you read it, please?

**Mr Fola Omidiji:** It reads as follows:

*Subject to paragraph (2) of this order and subject to the provisions of paragraph (2) of Standing Order 63 (Appropriation Bill), no Member shall be entitled to address the House or a committee of the whole House for more than thirty minutes on any subject.*

The hon. Member on the Floor of the House, apart from speaking for more than 30 minutes, has been introducing sentiments, and incitements. So, the point I want to get clear from the hon. Gentleman is whether he had been used by political parties in the past. Such statements mean that he is not fair to the other parties.

**Mr Etienam:** Finally, Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to say that the present administration is committed to the welfare of the working people of this country and we will continue to do our best to improve their plight. The action which the President has so far taken on the car issue is commendable and should be supported by this House.

With this, Mr Speaker, I want to say that I support the Motion.

**Alhaji Abubakar Abutu (Ankpa South):** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I am supporting this Motion and I want to explain that the Mover of this Motion has done the right thing, but he deviated from the normal Industrial Relations practice with regard to this Motion. I would like to say that it is a point that could be put right by an Amendment. There is a difference between the Labour Committee and the Civil Service Committee. As a labour expert—(Interruptions) Since we all agree that the Motion on basic allowance is all right, if it lacks some ingredients, it will serve no useful purpose if we do not put them right. Therefore, Mr Speaker, Sir, I seek the indulgence of Members to put the point right.

The point is that because of the difference between the Committee on Civil Service matters and the Labour Committee, this Motion should be sent to the Labour Committee. Car basic allowance is part of the amenities enjoined by workers and these are embodied in their conditions of service. Therefore if you refer it to the Committee on Civil Service, Matters, it would be irrelevant and it would have no basis at all. I plead with the Speaker that this Motion should be referred to the Labour Committee. Car basic allowance is part of the fringe benefits that workers enjoy. It is quite appropriate that it should go to the Labour Committee. Thank you very much; that is my contribution.

**Mr M. O. Effiong (Oron III):** Mr Speaker Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion but in doing that it is baseless granting any car loan to any worker if motor basic and transport allowances are not attached. I strongly appeal to the appropriate quarters and the Committee that they should make all necessary efforts to see that the workers who are in possession of car loans are also given a chance to have motor basic and transport allowances.

We must not forget the low-income workers who are only privileged to have motorcycles and bicycles. This is very important. This type of amenities

[MR. EFFIONG]

should also be extended to this class of workers. Apart from that, you know very well that car loans are meant to be refunded. Every month, every worker would have to refund part of his car loan, he would have to pay his tax under the Pay As You Earn system and he would have to pay some other rates. So, I strongly appeal that every effort should be made to see that the Government of the day provides motor basic and transport allowances to all classes of workers. Thank you.

**Mr O. Olanrewaju** (Oranmiyan North): Mr Speaker, Sir, the granting of car loan and car basic allowance is within the competence of this honourable House. The granting of these amenities means giving incentives to the workers of this nation. I wonder why the hon. Member for Ankpa South (*Alhaji Abubakar Abutu*) suggested that this Motion should be referred to Committee. The President has thrown the ball into our court; we are just amending the speech of the President that giving car loans is a necessity. If we fail to give the basic allowance, it will serve as a punishment to the workers because they are human beings. If we pinch them, will they not bleed? If we torture them, do they not feel the pains? If somebody receives a car loan of ₦3,600 from the Government and he is paying about ₦64 per month instalmentally out of about ₦336, he has nothing with which to provide other amenities and to feed his children properly. So, Mr Speaker, this Motion is straight forward and we should support it.

I beg to support the Motion, Mr Speaker.

**Mr M. O. Oni** (Obafemi Owode): Mr Speaker, Sir, there is no doubt that an average worker in Nigeria is suffering, not because of his own fault, but because the nation has not done its duty which is responsibility towards the workers. The whole nation constitutes an economy and if we consider that he who labours should reap the sweet of his labour, we would know that we have to give them the tools; we have to give them a share of their own labour.

Now, I come to the issue of car loan and car basic allowance. In my own opinion, there is no worker in the country who does not require a sort of car allowance. In actual fact, it is not car allowance but motor transport allowance. This is an allowance which is sort of assisting him to reimburse part of his expenses on transportation. At the moment, I have no car. I spend nothing less than ₦300 per month on transportation and if I do so, I wonder how much a worker who earns less than ₦100 per month is spending on transportation. I wonder how he is able to sustain himself and his family. Car loans should be given to those who are due, and motor cycle loans should be given to those who are qualified for them.

**Alhaji Abubakar Abutu** (Ankpa South): Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker**: Order number what?

**Alhaji Abutu**: Order number 26 (2). Let me read it.

**Several hon. Members**: No! No!

**The Deputy Speaker**: There is no need for you to read it.

**Mr Oni**: Thank you, Mr Speaker for saving me. What I am trying to say is that every worker is entitled to an allowance for transportation and it should start from whatever level you may call it, whether it is Grade Level 01 or Grade Level 17.

Mr Speaker, I will now come to give a suggestion, and in giving my suggestion, I would implore hon. Member of this honourable House to please be patient with me and not disturb me with their so-called Orders. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker**: Is that necessary?

**Mr Oni**: I am sorry for that. Mr Speaker I would suggest that transport basic allowance be awarded as a percentage of a worker's salary I would suggest 20 per cent of the basic salary of a worker on Grade Level 01 to a maximum salary of ₦3,000 per annum.

**Mr Tubo O. Bob-Manuel** (Degema II): Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker**: Yes, what is your point of Order?

**Mr Bob-Manuel**: My point of order is Order 29 (1). I would want the Speaker to please rule.

**The Deputy Speaker**: The hon. Member for Obafemi/Owode (*Mr O. Oni*), the subject under discussion is vehicle basic allowance. Are you proposing an Amendment to this Motion?

**Mr Oni**: Mr Speaker, Sir, this is not an Amendment but a suggestion. We cannot talk of motor basic allowance without making any suggestion at all, otherwise we will not have a base for measurement.

**The Deputy Speaker**: The hon. Member for Obafemi/Owode (*Mr Oni*), do you not think this suggestion is best taken by the Committee that is going to look into these basic allowances?

**Mr Oni**: Thank you Sir, but we need to enlighten the Committee.

**The Deputy Speaker**: You said you are enlightening the Committee?

**Mr Oni**: I have supported the Motion and I am now making a suggestion. Mr Speaker, anybody on a salary of more than ₦4,000 per annum should earn 15 per cent of his salary as allowance up to a maximum of ₦150 per month.

**Mr Bob-Manuel**: Point of order!

**The Deputy Speaker**: You are still on the same Order 29 (1)? The hon. Member for Obafemi/Owode (*Mr O. Oni*) can you hold on please?

**Mr Bob-Manuel**: I am still pressing on my Order 29 (1). If you permit me, I read it:

*Debate upon any motion, bill or amendment shall be relevant to such motion.*

If my hon. Member wants those things he is enumerating to come up, he should bring a substantive Motion into this House. He should not amend the Motion we are discussing here.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The point of Order is valid, that you are trying to introduce something that this Motion is not calling for. The Motion is talking of vehicle basic allowance and not making suggestions on what is to be paid and so on. This is going to be done by the appropriate Committee that is going to look into this motor basic allowance.

**Mr Oni :** Mr Speaker, I accept your ruling, but in my own opinion, I shall feel it is relevant to this Motion. Thank you very much, and I take my seat.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Thank you very much. Is there anybody speaking against the Motion?

**Mr David Niyi Adelu (Ibadan East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, if I can be given audience, the drafting of this Motion cannot carry the necessary burden of the working class of the Federation. What happened during the Military interregnum was that a ban was placed on car advances and allowances. That ban should be lifted, simple. If the ban is lifted, then car advances and allowances will be restored. You will understand, Mr Speaker, that the allowance is not restricted to cars alone; motorcycle allowance and bicycle allowance were equally banned. Mr Speaker, Sir, if the present administration is not an elongation of the Military regime, it should come to the aid of the working class of this country. (Fire ! Fire !)

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is crystal clear that the present government is conservative and perverse oriented, instead of doing things that will come to the aid of workers. This government must see to it that the ban is lifted.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The hon. Member for Ibadan East (Niyi Adelu), please, you do not have to get heated up on this matter and address the honourable House the way you are doing.

**Mr Adelu :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. What I am saying is that the Nigerian Labour Congress has already given an indication that it is going to declare a sort of strike action at the end of March if the car basic allowances are not restored. I am sure, Mr Speaker, that any Member of this honourable House who is opposed to the interest of the workers of this country is not fit to be here. I am sure everyone of us will support the workers in their demands.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The hon. Member for Ibadan East, I allowed you to speak because you said you were going to oppose the Motion.

**Mr Adelu :** I am opposing the way it is put down here. It is not properly put, Mr Speaker. It should be put in a way to ensure that this would be restored to the workers and it should go to the Labour Committee.

**Deputy Speaker :** I would now call on Mr John Laven.

**Mr John Laven (Langtang) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I would not have spoken on this Motion because I support it; but the way the debate is going on and being one of the ex-civil servants in this House, I am forced to speak. (Interruptions)

Mr Speaker, Sir, from my experience as an ex-civil servant, as I have said, giving a civil servant a car loan without the necessary basic allowance or transport allowance will be of no use. I would wish to tell this House that there are some people with whom I started as senior civil servant, in those days, as far back as 1965. Our salaries were so small and we owned cars with very meagre basic allowances. You could therefore bet that ninety per cent of us abandoned our cars and went back to use Government allocated cars.

If you look at the two sectors right now, that is, the parastatals and the main Civil Service, the parastatals are attracting the attention of the people in the main Civil Service. Why is this so? This is because they have more basic allowances or fringe benefits than the Civil Service. Both arms belong to the same Government. But you will find that the people in the parastatals live luxuriously with two to three cars while those in the Civil Service with only one car are denied basic maintenance privileges. I could not have run a car had I not got a basic allowance in those days. Right now, even as a Member of the House of Representatives, if I get a car I would have to sacrifice a certain percentage of my salary for its maintenance. A civil servant cannot do that. He has got so many responsibilities competing with his little salary.

I would say I am in full support of this Motion and that not only basic allowances but also full travelling allowances should be restored.

**Mr A. Mahmud (Yola) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

**Resolved :** That this House conscious of the need to promote the welfare of workers and to enable them enjoy the car loan facilities now provided by Government, direct the Committee on Public Service Matters to study promptly, the desirability of granting to workers Motor Basic Allowance as well as such other facilities and concessions that would minimise the burden inherent in the repayment system.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Will Mr A. Mahmud move the Motion for Adjournment.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr A. Mahmud :** I move that this House do adjourn till 10 a.m. tomorrow.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Is anybody seconding the Motion?

**Alhaji Tuggar (Gamawa) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I second the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** I would now call on Mr Kangama to speak.



## Committee Reports

**Mr. M. S. Kagama** (Aliyo/Kangama) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, from my observation, I think there is need for us to take stock of what we have been doing from the start of the sitting of this House. From the time we came, Mr Speaker, we have passed Resolutions and committed so many Motions to Committees. We have also agreed, in respect of certain Motions, that some actions have to be taken. Up till now, no Committee has come to the House to report of what has been happening. Nobody knows what has been happening to all the Motions that have been committed to Committees.

In this respect, Mr Speaker, I think there is need for us to appoint a Committee or a watch-dog of the House, to follow up what had been passed to the Committees as regards Resolutions on Motions that had been agreed upon. We cannot continue without knowing the result of what we have already achieved in the past. That is my observation, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker** : In connection with the observation made by the hon. Member for Aliyo/Kangama (Mr M. S. Kagama), will the Chairmen of all Standing Committees in the House please meet me in my office immediately after this meeting.

## Communication Facilities

**Mr P. O. Eleke** (Dobwo) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I want to draw the attention of the Federal Government to the very poor communication facilities in Imo State. By this Mr Speaker, I mean telephone, telex and television facilities. Poor communication facilities are caused by the following: firstly, by dormant telephones in different offices in Imo State; secondly by lack of telex facilities in most of the offices in Imo State. There is no telex facility for the State Government. Most of the existing lines have all been hired out to private companies and the State Government cannot do anything about it. There is no micro-wave link between the Satellite Station at Owerri and the Nigerian Television Authority at Aba. Consequently, both the services of the State Government, social and economic life of the people of Imo State have been seriously affected. The programmes of NTA Aba are hardly received in distant and neighbouring towns of Imo State, especially at Oguta, Egbema, Orlu, Okigwe, Ohaozaru and Afikpo. We do not want this condition to continue indefinitely. That is why we have decided to alert the Federal Government whose responsibility it is, and ask it to be kind enough to solve these problems. I hope the Federal Government Authorities who are in-charge of telephones, telex and television will realise the seriousness of the situation in Imo State. We want an improvement in the situation so that the State Government may be free to communicate with the Federal Government and other State Governments in Nigeria and be able to perform its duty effectively and efficiently as a government.

Mr Speaker, Sir, this is all I am asking for.

## Business of the House

**Mrs Biola Babatope** (Mushin Central II) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to draw your attention to the conduct of the business of this House. On Friday, you did make a ruling that the Motion pending with the Business Committee on the conduct of the Business Committee itself should be brought for discussion this morning. When we looked through the Order Paper this Motion was not even listed. For quite some time, it has been the pattern in this House for one to hear instructions just by rumours. Eventually rumours get confirmed. I think since we are not operating a court system, whatever we need to discuss should be discussed in the open for the benefit of all the Members of the House.

I do not believe in cringing before I know what is going on in this House. If it is a privileged information, but it is an information for all the Members of this House, I think it should be brought and discussed in this House. If we are fighting so shy of the press that we cannot discuss our own personal problems in this House, I think it does not augur well for us. Since the electorate voted us here they have the right to know what we are doing and I believe that people in my constituency should know that I am quite aware of everything that is going on in this House. I am craving your indulgence to tell all those people who are in the position to pass information to Members, to please pass this information for all of us to know. I do not believe in going from one office to another; it is not lady-like for me to do that and I would not even do that. I feel that whatever business is for the generality of the Members should be discussed and we would all lend our support or otherwise hold it.

Mr Speaker, the Motion that you requested for on Friday should be brought by the Business Committee to this House for debate. When that is debated, we would all know that when we submit Motions, the Motions would get to the Committee and the Committee will decide whether the Motions need to be amended or otherwise before they are brought to this House.

Mr Speaker, I hope the Business Committee will take note of your ruling on Friday. Thank you.

## Retirement Benefits

**Dr Mike Ukpong** (Abak) : Mr Speaker, my observation is a reflection on the problem of retired soldiers of this Federation who have not been able to claim their own retirement benefits. Mr Speaker, Sir, we were all aware that towards the transition period, that is, during the preparation to handover government from Military to Civilian, quite a number of Nigerians who were in active service retired either on medical grounds or of their own volition. But unfortunately, up till this time, quite a number of them have not been able to collect their entitlements. The inability to collect these entitlements by fellow Nigerians is caused, according to the *Daily Times* and other reports, by unscrupulous officials who are demanding ₦400 in order to expedite action on their claims.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the danger in withholding the entitlements of this low-income group of Nigerians who actually fought during the war to keep us one cannot be over-emphasised. We should know that these people have been trained to handle guns in any way and they have no other source of income. I think quite a number of them were sure that they would be given their own entitlements after retirement in order to invest them in a trade of their choice. We are now talking about the increased wave of crime in this country and some people have been talking about bribery and corruption. We should find out the causes of bribery and corruption and the causes of the increased crime rate in this country. These soldiers might have not been trained in a way that they can live on their own. These soldiers had actually worked for this country and I am sure that it is our own duty as elected legislators and as a democratically elected government to protect the interest of all Nigerians including the interest of the retired soldiers who helped to make Nigeria what it is now.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it has always been impossible in Africa to talk of a voluntary handing-over of government from the military to the civilian. And this country has set the very first example. I think that we should reciprocate this kindness by taking a very good care of the fate of soldiers throughout the Federation particularly those who have been retired.

### Nigeria Policemen

Mr Speaker, my second point is on the plight of our Policemen. You will see that very many policemen in this country work for ten to twelve years without promotion. These are the people who handle legal affairs and conduct criminal investigations in this country. We always accused them of corruption. Before we prevent corruption we must try to prevent the causes of corruption by providing them adequate means of existence as well as adequate incentives.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am calling on you in particular and this House in general to direct or advise the Police Service Commission to ensure that Policemen are not made to suffer by their own bosses. Also, that the Ministry of Defence should be alerted about the impending danger of failing to pay the entitlements of retired Nigerian Soldiers.

**An hon. Member :** Mr Speaker, there is no question,

**The Deputy Speaker :** Will the Clerk please check the Quorum ? (*Quorum checked*)

Hon. Members, there is no quorum and the House is hereby adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 11.55 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 8 (1).*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Tuesday, 12th February, 1980

The House met at 10.05 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, I have gone through the Votes and Proceedings for Monday, 11th February, 1980. They reflect the true position of what took place in this House yesterday. I have, therefore, approved them.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Committee Meetings

I have only one or two announcements. The Committees on External Affairs and Defence seemed to have fixed their meetings for 10 and 10.30 a.m. respectively. Is it possible for the Chairmen to suspend these meetings until after 1 o'clock. I think they had better do so.

I would like the Chairmen of all the Standing Committees of the House, that is, those Committees that Motions and Bills had been referred to since we resumed sitting here on the 9th of October, 1979, to meet. I have gone through the Proceedings of the House of Representatives to see what had happened to the various Motions and Bills that had been sent to the Committees. I think it is absolutely necessary that the Chairmen of all the Committees should meet so that we would know exactly what is happening to those Motions and Bills. The meeting is going to be in my office at 1 o'clock when we leave here.

The other meeting is for the Business Committee. It is going to be held in the Staff Committee Room and not in Committee Room No. 3. The meeting is scheduled for 12 o'clock noon.

For Members of the Special Committee on the NNPC, I think it is important we meet again in my office after the meeting with the Chairmen of the various Committees because of new developments.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Water Supply

**The Deputy Speaker :** The first Motion on the Order Paper for today is on Water Supply.

**Mr Aka Ogbobe (Igbo Etiti) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I stand to move the Motion standing in my name and in the name of Mr Syle Lamido :

That in view of the fact that water is a vital necessity to life and in view of the fact that no form of physical, social or other economic deve-

lopment is possible without water supply, this House directs the Committee on Water Resources,

(i) to explore avenues for accelerated supply of drinking water in all our rural communities ; and

(ii) to examine the possibility of fixing a target date within the next development plan period for supply of drinking water to all the rural areas.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Ekok Ojogu (Ikom) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Ogbobe :** Before I go on to argue this Motion, I shall request the indulgence of this honourable House to make a short explanation.

As far back as November last year, a Bill on rural water supply was prepared by me and was forwarded through the Business Committee to the Ministry of Justice for legal drafting in December. Up till now, nothing has been done about it. Because of the importance which I believe all of us attach to water supply, I have decided to bring this Motion which I hope will be a starting point for a legislation by the National Assembly on Rural Water Supply.

Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, the Motion has specifically asked for the supply of water to the rural communities of this country. In the past, State Governments had concentrated their attention on supplying water to State Capitals and, quite often, to the utter exclusion of the rural communities in this country.

I remember that during the last electioneering campaigns, every Political Party represented in this august Assembly did put up some programmes on integrated rural development. We are all aware that no development of any sort can be possible in the rural areas without water supply. We are also aware that after air the most important thing to life is water.

The hazards of impure water and water scarcity are too well known to be enumerated here ; but let me say this. Millions of fellow Nigerians daily helplessly drink worm infested water because they have no choice. Millions of fellow citizens also trek miles on end every day to fetch water, not clean water, any water at all, in order to keep life going. Are we going to remain apathetic to this situation ? These people who form the majority of Nigerians are not interested in free education, free housing or free medical services. They want, first of all, to live but they cannot live without water.

Hon. Members, I did carry out a survey on the water supply situation throughout the country. The details of that report will be made available to the appropriate Committee of the House when the time comes. But for the interest of Members, I shall give a summary of the National average of this report.

Hon. Members, only one in every ten thousand Nigerians has sufficient water to drink. Only one out of every twenty Nigerians has some water to drink occasionally. Ninety-five out of every one

[MR OGBOBE]

hundred Nigerians have no access whatsoever to pipe-borne water. This is the sad situation of water in a country which in 1977 spent over seven hundred million naira to host an entertainment Jamboree which went by the name FESTAC. Hon. Members, we shall resolve and I appeal to you to resolve that we shall do everything to get our priorities right.

How much will it cost to supply water to our rural communities? I did also carry out some survey throughout the Federation on the cost of supplying water to our rural communities? The survey sought to know or got information on the following. It got information on a number of planned water projects in each State, on the population covered by each water project, on completed projects, on projects under construction, on the cost of each water project and the total cost of water projects in each State. There was also information on the sources of water supply, whether they are from the rivers, bore-holes or dams. Further, there was information on storage of water. Even though I have not received the reports of these surveys from every State, I have got enough information to be able to arrive at a conclusion that, on the average, each State of the Federation will require a total sum of ₦420 million to supply water to its rural community. This does not include the State capitals.

Hon. Members, I recognise that water supply is on the Concurrent List. Water supply is so important to us that this honourable House should support the view that the Federal Government must bear the lion's share of the cost of this project. To this end, Mr Speaker, I recommend that 75 per cent of the cost of this project should be borne by the Federal Government, the State Government should provide 20 per cent, the Local Governments and the areas concerned should provide 5 per cent of the cost. If this is done, the Federal Government needs to spend only ₦1.2 billion every year for five years to make drinking water available to every rural community in this country.

One would ask where do we get the money? Apart from the normal budgetary position of water supply, there are other sources. The United Nations has some agencies which provide short-term loans to developing countries specifically for rural water supply. It would be a wise thing if we made use of these agencies. The ones that come to my mind immediately are the UNICEF and, in fact, the World Bank.

Finally, Mr Speaker, this is an opportunity for every Member of this House to fulfil one of his election promises, that is, supplying water to all our rural communities. I believe that if the present Government can only provide water to all our rural communities, it would have achieved much. We now have an opportunity in this august Assembly to revolutionise water supply in this country and we should not miss this opportunity.

Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I beg to move.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Member for Igbo-Etiti (*Mr Aka Ogbobe*), I must say that you have done a good research on your Motion and I believe that this is a good contribution.

I will now call on the hon. Member for Birnin Kudu (*Mr Sule Lamido*).

**Mr Sule Lamido (Birnin Kudu):** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, as regards the Motion on the Floor of this House, as you have all heard, Mr Ogbobe has really done a very good research and has come up with submissions with which I associate myself.

The importance of water in human life cannot be underestimated. We all know the sufferings of our people over this vital aspect of life sustenance. In the rural areas, enormous distances are covered by our rural communities to get drinking water, day in day out. This tells so much on their lives and normal activities.

I have discussed several times with Members outside this House about the problems of water supply in my own Constituency. I have had to narrate a situation where somebody used a donkey to travel about 10 kilometres to get water and 10 kilometres back. I have also said several times outside this House, that, in some rural areas, if you happen to lose your donkey, what you have to do is to sell your little portion of land to get a new one so that you can use it for your daily journeys to get drinking water. I presume the value of human life is so important that whatever is the cost, as enumerated by Engineer Ogbobe, we should provide for this. This country has the resources and I think with planned and well managed approach, this vital requirement can be evenly and gradually taken to the rural areas.

I have said that his presentation was very articulate and everybody here is convinced. This is a very simple and important Motion. I think, if in the next four years, his honourable House succeeds only in providing to the Nigerian electorate this vital aspect of human life, we would have done everything for Nigeria. Therefore, Mr Speaker, without bothering or belabouring the House on this issue, which is straightforward, simple but very important, I wish to allow other hon. Members to contribute to this topic. Thank you very much.

**Mr Kemte Giadom (Bori II):** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion.

As we all can see the Motion is straight forward and non-controversial. I believe that it is only strangers in our society that will say that this Motion is not meant for the good of our citizens. That is to say that there is no hon. Member here who will not agree with me that water is so scarce in our country that something must be done about it. It is true that some of us who live in a place like Lagos and do not suffer from scarcity of water, will not appreciate the suffering the citizens in the rural areas of this country are passing through as regards scarcity of water.

During the rainy season cases of cholera and dysentery are rampant in the rural areas. Why? It is because when the rain falls it washes faeces into the streams and you see poor rural dwellers coming to these streams to fetch water to drink. This water is contaminated and you will see that it

[MR GIADOM]

carries a lot of germs and diseases with the result that we have people in the rural areas dying of dysentery and cholera. In fact, even though the Motion calls for greater attention to be given to the rural areas, I would say that even urban areas, townships and some cities in this country are also victims of shortage of water. For example, as I am here now speaking, in the streets of Port Harcourt, you will see children and women with buckets going from place to place, roaming the streets looking for water to drink. And yet if anybody says that a place like Port Harcourt could be short of water, people that have not been there will deny; but this is a fact.

When we are calling on the Federal Government to supply the citizens of this country with adequate good water to drink, we must not lose sight that this should not be confined to rural areas alone. They should look into other urban centres—cities and towns in which it has been taken for granted that good water is being supplied, and see that these cities and urban areas are also supplied with sufficient water.

Therefore, I would say that all Members of this House should support this Motion and let the Federal Government, as a matter of urgency, not delay to take action. It should take up the lion's share in the distribution of water to our citizens.

It is surprising that Nigeria, great as we are, is lagging behind some of African countries in the supply of some of these elementary amenities. If you travel outside Nigeria to other African countries you will be highly impressed with the way some of these things are being supplied. So, if we must hold our position as leaders of Africa I think we should show our leadership in so many directions and that includes the provision of some of these elementary necessities of life like water. I cannot understand how we can build a healthy society without adequate supply of clean drinking water to all the citizens of this country, whether in the rural areas, cities or urban areas.

So, Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I commend this Motion to this honourable House to be adopted without a single dissension. Thank you.

**Alhaji Lawal N. Daura (Daura West)**: Mr Speaker, Sir, I am associating myself with the Movers of this Motion. This Motion is quite straightforward, it is on the right point and at the right time. The Movers have explained everything and I do not think we should continue to argue on it.

In my Constituency, it will take you a day to get to anywhere and fetch water. Even when you go there, you may not get it. You must wait for others. People travel a radius of over ten miles to go and dig wells of about 200 feet deep in order to get water. Water cannot be drawn out unless you use camels, bulls or donkeys and because you must line up to draw water, it will take a day or more. Mr Speaker, Sir, you will agree with me that my Constituency is heavily encroached upon by desert and it is difficult for my people to get water from either ponds and rivers. Even if you construct a dam, it will not be useful for at least three or four months. Immediately

the rain stops, the dam will be dried up by the heavy blowing wind. I do sincerely agree Mr Speaker, Sir, that this Motion is quite straightforward.

With these few comments I beg to support the Motion. Thank you.

**Alhaji Muhammadu Ali Kaita (Kaita)**: Mr Speaker, Sir, this is a straightforward Motion and I doubt if there is anybody who has courage or guts to oppose it.

In associating myself with the Movers of the Motion, I would like to express my feeling on the problems those in the rural areas are facing. If we are to consider those who are facing the problem of desert encroachment, like the place I come from, that is Kaita Constituency, and the place where the last speaker comes from, that is, Daura Constituency, it is true you will find that people are not looking for so-called pipe-borne water. They look for any place where water can be found, no matter how bad it may be. They are after water to drink. They do not have any stream and they have to travel for over ten miles before they are able to get water to drink. I am sure those who come from Gaidam, Nguru in Borno State, Sabon Birni in Sokoto State and Hadeja in Kano State, will agree with me that we are encountering the same problem. We are looking for water to drink, not water with which to bath and wash our clothes. Sometimes someone has to spend more than seven days before he is able to get water with which to bath.

This is not a controversial issue. We have to support this Motion automatically. This is a humanitarian Motion. If we are going to do any service to this nation, especially to the people in the rural areas, we have to associate ourselves with the Movers of this Motion and support the Motion wholeheartedly.

With this little contribution, Mr Speaker, I wish to sit down. Thank you.

**Mr D. O. Agi (Oju)**: Mr Speaker, Sir, I think it is only a Member who represents the residents of the Government residential areas in this country who would say that this Motion is not acceptable. I believe there is not a single hon. Member here who may be speaking for the people living in the Government residential areas all over the country. These areas are the privileged areas in our society where there are sufficient facilities and amenities which we can think of. I believe the hon. Members here are the humble Representatives of the humble masses all over the country.

As well as I know, the basic facilities that these people require in order to sustain living and for which we pledged that we were going to fight tooth and nail in order to give them an adequate representation are water, roads and education. The Motion on supplying sufficient drinkable water to the masses of this country, especially in the rural areas, is a great Motion. It must be supported by those who see themselves as representing their people in the true sense of the word. I come from one of the most rural

of all rural areas of this country. There, pipe-borne water to any of the citizens staying in that area is an item of tourism. Only a few of them who are articulate and who have even travelled to some towns would really have any idea of what it means when you talk of pipe-borne water.

It is a common story in most parts of the country that travelling in search of water is not measured in terms of only ten miles. Sometimes one is not even certain of getting water ; in which case one may have to sleep in a particular place for about two or three nights before one can get water. The problem is that in some parts of the country, particularly where I come from, when you even get water, you would have another problem of finding some means of purifying it so that the germs in it could be eradicated with the sediments in the water allowed to settle for about three days before one can drink it.

Therefore, I believe that this Motion should receive the blessing, and a quick one for that matter, of this august House. Thereafter, it should be sent to the appropriate Committee where a proper homework should be done before recommendation is made for a Resolution or a Bill to be brought before this honourable House. Further action with the Executive will be taken afterwards.

I would also say that if the cost is going to become too colossal in terms of providing pipe-borne water for all the rural areas of this country, bore-hole water system may be considered. It takes only six months to build this system. Pipes can be connected to the bore-hole and this can serve just as well as the direct pipe-borne water. In some of the rural areas, there may not be flowing waterways ; in which case, the only thing we can do to help limit the problem of water shortage is to use the bore-hole system.

With this little remark, Mr Speaker, I would like to call on every Member here to give a very quick passage to this Motion so that we can make progress. Thank you very much.

**Mr P. U. Chukwu** (Ohaji Egbema Oguta) : I rise to support this Motion. In supporting the Motion I have a brief comment to make.

The Mover of this Motion has made a research on his Motion, and the facts given to us have no other comparison. In my own area, in Imo State, and other areas there too, people still drink contaminated pond water. There is no stream nearby. Some areas are lucky to have got streams. What happens is that even when you go in search of this pond water, you find that some children do drink their urine when they taste the pond water. They could have inadvertently urinated in the pond water some time ago and they would still come back to this pond in search of water to drink. (*Prolonged interruptions*)

**Several hon. Members** : Shame ! Shame ! Disgrace !

**Mr Chukwu** : It is not a disgrace ; I am saying what I have seen. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker** : Order ; Order ! Yes, go on, Mr Chukwu.

**Mr Chukwu** : I am giving an account of what I really saw happen. There are areas today where there is no pond water at all to drink from. In some areas where one can get water, one buys a gallon of water for 30k. There is nothing that can make a peasant farmer happier than to have good water supply.

I am of the opinion that within the prescribed tenure of the present Administration, if we are to uphold the tenets of the Constitution and if we are to alleviate the sufferings of the masses, water supply should be provided in all rural areas of the Federation. Water has no substitute ; air has substitute. Now, we are enjoying artificial air in this House, this is a substitute. Also if we go out, we would enjoy fresh air ; but water has no substitute at all. (*Interruptions*) We cannot enjoy artificial water or fresh water without having bore-holes dug in all areas of the country. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker** : Order ! Order ! Please, allow the hon. Member to air what is worrying him. (*Interruptions*)

**Several hon. Members** : Fire on ! Fire on.

**Mr Chukwu** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I want this House to get something clear by my first statement which some of us seem to be doubting. Children go to fetch water from a stream around which some people may have urinated upon and when rain falls, that urine runs into the stream and they drink it. It is equivalent to drinking urine. (*Interruptions*)

Mr Speaker, before I take my seat, I am suggesting that each town in any rural area of about five thousand people should be given bore-holes. These bore-holes can easily be made if this provision is included in the next development plan, that is, between 1981 and 1983, that all rural areas should have water supply. I therefore appeal to this august House to request the Committee on Water Resources to see that water supply is given to every State throughout the Federation.

With this, Mr Speaker, I beg to take my seat.

**Mr C. A. Modebe** (Onitsha North-East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion. I associate myself with what the Mover and a lot of other speakers have said in relation to this Motion. However I have something to add to it. I am very pleased to note that water supply is on the Concurrent List. I have to take this opportunity to say that it is not enough for us to urge the Executive or the President to provide more money for the supply of water. We have to ask the various Governors of the various States to do their own home work on this matter.

This is a Presidential System of Government and they have to do a lot on their own part, as I said, to provide water for the people of the States. I agree with the Mover that money should be provided to help them, but the reason why I make this particular remark is that before this Presidential System of Government came into operation, we had the Governors of the various States managing their own affairs. In some areas like my own area, Anambra State, much was not done to provide water. But in an area like Kano where you had the hen Military

[MR. C. A. MODEBE]

Governor Bako, he did a lot there to provide water for his people. If only all the Governors could emulate the good work that others are doing now that we have the Presidential System of Government, I think it would be very good for us. Many years ago when I was in Kano for eye treatment, there was no water anywhere but there were holes from where people could collect water which was very scarce. But you need to go there now ; water is almost everywhere in Kano State.

Therefore, I am asking other Governors in this Presidential System of Government to please take a cue and try to emulate the good things that other Governors are doing in their own areas. In doing so, we shall have what we are looking for and that is even development in all areas. It is not enough for us here to vote for money to be sent to a particular area without the money being used wisely.

With this, I support the Motion. Thank you very much.

**Alhaji M. S. Aliyu** (Nasarawa) : I rise to support the Motion and in doing so, I have a little to contribute. As the Mover and the rest of the people who have spoken before me have said, water supply to the rural areas is very essential for human beings.

As we all know, water has no substitute. In my own Constituency, in places like Laminga and Rubochi, the inhabitants there tried to build a dam but it was not possible. They drink pond water which is actually contaminated. As a result of this a lot of children, as one of the speakers, has said, drink their urine.

What I understand from that statement is that when children urinate and it rains, the rain washes the urine into the pond. Therefore, people drink water with the mixture of urine. It is not that you have to urinate into a cup and drink it. He should not be misunderstood by saying that people drink their urine. I have heard it but I have not seen it that people eat human beings to survive. (*Interruptions*) Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not see anything wrong in drinking their urine to survive if that is the way to survive.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I appreciate the fact the whole House has given support to this Motion and with this little contribution, I beg to sit down.

**Mr David Gba'aondo** (Takum) : Mr Speaker, Sir, in contributing to this Motion, I would like to appeal to all hon. Members of this House to give their full support to this Motion. Since the Motion is very clear and straightforward, we should allow the Motion to go through so as to make sure that it brings out everything that is required to help our rural areas as regards water supply.

For example there are places like Takum and Gombi and all other areas, which do not have water. Therefore, this Motion need not be handled lightly. I therefore pray that it should go through.

**Mr H. M. Nganjiwa** (Biu North) : Thank you, Mr Speaker, for recognising me.

I wish to associate myself with the Movers of this important Motion and I wish also to express my sincere appreciation at the way the Debate is going on the Floor of this august Assembly. Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to say that any Government that implements the provision and request of this Motion has 1983 as a sure banker. Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to say and to emphasise on the Floor of this House that gone are the days when the rural man was represented on the Floor of this House by the man from the metropolis.

Mr Speaker, Sir, most of us represent a cross-section of the rural communities of this country. I believe that more than eighty per cent of us are speaking authoritatively on the situation obtainable in most of the rural areas of this country. I wish to say, Mr Speaker, and to have this emphasised also, that when the rural man was represented by the man from the metropolis, he was regarded as a cheap ass, he was regarded as the wretched of the earth who should suffer in silence. We should make sure that this position is rectified by this passing Motion.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the life of the rural man in this country is regarded as a common one and it is very well known by all of us. Lack of water has resulted in the movement from the rural areas to the urban centres of this country. It has resulted in the movement from one rural area into the other in search of water. Lack of good water to drink has resulted in the exposure of the rural man's life to water diseases and ill-health which have made his life very unsafe. Lack of water, Mr Speaker, has in fact reduced the life span of the rural man.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to emphasise again to this honourable House that it is our duty to see that we bring the rural man's life to conform with the life span God has proposed for the people of this part of the world. It will be suicidal to reduce the rural man's longevity on this earth. It is suicidal for this House, Mr Speaker, to see in the GRA people living in luxury with water for drinking and for everything including swimming pools and gardening, while the rural man has not got a drop of water to drink. (*Applause*)

Mr Speaker, Sir, this has got to stop. We have got to save the rural man's life. In this country and particularly in different parts of the country, in the Northern States for instance, you have water-table that has gone so low that you have got to get a rope that will go miles and miles down before you can get a bucket of water. This is common in many parts of Borno, Kano and Sokoto States, and many other places. In my Constituency, the river water from which most of the people get water supply is now dry for nearly nine months. This includes the neighbouring areas of Bauchi like Duku and so on. Mr Speaker, Sir, we have got to rectify this situation. The water-table has gone low. We have got to suggest to the Committee on Water Resources to make strong recommendations on the utilisation of water particularly the surface water. That is by constructing dams, especially small dams. We can construct a few dams with that same amount of money that is to be used to construct one of these giant dams. Many rural areas will benefit from this and death rates will be reduced.

Mr Speaker, Sir, in the riverine areas water service is always suffering from pollution. We have got to suggest to the Committee on Water Resources to make strong recommendations, especially the use of chemicals in treating water to get fresh water supply in the riverine areas. Treatment of water should be encouraged, especially in the dry desert areas of Borno State, Sokoto State and so on. In fact the dream of Green Revolution could materialise. At the same time bore-holes should be dug in all villages that have a population of at least five thousand.

Mr Speaker, I wish to associate myself strongly with this Motion and to appeal to the hon. Members of this House to make sure that this Motion is passed in order to save the lives of the rural men we are all representing on the Floor of this House. Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Mallam Sidi Ali, what revelations have you got today ?

**Mr Sidi H. Ali (Danbatta) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I feel this is a very important Motion but it should not be allowed to be passed without having this honourable House pay special respect to a man whose name had been given to the greatest man-made dam in Nigeria, Late Alhaji Audu Bako, for his contribution to giving water to the people of Kano, although he came from Sokoto State. Mr Speaker, Sir, the type of dam built by this great man at a very low cost shows what can be achieved if an elected or appointed officer, be he a Military Governor or a Civilian Governor, can do if he is committed to the cause of his people. That was why the Kano State House of Assembly passed a Resolution paying the greatest tribute to this great son of Nigeria which I believe, no other State did for its former Governor. It was not because he was from our State but it was because his contribution was great.

So, Mr Speaker, these are the only few points I feel I should mention at this time when we are discussing the question of water.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the present Government has just signed a paper for awarding a contract for thirty-five million naira by the Kano State Government to build a new Dam in Challawa in order to supply water to Garko and Kombotso Constituencies in Kano State. We are very grateful and we congratulate the new Federal Minister of Water Resources for having done this great job. Thank you.

**Mr M. Rabi Sha'aibu (Ringim) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, in supporting the Motion on the Floor of this honourable House, I would like to confess that 80 to 90 per cent of the Nigerian population come from the rural areas. These people get their water supply from streams, shallow wells, rivers and the ocean, just to mention a few. Normally, water from these sources is not of good quality. The chances of diseases being transmitted through low quality water supply are very high. Such diseases as cholera, dysentery, diarrhoea and so on, are contacted through contaminated water. It is high time this country started adopting the preventive medicine system rather than curative. It would be

cheaper for any government to prevent a person from falling sick than trying to cure him after falling sick. Nigeria is blessed with natural water resources which, if fully utilised, will go a long way to solving our water supply problems not only for domestic but also for agricultural purposes.

During the Third National Development Plan, the Federal Military Government earmarked approximately 300 million naira as grants to the States. This was to improve the financial position of the States in implementing water supply schemes in the respective States.

I would, therefore, call on this honourable House to make sure that during the next Plan period this amount is tripled, if possible. With this contribution, Mr Speaker, I support the Motion whole-heartedly.

**Mr J. O. Owoseni (Ekiti South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, by and large and by any standard, this Motion is perhaps one of the greatest and noblest Motions that had ever been brought to the Floor of this House. I am saying this without any exaggeration. I am also saying so because this is a Motion which concerns everybody, be he a rich man, a poor man, a King or a commoner, a Muslim or a Christian.

Water is the beginning of life. You will realise that right from the womb a man requires water until he is finally put into his grave. It is not only human beings that require water. Domestic animals which we have in our houses also require water. So, the importance of water in any place, whether in the rural or urban areas cannot be over-emphasised. I think it is important to life. It is even part of life itself.

Two important things struck me admirably by the speech of the Mover of this Motion. Firstly, he said no development programme is possible without water. Secondly, he said that the Federal Government should bear the lion's share in the provision of water to the rural areas in this country. These are the two areas where I want to expatiate a bit.

The President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Alhaji Shehu Shagari, has made it clear to us that his priority is an Agrarian Revolution or what he calls Green Revolution. I believe that his Agrarian Revolution can be a disaster without the provision of water. Apart from the provision of water for irrigation, you cannot supply food to people and neglect to give them water, otherwise it would amount to murder. So, it is my submission that Mr President in executing his Agrarian Revolution must accompany it with the provision of water to the people of this country.

Some time ago, I was amused when some people in Lagos complained that they had no water and that a tanker of water cost them about 80 naira. I was amused because these are people who can even get water to buy. They are surrounded by the lagoon and the sea and yet they complain that they have no water to use. I am not saying that they should drink sea water. That is not the point, but what I am saying is that in Lagos, people have water to buy ; but in the rural areas you have the money but no water to buy. So, the rural area deserves the attention of the Federal Government in the provision of water.



[MR OWOSENI]

Another point is that any Development Programme which does not take into account the provision of water would fail. Now, take for example, the provision of cottage hospitals with medical facilities and the rest of it which we debated and passed on the Floor of this House. I cannot see how a cottage hospital or any dispensary or hospital can function properly or effectively without the supply of water. So, from this angle we can conclude that water, apart from being very useful to our lives and existence, is also very important in contributing to our development programmes in this country.

It is my candid wish that this Motion is passed to the President of this Federation, Alhaji Shehu Shagari either in the form of a Motion or, as an hon. Member has suggested, in the form of a Bill. He should use all his energy and grace to ensure that water is made available to all the rural communities within his term of office so that we all can praise him and tell him that he has done his best for this country. Thank you.

**Mr O. Fagbamigbe (Akure):** Mr Speaker, Sir, much as I sympathise with the motives of the Mover of the Motion, and much as I sympathise with the arguments brought forward by Members who have spoken on this Motion, I wish to point out that both in form and in structure the Motion is sectional and partisan. (*Interruptions*)

**Several hon. Members:** Shame! Shame!

**Mr Fagbamigbe:** It is sectional and partisan in the sense that the problem of inadequate water supply is not the problem of rural areas alone; it is a problem that is nation-wide, it is a universal problem of this country and we cannot run away from the fact.

There is no town in Nigeria that can boast of adequate water supply. Even here in Lagos, some weeks ago, we found that we could not hold our meeting in this National Assembly because the air-conditioner was not working well and the cause was traceable to lack of sufficient water supply. Visitors who had come to this country and lodged in our most expensive hotels, I have in mind the Eko and Federal Palace Hotels, had complained that they had no water supply. So, the problem of water supply in this country is not one that affects rural areas alone; it is a problem that affects the whole nation. It is one to which we must draw the attention of the government so that government can look at it as a nation-wide problem and not a problem affecting rural areas alone. We have found that here, in this House of Representatives, some days ago, our toilet was closed because there was no sufficient water.

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II):** Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Point of Order on what?

**Mr Bob-Manuel:** Mr Speaker, Sir, I refer to standing Orders 26 (2) and 29 (1). We are not here to discuss Eko Hotel or any other hotel for that matter. We are talking about the three-tier system of government, we want water in the rural areas. The Motion is not partisan.

**Mr Fagbamigbe:** I am talking of water supply, Mr Speaker. There is no adequate water in the rural areas.

**An hon. Member:** Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Yes.

**Mr Effiong Ononokpono (Oron I):** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am raising Order 29 (1) which says:

*Debate upon any motion, bill or amendment shall be relevant to such motion, bill or amendment except in the case of a substantive motion for the adjournment of the House.*

What I am saying Mr Speaker, Sir, is that the Gentleman is not debating rural water supply, but he is now debating water supply all over the entire country.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Member is opposing this Motion and in doing so he is giving his reasons for opposing it, and I do not think he is going outside this debate.

**Mr Fagbamigbe:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir, for your protection.

Some days ago there was an interview on the television and the Project Manager of Coca-Cola was giving reasons why he could not supply Coca-Cola in sufficient quantities to Lagos, Ibadan and other Nigerian towns. The reason he gave was that there was no sufficient water to increase the supply of Coca-Cola. So, Mr Speaker, Sir, the problem of water is, as I have said, not just a problem of rural areas; it is a national problem and any attempt to solve it at partisan level will not help the community. Mr Speaker, Sir, that is my contribution to the Motion.

**Mr S. B. Abodunde (Oyi):** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I believe we have flogged this topic for quite some time now because we all know the importance of water in our lives and in the life of any community. We do not want the people that have settled in these communities to die for lack of water.

In the rural areas, we all know the suffering of our people. They have to wake up, at times, as early as 4 a.m. to go and look for water from the streams. When they get there they only scoop a little quantity in their pots and go back home with this. The little quantity they are able to scoop at times is full of impurities and when you drink this, of course, what happens is anybody's guess; they become sick. One of the greatest diseases and harmful ones, that one can contract from water is cholera. Many years ago in this country we lost so many lives as a result of cholera. We should do everything in our power to guard against this. Not only that, women who wake up early in the morning to look for water at times fall in to mishap. There are often cases of snake bites because when they go, they do not have their lanterns.

Therefore if we could provide water to these rural communities, we would not only be eliminating causes of illness but we would also be bringing to them the benefits of modern technology. Some of them who may not have water within their surroundings go about seven kilometres away and, in some

cases, I know in this country, and I believe this is not known to everyone here, where people use palm-wine to cook especially during the dry season. I have also seen places where people scoop water which is found in pot-holes on the roads. Believe me honestly, people boil water they get from pot-holes, keep it and use this type of water for cooking and washing. So you can see that this question of water supply to rural areas is one that is very very important. Apart from making this pledge during our electioneering campaigns, we shall be helping them if we bring water right to their door steps.

In my own village we have water surrounding us but it is not the same thing as bringing pipe borne water to the town. So hon. Gentlemen, if we can provide treated water to the communities, we shall be opening them up also to the use of modern amenities to which tax-payers of this country are qualified. Of course, all the hon. Members here will be doing a great deal of service to their constituencies if we can succeed in bringing water supply to the rural areas.

One important thing I notice in this Motion that is of great interest is that we should try to fix a date for the provision of this water. So, I am appealing to the Committee that might handle this Motion to please fix the target and see that during our tenure of office in this House, such a great and progressive achievement comes through us. Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member for Yola (*Mr Mahmud*) put the question now.

**Mr Aliyu Mahmud (Yola) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, having discussed this Motion exhaustively, I now move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

**Resolved :** That in view of the fact that water is a vital necessity to life and in view of the fact that no form of physical, social or other economic development is possible without water supply, this House directs the Committee on Water Resources,

(i) to explore avenues for accelerated supply of drinking water in all our rural communities ; and

(ii) to examine the possibility of fixing a target date within the next development Plan period for supply of drinking water to all the rural areas.

#### Minimum Wage

**The Deputy Speaker :** The No. 2 Motion on the Order Paper is the Minimum Wage and Living Conditions for Low Income Workers.

**Mr T. N. Ochiama (Ikeduru) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name and the names of my hon. Colleagues, Alhaji Mohammed A. Yelwa, Mr David H. Gbaaondo and Mr Amos Sunday—

That in pursuance of Section 16 (2) (d) of the Nigerian Constitution and considering the apparent inadequacy of living standards of Nigerian

workers, this House directs the Committee on Labour to seek ways and means of determining a reasonable national minimum wage with a view to improving living conditions for Nigerian workers.

I beg to move.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Hamman Dikko (Maiha) :** I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Ochiama :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of this august House, before I go directly into my Motion, I would want your people to view seriously the conditions of low-income workers of this nation. Before this Motion is referred to the Committee on Labour for appropriate recommendation, I want us to look into all aspects of the living conditions of workers in this country.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the other day, I was standing in the midst of some gentlemen at the bus stop. These people are responsible individuals of this Nation. They were discussing the increase in the price of maggi cubes from 4 for 10k to 3 for 10k. One of them said that the maggi cubes they used to buy at 4 for 10k were now 3 for 10k. If an individual of this great Nation of ours can feel the impact of the removal of one maggi cube, Mr Speaker, Sir, then you can assess the standard of living of that particular individual. I am also saying that this grade of people are merely existing and not living. This is because it is hard for one in this country to earn ₦70.50 a month which is ₦846 per annum and be paying a tax of 71k, leaving him with ₦69.58 per month. In the urban centres, somebody may live at Ikeja, maybe he has a job in Lagos and he has to spend at least ₦20 a month on transport. He also has to pay for one room. He cannot afford to pay for more than a room for which the minimum rent is ₦20. He has already spent ₦40 out of the ₦69.58 left.

**Mr D. Agi (Oju) :** There is a point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, what Order number ?

**Mr Agi :** It is a Constitutional point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** What section of the Constitution ?

**Mr Agi :** Section 16 (2) (d) as it affects the Motion. Mr Speaker, with your permission, I beg to read—

(2) *The State shall direct its policy towards ensuring—*

(d) *that suitable and adequate shelter, suitable and adequate food, reasonable national minimum living wage, old age care and pensions, and unemployment and sick benefits are provided for all citizens.*

Mr Speaker, the point I am trying to make here is that there is a Constitutional provision for the issue that the Movers of this Motion want to bring before this House. The Motion is not calling on the Executive arm of government to implement or justify this provision in the constitution nor is it bringing any Bill for action before this august House.

[MR AGI]

By not going through any of the means, the Motion is redundant, it is of no effect and it is a waste of the time of this august House.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Mr Agi, Section 16 (2) (d) which you are quoting is different from the substance of the Motion. What the Movers of the Motion are requesting this House to do is to direct the Committee on Labour to seek ways and means of determining a reasonable national minimum wage with a view to improving living conditions for Nigerian workers. It is not the same as the provision of the Constitution and the Motion is in order. (*Applause*)

**Mr Ochiama :** Mr Speaker, Sir, thank you very much for the protection you have given me. As I was saying, ₦69 is being paid to somebody on Level 01 in this country but after he has paid his house rent and transport fare, he is left with only ₦28.

Mr Speaker, Sir, this grade of people, because of financial problems, cannot move out to fit into societies. They cannot also take care of themselves and cannot keep off a bit from their wives. The tendency therefore is that they keep on breeding children because almost every time they are with their wives. (*Applause*)

Mr Speaker, Sir, you should understand that somebody who lives on ₦69 a month and has about seven children here in Lagos or in Aba, Ogun, Sokoto, Kano or anywhere you can think of in this country, cannot at all maintain his family. There is nobody on a salary of ₦69 a month that will be able to meet up his family demand. You will also remember that on the 24th of January on an NTA network news, in fact, one of the workers in Kwara Paper Mill when he was interviewed, laid bare his grievances by saying that some of them had worked for that particular industry for over 11 years and up till that time, despite the recommendations by the last regime that ten per cent should be added to their wages, they were still on ₦60 a month.

Considering all these things, Mr Speaker, you will find out that if you call these people members of this society, they find it hard to agree. To this grade of people, Mr Speaker, Sir, rice is a luxury food. They cannot afford to buy rice because it has become a luxury; they cannot go to the market with a balance of ₦28. We have not even calculated how much they spend at the site where they work and they have to save some money in case there is a lock-out. We have not even calculated that and may be they have to feed on 50k a day during break. In fact such a worker would be left with ₦10 to feed himself and his family for the whole month. Thanks to God that the Head of State has agriculture in his priority list. I think it will be very appropriate because no matter how much is being paid to workers in this country, without sufficient food, it is meaningless. It comes back to square one.

I am also saying that it will be very appropriate if we have mass production of food. The moment we are self-sufficient, then with whatever these people are being paid, there is no doubt they can conveniently lay hands on what to eat. They are not talking in terms of riches but how to be able

to get three square meals daily. Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, you will agree with me that nobody in this country today can live on ₦28 a month. Those on Grade Level 02 earn ₦78.50k; those on Level 03 earn ₦87; those on Level 04 earn ₦110 and tax is ₦1.10k; those on Level 05 earn ₦135.60k and they pay tax of ₦1.35 and those on Level 06 earn ₦178 and tax is ₦1.75k.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am saying that it will be very appropriate if there is mass importation of food before the green revolution which we are talking of materialises because I cannot see how in the next five years, no matter how mechanised this great country is, we can be self-sufficient in the production of food.

**The Deputy Speaker :** There is a point of Order.

**Mr Isaac Olaleru (Oyun) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of Order is 26. The Speaker should confine himself to minimum wage and not importation of food. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker :** We are discussing here ways and means of determining reasonable national minimum wage with a view to improving living conditions of Nigerian Workers.

**Mr Ochiama :** Mr Speaker, Sir, thank you very much for the advice which I accept.

Some of you who have gone outside this country, especially to Europe can bear me witness that you cannot conveniently employ a driver or a cook because it costs a lot. In this country, you know how much this grade of people earn. That is why I am saying we should please sink our political differences and party leanings and give this Motion the green light which it deserves to be able to cross the river.

Mr Speaker, Sir, as I earlier told you this grade of people on Levels 01, 02, 03, 04, 05 and 06, are finding life extremely difficult. This is the Motion that reflects the Federal character of this nation. I am not saying that it should be directed to my Constituency or to anybody's Constituency. Something should be done to alleviate the workers' problems.

In alleviating some of their problems, you have to refer this Motion to the Committee on Labour for them to find out the appropriate ways and means of doing that. Some Members have spoken to me on this particular Motion. I also want Members to understand that this is for the whole nation. I am not recommending a particular salary; I am not recommending a particular wage. I am saying that this Motion should be referred to the Committee on Labour for them to look into it appropriately and recommend ways and means of alleviating all these hardships.

**Mr Adekunle L. Alli (Lagos South) :** Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, your point of order.

**Mr Adekunle :** My point of order is Order 23 (1) :

*Upon an amendment to insert or add words Mr Speaker or the Chairman shall state the amendment and propose the question thereon in the form "That those words be there inserted (or added)".*

We have an Amendment by the hon. Member for Ero South (*Mr Olu Olofinlade*) which says :

In line 3, after the word *wage* insert of at least ₦200 per month.

I think this one should be taken before we proceed with the substantive Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** You are talking on the question of the Amendment, but I believe that the Mover of the Motion should speak first to explain what he wants this honourable House to do. When he has done that, then the Amendment will be taken.

The next person to speak will be the Mover of the Amendment. Please can you round off what you have to say on your Motion.

**Mr Ochiama :** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, but still I am laying emphasis on the availability of food because whatever you pay to this grade of people, in fact, it will not be useful to them unless there is sufficient food in this country, that is, prices of things are adequately controlled.

I am also saying, Mr Speaker, Sir, that it will be more appropriate, in fact, if it is possible to send prisoners who are in different prison yards, to the field for them to make food available. They themselves will eat and it will be a useful exercise.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Can you please round off what you have to say.

**Mr Ochiama :** With these submissions, I now beg your indulgence to give this Motion the unanimous support it deserves. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The hon. Member for Ero South (*Mr Olu Olofinlade*) can now move his Amendment.

**Mr Olu Olofinlade (Ero South) :** I rise to move the amendment standing in my name as follows :

In line 3, after the word *wage* insert of at least ₦200 per month.

I beg to move.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No ! (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr T. O. Badejo (Mushin Central I) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, this is a green letter day.

**The Deputy Speaker :** You just second the Motion and sit down.

**Mr Badejo :** I am sorry, Sir. I beg to second.

**Mr Olofinlade :** What the Amendment is seeking is to bring certainty into the Motion so that the Committee on Labour—

**Chief Yomi Akintola (Ogbomosho Central) :** Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, your point of Order.

**Chief Akintola :** My point of Order is Order 23 (3), Sir. May I read ?

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes.

**Chief Yomi Akintola :** It says :

*Upon an amendment to leave out words and insert other words instead, Mr Speaker or the chairman shall first state the words to be left out and put the question thereon in the form. "That those words be left out", and if that question be agreed to, shall then state the words proposed to be inserted and put the question thereon in the form. "That those words be there inserted".*

He is not allowed Sir,—(*Interruptions*) Mr Speaker, Sir, I therefore submit that the Question be now put.

**Mr T. O. Badejo (Mushin Central) :** Point of explanation.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**The Deputy Speaker :** The hon. Member for Mushin Central I (*Mr T. O. Badejo*), explanation on what ?

**Mr Badejo :** I think I am permitted to explain Sir. Mr Speaker, Sir, it appears—

**The Deputy Speaker :** The hon. Member for Mushin Central I will you take your seat please ?

**Mr Badejo :** I am grateful, Sir. Point of explanation.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**The Deputy Speaker :** Are you getting up on a point of Order or a point of explanation ? If you are getting up on a point of Order, you may but not on a point of explanation.

The hon. Member for Ogbomosho Central (*Chief Yomi Akintola*) has made a valid observation on the point of Order he has raised.

The hon. Member for Ero South (*Mr Olu Olofinlade*), you are asking us to insert a minimum wage of at least ₦200 per month. Hon. Members, the Mover of this Amendment is amending the Motion to read as follows :

*That in pursuance of Section 16 (2) (1) of the Nigerian Constitution and considering the apparent inadequacy of living standards of Nigerian workers, this House directs the Committee on Labour, to seek ways and means of determining a reasonable national minimum wage of at least ₦200 per month with a view to improving living conditions for Nigerian workers.*

That is the Question now. (*Interruptions*). Please hon. Members, may I have your attention ? I have to put the Question.

You have your Standing Orders. You had better read your Standing Order Number 23, hon. Members,

Mr Olu Olofinlade, I have read out the Amendment which you are proposing. You are allowed to speak on your Amendment and the Question will be put after it has been seconded. Please, go ahead.

**Mr Olu Olofinlade :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Sir, What my Amendment is seeking is to make the Motion certain so that when the Committee on

[MR OLOFINLADE]

Labour considers the minimum wage, it will take a guideline from the directive of this House. This House has to give the directive and the directive is that the minimum that they should give is ₦200. They can go further but the minimum will be ₦200.

If you consider the hyper-inflation in the country, you will realise that ₦200 minimum wage is a meagre sum for people with family—wives, children and dependants to live upon. As I have noticed the attitude of the Members of this House that they have a lot of consideration for the low-income earners. I know that this House will support the Amendment because what the Amendment is seeking is that the Committee on Labour will not have any rigmarole on it. They will know that all there is before them is to advance further from the ₦200 or leave it at that. I am asking for the support of this honourable House and I know that they will give me the support.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, you had better dispose of the Amendment.

**Dr M. B. Ukpong (Abak) :** Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Who are you pointing to order? Dr Ukpong, will you please sit down?

*Question put and negatived.*

**Mr Effiong Ononokpono (Oron I) :** I press for a Division.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, it is obvious that there is no Division on this matter. The decision is final. (*Interruptions*) Order please!

Hon. Members, we are all in this House to interpret the Nigerian Constitution. I believe that Section 16 (2) (d) to which you referred is quite correct. That Section guarantees comfort for all the citizens of this country and not for a particular section of the society. We have to improve their living conditions, we have to give them adequate shelter, sufficient food, a reasonable national minimum living wage, *et cetera*. This is what the Constitution is asking us to do. It is our responsibility to interpret the Constitution to suit all the citizens of Nigeria. As much as possible, we must try to avoid politicking on the Floor of this House. We are here to serve all the citizens of this country. Although we are here as politicians, we are not to serve the interests of our individual Political Parties. We are to work together for the good of the whole country. We are not here on a political campaign. Yes, Alhaji Yelwa?

**Mr S. O. Olowu (Ikale) :** Point of Order!

**The Deputy Speaker :** What point of Order are you making and in respect of whom? Alhaji Yelwa has not said anything yet.

**Mr S. O. Olowu :** Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of Order is Order No. 38 (1). If I may read, with your permission, it says :

*If the opinion of Mr Speaker, or in committee of the whole House the chairman, as to the decision of a question is challenged, Mr Speaker or the Chairman shall direct that the lobbies be cleared, and on such direction being given the door at the south end of each lobby shall be locked, and the division bells shall be rung for one minute.*

Mr Speaker, Sir, the decision of the Speaker has been challenged and a Division must be forced

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, I have not expressed an opinion. I have passed a decision on what we (myself and the Clerk of the House) thought was unanimous. We feel that the *Noes* had it, and I have accordingly accepted it as such.

Yes, hon. Member for Yauri (*Alhaji Yelwa*), make your contribution.

**Alhaji Mohammed A. Yelwa (Yauri) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, distinguished Representatives, I am happy that this Motion has crossed two hurdles—one is the Constitutional issue raised and the other is the Amendment to the Motion.

We have no political motives behind this Motion; we did not put the Motion forward because of any political goals. Our intention is to look after the welfare of Nigerian workers generally, not caring what Political Parties must have promised the electorate.

I am looking at this Motion from three angles. Already we know that there is provision for adequate shelter, adequate food and reasonable minimum wage for Nigerian workers. But in doing so, we should consider that it is not workers alone that we should have in mind when we talk of a minimum wage. That is why we are cautious not to fix a specific amount. We have to remember our farmers and craftsmen who form the great majority of our people. We cannot just raise the salary of workers and forget about the sufferings of the common men. That was why we suggested in our Motion that this matter should be referred to the Committee on Labour to carry out a thorough and objective investigation and also ensure that the people who produce our food do not suffer by this so-called adequate minimum wage provision.

As regards the present condition, we know what the low-income group earners are earning. Those on G.L. 02 earn about ₦78, those on G.L. 03 earn about ₦87, and those on G.L. 04 earn about ₦110. Facing the reality of the situation, we know that these salaries are not enough to cater for the individual; but it is not our intention to stipulate a figure. We would prefer the Committee on Labour to do this. But we feel that in the present condition in Nigeria, an ordinary man today would require a shelter which would cost him not less than ₦20 a month, no matter what part of the country the shelter may be and his food alone would cost him about ₦50 a month. Naturally, he would need some clothing which would cost him about ₦10 a month, and that means that he would spend about ₦30 in three months to buy three sets of clothing. You will therefore find that an ordinary man would spend about ₦80 a month. So, if he earns ₦70 a month and spends about ₦80 a month, then we are putting him in a very difficult position, especially when he is not catering for himself alone. Even where he caters for himself alone, he would still have some other problems to face. Whether or not he has a family to cater for, you will find that, he has, one way or the other, other commitments requiring some expenditure.

[ALHAJI YELWA]

As I have previously said, we have no intention of forcing any figure on anybody. Our aim is to refer this matter to the Committee on Labour. Let the Committee interview some people. They should first interview the farmers and find out, on the average, what a farmer can produce in a year. Let them find out what type of crops he can produce and the cost of such crops. Let them interview school leavers without families, find out what they require to do with the salary which they would now be earning; find out from older people with families what they are now earning and what other problems they face. Based on the findings of this investigation, the Committee can come to an utmost amicable position whereby a minimum wage can be fixed. In doing so, we are not providing any new thing for workers, we are only fulfilling the provision of the Constitution.

Once we have successfully interviewed these people and the position of the Nation's economy is known, we should evolve a permanent way of checking the soaring cost of living in this country. We should not try to encourage inflation. If the position of farmers and craftsmen is not considered, any rise in salary would not help the workers themselves. I hope the workers themselves would realise that we are not just bringing in this Motion for the sake of politics, but that we are sincerely thinking of the welfare of every Nigerian. We are sincerely trying to make sure that every Nigerian is privileged to have a shelter, either by renting or by building his own house. He should also be sure of getting his three-square meals a day which would be proportionate to his scale of salary.

I am sure that my other Colleagues will have contributions to make; but with the few remarks and observations that I have made, I beg to move the Motion.

**Mr David H. Gbaaondo (Takum)**: Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of this august House, before I go on to make my contributions to this Motion, I would like to let the people in the Gallery (among them there are some low-income earners) to know the attempts that are being made on this Motion in order to kill it. I believe the people concerned will have some questions to answer when they go out because this Motion is not controversial. I, therefore, beg those who are trying to kill this Motion not to do so.

The living condition of our low-income workers throughout Nigeria today is an abuse to this Nation and hangs like the Sword of Damocles over the head of legislators. I believe when we were campaigning to come here, we made so many statements to the poor people of this country that whenever we come here we would try to improve their living conditions. So, we must do something about it. As we are here today, we must do everything possible to see that their living condition is improved. Section 16 (2) (d) of the Constitution will be violated if we do not come together to make this Motion successful.

A country like Nigeria is very rich in everything, is known for its economic position in Africa and holds a large population of foreigners. I do not therefore see any reason why some people should be

suffering because they do not have money to buy food, clothes and other necessities of life. If Nigeria can send relief materials to a country like Ghana worth millions of naira, I do not also see the reason why its own people should be suffering. I am not against any country that Nigeria sends relief materials to but I am only being fair. You can prepare your house before you go out to prepare others. The low-income workers in Nigeria today are those on Grade Levels 01, 02, 03 and I may say, 04. The little these people are earning cannot serve them well given the situation in Nigeria today, especially in the Northern States. Those on level 01 earn just above fifty naira, not even up to sixty naira. Those on level 02 earn sixty-five naira or even less. If you take all this into consideration, you will see that the situation is very, very bad with regard to this group of salary earners. Therefore, we are begging the House to adopt this Motion so that the Committee on Labour will fix an amount that can adequately cope with the situation in this country today. This is because when we go to the market, nobody is going to be sold anything at a lower or higher price because he earns less or more. You may earn two or three kobo and you will be charged the same amount for an item in the market with the person who earns two or three hundred naira. These are some of the reasons that have brought about armed robbery in the country, smuggling, bankruptcy, stealing and disloyalty among workers.

With this contribution, I would suggest that hon. Members should try to pass this Motion so as to make sure that our low-income workers in this country receive great attention from the Federal Government. Thank you.

**Mr Amos Sunday (Song)**: Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, much has been said about this Motion and I want to be sincere to everybody. It would be a shame for any of us to go against this Motion because we want better living conditions for all Nigerians. We are saying this specifically because those who do not have their private business, the so-called employees, find that, after thirty days, they go to sign for sixty naira. It is a shameful thing. So, we are appealing to this House to co-operate and do something better so that those earning sixty naira per month could get something better and cope with the high cost of living in the country.

We have already known how high things cost now in the market. For example, three pieces of wrapper cost about sixty naira. Does it mean that if a person wants to buy these pieces for his wife, he is not going to eat again? It is a shameful thing, in fact, to see that these people go to the same market with those who are earning more than that as allowances. So, Mr Speaker, please let us not take it that this Motion has been brought to challenge any party. That is not the case at all. We brought this Motion so that we could come together, think properly over it, throw it to the appropriate Committee to discuss and then suggest to the Executive body of the government to do something to those who are concerned to make their living a bit better than before.

With this, Mr Speaker, I beg to support the Motion. Thank you.

**Chief Yomi Akintola** (Ogbomosho Central): I is rather sad that a good Motion such as this is being turned into a political weapon. We are all deeply interested in the plight of our fellow Nigerians, more so the working class of this nation. I remember some time ago during the time we were earning five shillings minimum wage, a driver told his boss that rather than pay him so much, he should leave him on what he was earning but he should compensate him for every round trip he made. As such every trip he made the man compensated him by paying so much. At the end of the year it was discovered that the man earned ten times as much as he was earning before. The owner was satisfied because the driver maintained the vehicle as if it was his own. This is the reason why I for one am opposed to talking in terms of a particular amount for the hard-working Nigerian.

A hard worker should be made to earn as much as his sweat or his body can carry him. Mr Speaker, Sir, in Nigeria we have labour organisations whose duties are to work for the interest of the workers. The minimum wage for any worker depends actually on the output or rather the collective bargaining as agreed between the employers and the Trade Unions. As such, we should at least allow the Labour Organisations and the owners of companies or Corporations to be in a position to negotiate freely. Once we start fixing a particular amount I am sure we will on the long run discover that we are not doing this in the interest of the working class. What we should do is to advise these large companies or Government Corporations to make adequate provisions for the living standards of these workers by providing adequate accommodations, good means of transportation and as it is happening today, free education for their children.

Hon. Members, we should all jointly work to improve the minimum wage and living conditions of low-income earners in this country. So, I urge you all to support this Motion.

**Mr Dagogo Princewill** (Degema I): Mr Speaker, hon. Members, all of us are aware that the reward of production comes in form of wages. Therefore, what determines adequate wage for an employee is production. We must achieve a certain standard of production—

**Mr Peter Obaoye Olayemi** (Irepodun): Point of Order. I am referring to Section 16 of the Nigerian Constitution. If we have to consider what the Section of the Constitution says, it does not confine itself to wages alone. It includes benefits, shelter, food, pension and so on. If you have to consider the Section in the Constitution, it means we have to pursue all the relevant things mentioned there. So, I do not see why we can take wages alone now and leave others.

**The Deputy Speaker**: What are you driving at? What the Motion says is *in pursuance of Section 16 (2) (d) of the Constitution*.

**Mr Olayemi**: The Section includes other things like old age care, pensions, food, sick benefits. I cannot see why we can take wages and leave other things out. For instance even if we pay a worker a

thousand naira a month and we leave other benefits aside, that does not conform with the provision of the Constitution.

**The Deputy Speaker**: I do not think this is relevant. The Constitution is providing for those things and this Motion is seeking for a minimum wage which it is free to do.

**Mr Princewill**: Mr Speaker, Sir, thank you for protecting me. As I was saying, we must achieve a certain standard of production before we can achieve the reward of production which comes in form of wages. Mr Speaker, Sir, we on this Side of the House are not opposed—(Interruptions)

**The Deputy Speaker**: Will you make your contribution and confine your observation to yourself?

**Mr Princewill**: Mr Speaker, no one is opposed to a minimum wage and that impression should be taken away. The relevant Section that is referred to which is Section 16 (2) (d) is not mandatory. It is an objective which we have to achieve in the course of our nationhood. To say that it is mandatory and therefore that a certain sum should be set as a minimum wage, then the country would be in chaos and confusion. How can we determine minimum wage by fixing a certain amount? If we say Grade Level 01 should earn so much, what is going to be the progressive scale from Grade Level 02 to Grade Level 16 or 17.

**Mr T. O. Olusi** (Lagos South): Point of Order. The point of order is a Constitutional provision.

**The Deputy Speaker**: What Section of the Constitution.

**Mr Olusi**: I will tell you, Mr Speaker, if you will exercise some patience. I would like to draw your attention to the Second Schedule in the Exclusive List.

Under Item 32 we have the following:

*Labour, including Trade Unions, Industrial Relations, conditions, safety and welfare of Labour; Industrial Disputes; prescribing a national minimum wage for the Federation or any part thereof; and Industrial Arbitrations.*

Mr Speaker, Sir, the point is that it is part of the responsibility of the National Assembly to prescribe minimum wage. No other Government in the Federation can do that except this House. So, my friend, hon. Mr Princewill, is grossly out of order to say that we cannot prescribe a minimum wage. (Applause)

**Mr Princewill**: Those of us who are opposed to a certain amount being fixed as a minimum wage are not opposed to a good salary being paid to the workers. I am opposed to—(Interruptions)

**The Deputy Speaker**: Please can you always confine your observation to yourself?

**Mr Princewill**: Mr Speaker, I am opposed to a certain amount being fixed because there is nothing magical in that amount over which certain people have been parading themselves.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Mr Princewill, you are speaking on a matter that has already being disposed off on the Floor of this House.

**Mr Princewill :** Thank you Mr Speaker, I am in favour of this Motion and I support wholeheartedly that the Committee on Labour should seek ways and means of determining what would constitute a minimum wage.

I beg to support.

**The Deputy Speaker :** It is almost one o'clock and a lot of people want to speak on this Motion. We have got to go on with the debate until 1 o'clock but we have to come back in the afternoon.

**Alhaji A. D. O. Abutu (Ankpa South) :** I have to express my gratitude to the entire Members of this august House and the Speaker and also those who ably moved this comprehensive Motion. (*Applause*) My happiness is that this Motion is going to the Committee that is charged with the responsibility for this type of Motion. We are all aware that in a Presidential System of Government—

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members the House is suspended till 3 o'clock.

*Sitting suspended : 12.43 p.m.*

*Sitting resumed : 3.20 p.m.*

**The Deputy Speaker :** The hon. Member for Ankpa South (*Alhaji Abubakar Abutu*), was on the Floor—before we went on break.

**An hon. Member :** I do not think there is quorum.

**The Deputy Speaker :** You talk about quorum at four o'clock, not now.

**Alhaji Abutu :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, thank you very much for putting me up again.

As you all are aware, we are practising a new system called the Presidential System of Government which works through Committees. My happiness with this morning's Motion is that it has been referred to the appropriate quarters. I would like to caution that Nigerian Workers have suffered under the yolk of ignorance. This ignorance came from the leaders of the Trade Unions including myself who go out to demand minimum wages for Nigerian workers. As a result, farmers, traders and other people, as soon as they hear the news that workers salaries have been increased, they will increase the prices of all the commodities in the market.

Let me draw the attention of the hon. Members to the two Commissions on national minimum wage the Adebo Commission and the Udoji Commission. If you can recollect, it was from there that prices of commodities started to increase and since then we have had increases in the prices of commodities every year ; in fact every month. I believe that the Committee will do justice and I implore all the hon. Members who have experience in industrial relations

to assist the Committee by putting up memoranda which will help the Committee because this is a big task.

We may be thinking we are doing something good to the workers, but we may be killing them by proposing something which may not be in their interest. For instance, what I did when I was a labour man in the most important and the biggest trade union in Nigeria which is the Textile Garment and Allied Workers' Union, in 1976 was collective bargaining in various textile industries in the Federal Republic of Nigeria. We got increases ranging from seventy-five *per cent* to eighty *per cent* unannounced to the Press. We recognised that the previous increases did not help the workers. Since then, no worker has suffered any loss at all.

I am sorry to refer you to the past but history always counts. I also feel that I should advise in my position as a labour expert that today in most sections of the private sector, some of the sweepers in some of the textile factories I was talking about (I think I have here some of my friends who are labour people), are on more than two hundred naira minimum wage per month because there are other basic amenities. I am glad we passed a useful Motion yesterday about car basic allowance. These are some of the amenities workers enjoy. They are so numerous that if we in this honourable House, are able to get workers the fringe benefits required, they may not even need increases in salaries. This is because all these fringe benefits, like housing allowance, car basic allowance, bicycle allowance, motor-cycle allowance, leave allowance, hospitalization allowance, *et cetera* are not taxable. These are things that we should think about for the improvement of the lot of workers.

When I met the Nigerian Labour Congress officials last week, they said they did not want wage increases, that they wanted fringe benefits. This was just a private discussion. I totally refused to accept that we should continue to put the Nigerian workers into problems by going to the Press, talking big grammar, saying we want increases or we want this or that only for these things to go into other people's pocket—the saboteurs, the middlemen in Nigeria while the workers will be the losers. So, I am happy that the Committee on Labour will take a stand on this. They should not recommend any minimum wage for Nigerian workers because it will do them no good. We have to think of the goods and services that will be very cheap to the Nigerian workers.

We have to think of productivity bargaining. When a worker is paid according to his output, he will enjoy it. For instance, we have the white collar workers but I think they are in the minority in this country now. Up to seventy-five *per cent* of the Nigerian workers are in the private and the technical sectors. When I say the technical sector, it is where we have the skilled and unskilled workers including the artisans. These have to be paid according to their training and efficiency. Then you have to pay them using their production as the yard-stick



[ALHAJI ABUTU]

I think that is what will help Nigeria because I do not believe in just saying that two hundred naira will be good for the workers. Even five hundred naira is too small because they will not get anything out of it.

Some of you who are economists and industrialists should help us to get some facts so that we will be able to bring to the notice of the government a standard that can benefit the Nigerian workers. If one takes into account the developed nations like England, America and other places, their governments do not go for minimum wages. That is rubbish because, it does not help at all. You only just kill the workers. You may think you are helping them but you are killing them. So, please, we should stop the question of minimum wages because we are killing the workers. We are putting them into a poor position whereby they cannot get a kobo out of their salary.

Mr Speaker, Sir, Thank you very much for allowing me make these few remarks.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The hon. Member for Bori I (*Prince J. S. Sangha*) is to speak.

**Prince J. S. Sangha (Bori I) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, it appears there is a fashionable design in this honourable House now. People often play to the gallery. You cannot take up the question of minimum wage without identifying other variables in the economy. We are here talking of salaries, but is it what the workers really want? If you ask me, my answer is no. Some people come with different expectations into the organisation and the organisation itself has its own expectations of the workers.

**Mr S. U. Nwanganga (Aba) :** Point of Order. There is no quorum.

**The Deputy Speaker :** You do not consider quorum yet : Wait until four o'clock please.

**Mr Mike J. Akpabio (Uyo II) :** Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** What is your Point of Order?

**Mr Akpabio :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I would want your ruling, Sir.

**The Deputy Speaker :** What is your Order number?

**Mr Akpabio :** Order No. 26 (5). I want your ruling on whether the use of the words that hon. Members are playing to the gallery is Parliamentary.

**Several hon. Members :** Yes ! Yes !

**The Deputy Speaker :** Playing to the gallery is a parliamentary language please.

**Prince Sangha :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. If I may continue—

**Mr S. G. Laosebikan (Iwo West) :** Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Point of Order on what?

**Mr Laosebikan :** Section 16.

**The Deputy Speaker :** What Point of Order is that?

**Mr Laosebikan :** It is on the Constitution.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, what section?

**Mr Laosebikan :** Section 16 (d)

**The Deputy Speaker :** There is no Section 16 (d)

**Mr Laosebikan :** Sorry, it is Section 16 (2) (d).

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, we have Section 16 (2) (d).

**Mr Laosebikan :** We have a duty here to fix the minimum wage for workers. It is our Constitutional duty and we swore that we would uphold this Constitution.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Please continue.

**Prince Sangha :** Mr Speaker, Sir, thank you once again for protecting me. The point here is that despite the romanticisation of the rhetorics that many of us here are carried away by, there is an economic reality in this Motion; that you do not just get into the provisions of the Constitution like people have been over-flogging the issue of Section 16 (2) (d). It is not specific that it should be only the workers. This section is clearly saying that at a point in time this country must provide food, shelter and so on, for the people of this country. Those of us who want to exploit the sympathy that many people have for workers come out often to declare that minimum wage is required. If you look at the statistics of this country, you will find that about 80 per cent of the entire population are peasant farmers for whom no provisions have been made whatsoever. You cannot think of growing more food without thinking of subsidy. You do not think of giving more money to the workers without providing what they are going to spend their money on.

**The Deputy Speaker :** There is a point of Order.

**Mr S. Laosebikan (Iwo West) :** We are talking of minimum wage and not about food.

**Mr Sangha :** Could my hon. Colleague please read the Motion?

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am in total support of all the efforts that this House and the Executive would muster in support of the welfare of the workers of this great country. I am in total support of what would be done to alleviate the plight of the ordinary farmers, tens and thousands of them at home, the silent majority for whom nobody speaks in this place. I think, we do not necessarily want to create hardship for workers because if we introduce any new wage structure now in the economy so many people will be retrenched tomorrow. Some of these people have many children in the school. Some have other dependants. What I am saying basically is that workers of this country need a type of welfare programme ranging from cheap housing where they can stay and pay about 5 per cent of their salary. They want cheap transportation, cheap food, good medical care and qualitative free education. (*Interruptions*). My hon. Colleagues, the way to address this issue is not even to mention salaries because as soon as you do that, you will see the repercussion in the market tomorrow. It appears many of us do not want to learn. There was the Adebo, the Asabia, and the Udoji Commissions. All these Commissions came out with nothing. Increases in salary or in any thing have not helped the economy nor the nation nor even the workers. So the time has now come when we should think of their welfare more than what we think of their pay packets.

My submission here is that when this matter goes to the Committee, I want the Committee to limit itself to the real issue that bedevils the workers of this country today. We should ask why they have personal income but not take-home income. So, they should look into their welfare. Staff quarters should be provided for all. Staff quarters should become part of the pre-requisite for all employers. Free transport facilities should be made available to the workers. Income subsidy where necessary could come in, in form of food coupon or anything that would alleviate the sufferings of these large families. They would prefer all these to the increases in salary which will only go to worsen the spiralling inflation already existing in the economy.

Subsidy should be given to farmers to encourage them to grow more food. Until we do this, we are running away from the issue. After they have been subsidised, then they can have relative productivity with people in the United States and in London where one can buy a fowl for one dollar, but it is not the cost of that fowl. Somebody is paying the other two dollars that you have not spent there. You buy a cup of rice for about ten cents. That is not the cost of the rice. The cost of production for that matter is more than what you are paying. It is being subsidised by the Government. I think this is what we should address ourselves to in this country.

With this contribution Mr Speaker, I hope when this matter goes to the Committee, they will be in a better position to know the area where they have to address their minds to and to do away with anything like the minimum wage. We are not ripe for it. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I will now call on Mr Okoye.

**John Okoye (Aguata):** Thank you Mr Speaker. I rise to support the Motion. No right thinking Nigerian will say that he will not support this Motion because with the experience some of us who had not been in the Civil Service are having here, I know it is very difficult for a worker earning ₦200 or ₦300 to maintain his family, his car and pay his house rent. We must be in sympathy with these people. I must be sincere to say that these people are in hell. With the biting inflation in today's market, one can see that a person earning a hundred Naira a month cannot come back home at the end of the month with a kobo. Supposing a member of his family is sick and with his poor salary he goes to the hospital and a bill of about sixty Naira is given to him, what do you think such a person will do?

In most cases you can see that the reason for corruption in our society is caused by poor salary. Some people might have good intention to do a job very well but because they are poorly paid, and because they have no alternative, when you offer them anything they will just manage it and add it to their income. I am appealing to the House to support this Motion. We are not playing to the gallery as some people have said but I am saying sincerely that some people are suffering. Thank you.

**Mr David Atta (Okpokwu East):** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion. I do so with every sense of responsibility. In doing so I am not going to pull any political punch or polemics. I am going to dwell on purely fundamental issues—things like inflation and the extent to which it has affected the low-income earner in this country. Then the need to look into our system of income distribution and the need again to work out an effective income policy. I am going to talk within this context.

Nigeria is a nation of extremes, a nation of too rich people and a nation of too poor people. We know what problem the resultant situation has created for the political system. This situation is singularly responsible for the general disillusionment, dissatisfaction and disenchantment. So, we owe it a duty as a body to bridge the yawning gulf that now exists in the various income levels and the final point of the impact has always been on the low-income earners of this country. We all buy from the same market and we have the same basic requirement to satisfy namely shelter, clothing and food. We know the extent which inflation has eaten deep into the pocket of an average income earner in Nigeria with the result that his money is not worth anything.

With due respect to the observation made by the hon. Member for Bori I (*Mr J. S. Sangha*) we cannot do everything at a time but we can do something at a time. This issue of minimum wage is something which is consistent with our Constitutional powers. We are not doing anything that is at variance with the Constitutional provisions, especially on this issue.

Inflation can arise as a result of very many situations. One does not require the professional competence of an economist to be able to identify these realities. Inflation exists when there is a general rise in the level of income in the economy, it can also arise when too much money is chasing too few goods. It can arise when people increase the price of their products, and it can arise when workers make unnecessary demand for wage increases. And most times all factors can interact and one can spill into other. So, it is a complex situation and we know it generally that inflation is one of the most serious economic problems of the nation which we need to do something about.

Having said this much, the task before us is to do something for this group of people who are hardest hit—the low-income level people we find in the society. We all agree that our society is very unfairly structured. I do not know how long we are going to continue with the situation.

To round up, I would like to suggest that the Committee which is going to be charged with this responsibility should see to it that they come up with positive suggestions about the need to have an effective income policy. Secondly, there is a need to open up a national wage bargaining process through which employers of Labour, the Government and the Unions can go into co-operative relationship so that ultimately they will be working towards price stabilisation. They will see to it that they monitor general wage movement.

[MR ATTA]

Without actually pre-empting the Committee, I would suggest too, as an *interim* measure, a 20 per cent *interim* award to workers between Grade Levels 01 and 06 until this issue of minimum wage is fully determined.

Well, my Colleagues from the other end were worrying that the minimum wage might not get to the level of ₦200 per person. It is not an issue that can be arbitrarily determined. The living cost index has to be taken into consideration and the state of the economy has to be taken into consideration. All I am saying is that the minimum wage level may even be more than ₦200 which our Colleagues are proposing. It is not an issue which can be decided ahead of a realistic survey of the situation.

With these few remarks I beg to take my seat.

**An hon. Member :** Point of observation.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Observation on what? I want to dispose of this Motion and so there is no room for observation.

**Alhaji Sarki Adamu (Dawakin-Kudu) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to fully support this Motion. This Motion is one of the most important Motions brought to the Floor of this House.

**An hon. Member :** Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** What is your point of Order?

**Mr T. C. Amasiatu (Oru) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to say that no quorum has been formed.

**Several hon. Members :** Sit down! Sit down!

**Alhaji Adamu :** Mr Speaker, Sir, minimum wage means to secure a legal minimum wage in order to raise the minimum standard of living of low-income earners. This is very important and it will surely be in the interest of the nation to see that the low-income earners are helped. But there are two or three problems. Firstly, by raising the standard of living of the low-income earners, it means prices will simultaneously go up with the rising wages. The cost of production will rise, and the cost of living of the ordinary man in the rural areas and those who are employed will also rise.

If we want to increase the minimum wage of the low-income workers, we have to make sure that prices are controlled. We have also to make sure that company owners are forced to minimise profits so that workers can compete with their counterparts elsewhere. Mr Speaker, it is only in Nigeria or in Africa that the gap between the rich and the poor is very wide. Overseas, the gap between the rich and the poor is very narrow because a labourer is encouraged to get as much money as the middle or the top class of workers. This is because of the high overtime claims he gets.

**The Deputy Speaker :** There is a point of Order.

**An hon. Member :** The point of Order is Standing Order 16.

**The Deputy Speaker :** That is not necessary

at this stage. What has that got to do with what the hon. Member for Dawakin-Kudu (*Alhaji Sarki Adamu*) is saying? Will you please sit down?

Alhaji Adamu, please round up.

**Alhaji Adamu :** Mr Speaker, if we are bound to increase the minimum wage of labourers, we shall have to encourage voluntary organisations, Trade Associations and Consumer Protection Boards. These Voluntary Organisations are private; they are not officially appointed by the Government. But some businessmen in the country are encouraged to pay special interest on protecting consumers by trying to check prices and report to the Government whenever prices are high so that the Government can remedy the situation.

Another thing is that Trade Association in every country fight to see that prices are always controlled by getting accurate statistics of all consumer products.

**Mr A. Afonja (Oyo Central) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, in view of the fact that it is now 4 o'clock, I would like to move that we suspend Standing Order 8 so that we can continue with this debate because this is a very important debate.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, it is 4 o'clock; so we have to resolve to suspend Standing Order number 8 on quorum if we want to continue with the debate. (*Interruptions*) Hon. Members, you have only two alternatives to this Motion. You either agree that Standing Order number 8 be suspended or this Motion will be guillotined and allowed to be moved for only one hour tomorrow before the Question is put to the House.

**Several hon. Members :** Yes.

**The Deputy Speaker :** In that respect a Member has to move the suspension of this Motion.

**Mr A. B. Yahaya (Ilorin East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to withdraw my first Motion for the Question to be put. I move that the Debate be suspended till tomorrow when the Motion will be debated for one hour.

**Mr E. B. Etienam (Oron II) :** I rise to second this Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Is it the wish of the hon. Members that this Debate be suspended until tomorrow when it would be debated for one hour?

**Several hon. Members :** Yes.

*Question put and agreed to.*

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr Aliyu Mahmud (Yola) :** I now move that the House stands adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

**Alhaji A. Tuggar (Gamawa) :** I beg to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That the House stands adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 4 p.m.*

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

## FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Wednesday, 13th February, 1980

The House met at 10.30 a.m.

## PRAYERS

(The Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

## Late General Murtala Muhammed

**The Deputy Speaker :** Today the 13th February, 1980, I would like hon. Members to observe one-minute silence for a great Nigerian, General Murtala Muhammed, who was killed in an abortive coup. It was the work of this General that made it possible for us to be in this Assembly when he agreed to transfer power to civilian. Let us observe one-minute silence for the man. (*One-minute silence observed*)

Hon. Members, if you look at the Order Paper of today there have been some very serious mistakes. One is on the Motion on minimum wage and living conditions for low-income workers.

Mr Olu Olofinlade only moved an Amendment which this House rejected yesterday but the main Movers of the Motion are Mr T. N. Ochiama, Alhaji Mohammed A. Yelwa, Mr David H. Gbaaondo and Mr Amos Sunday. The mistake emanated from the draft given to the Printers. On the main Notices of Motions we have no Senator M. O. Ugwu in our midst and the mistake was the Printers' devil.

## Votes and Proceedings

I have gone through the Votes and Proceedings of yesterday Tuesday the 12th February, 1980, and they reflect the true position of what happened in the House. I have therefore approved them.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Committee Witnesses

There are one or two announcements. The Clerk of the National Assembly will appreciate it if the Chairman of any Committee wishing to invite witnesses from outside Lagos will please advise him so that he can arrange transport, payment of bills, that is, hotel accommodation and other Administrative matters where necessary. If we invite any witness outside Lagos we are supposed to pay his fare and his hotel accommodation up to the time we finish with him. Therefore, it is absolutely important that the Committees inform the Clerk of the National Assembly about the names of people they are inviting from outside Lagos.

Secondly, in view of the diplomatic privileges and immunities, it is inappropriate to invite members of the Diplomatic Corps as any information desired from Foreign Embassies can be obtained through our own Ministry of External Affairs.

## Committee Meetings

The Committee on Defence is meeting in the Committee Room at 3 o'clock, Committee on Labour will meet in the Committee Room at 11 o'clock, Business Committee will meet at 12 noon at the Staff Conference Room, Committee on Judiciary will meet at 1 o'clock at the Committee Room No. 3, Committee on Petroleum and Energy Conservation will meet in Committee Room No. 4 at 1.30 p.m. and the Committee on Public Works will meet at 2 p.m. in the Senate Committee Room.

I had a meeting with the Chairmen of all Standing Committees of the House of Representatives yesterday. At that meeting it was agreed that due to lack of Committee Rooms in the National Assembly, the House would try as much as possible to adjourn the Debates at 1 o'clock so that Members of Committees could go back to Badagry Road at 1 o'clock and hold their Committee Meetings in the Committee Room there. Secretaries will be given transport to go there to take the minutes of the Committees.

In order to do this, we will have to suspend the Standing Order which requires that meetings of all Committees must take place within the premises of the National Assembly.

## Presidential Special Assistant

Hon. Members, the last announcement is that I have in the Box Mr Archibong, Archibong Omon who is the Special Assistant to the Presidential Adviser on National Assembly Liaison. He is the Assistant to Dr K. O. Mbadiwe and has been deployed permanently to the House of Representatives.

There is a point of information from an hon. Member.

**Mr Bayo Akinbisehin (Ifesowapo) :** It is on the announcement that an Order will be suspended in respect of Committees holding outside the premises. Do we take it that already you have made up your mind to suspend the Order or that we should move a Motion in this House suspending that Order which will formalise the whole thing!

**The Deputy Speaker :** You have to move that this Standing Order be suspended.

**Mr Akinbisehin :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am not capable of moving that. I think the Chairmen of Committees or the Speaker himself or the Leader of the House should do that.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The Leader of the House will move the suspension of the Standing Order. At least for this week, I do not think there is going to be any meeting taking place at Badagry; maybe the meetings will start as from Monday. So, we do not necessarily have to move a Motion for the suspension of the Standing Order now, but we will have to move it before Friday. I think the best thing we can do in this circumstance is that we will try to provide accommodation for Committee meetings within the premises of the National Assembly for any Chairman who has not been able to obtain

[THE DEPUTY SPEAKER]

Committee Room. If the Chairman of that particular Committee wishes to hold his meeting in Badagry, he will move a Motion on that day asking for the suspension of this particular Standing Order.

**Mr T. N. Ochiama** (Ikeduru) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I appreciate the explanation you made as regards the so-called typographical error in the item on the Order Paper which is standing in my name. Mr Speaker, Sir, I would not like this type of thing to occur again.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Hon. Member for Ikeduru (*Mr Ochiama*), I have taken care of that please.

#### Joint Committee on Remuneration

Hon. Members, I have received today the report of the Joint Committee on Remuneration. It is not possible to cyclostyle the verbatim report of the witnesses that had been interviewed for circulation to Members. The Committee have made their recommendations and I am giving these recommendations to the Clerk of the House of Representatives to cyclostyle and issue to Members by tomorrow morning. The report will be laid before this House tomorrow and it will be up to the House to decide what will be done with the report. (*The Deputy Speaker consulted with the Clerk*)

Hon. Members, I have just been told that this report has now been sent to the Government Printers for printing and we do not know when it will come back here. The main recommendation is only a few pages and if it is the wish of this House, we can cyclostyle the main recommendation for Members while waiting for the Printers.

#### ORDER OF THE DAY

##### Minimum Wage

##### Adjourned Debate on Question

(12th February, 1980)

*Motion made and Question again proposed.* That in pursuance of Section 16 (2) (d) of the Nigerian Constitution and considering the apparent inadequacy of living standards of Nigerian workers, this House directs the Committee on Labour to seek ways and means of determining a reasonable national minimum wage with a view to improving living conditions for Nigerian workers.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Yesterday, we agreed that the Motion on the Order Paper—Minimum Wage and Living Conditions for Low Income Workers would be guillotined and one hour debate was going to be allowed on it before the Question was put to the House. This was because there were a lot of people who still wanted to speak on this Motion. I think Members will be allowed to speak for five minutes. I am starting this morning with the UPN side as I promised yesterday and every Member is going to speak for five minutes. We are going round.

**Mr Olugbolahan Ijaola** (Lagos North East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, the question of the minimum wage for workers is what I would appeal to the Committee on Labour to view with seriousness

since it is the intention of the House that if the Motion is carried, it will be referred to the Committee on Labour.

The average Nigerian worker's life should be taken into consideration. We should ask what it takes the average worker to have a room or two rooms if he is with a wife and four children and also what it takes each family a day to eat properly? There are some people who really just eat anything. There are some of us who really feed; there are some of us who are dieting even with the most expensive of what we can call *feeds*, not the agricultural term in this case.

I would appeal to the Labour Committee to make sure that enough evidence is called for from labour leaders. They should not interview the labour leaders alone because we know that some labour leaders are living posh. They should interview the rank and file of the working classes, like the daily-paid employee of the Nigerian Ports Authority who is directly involved in the carrying of goods by the head, by the shoulder or by any other means; the manual labourer, in short, should be interviewed. Apart from that, those of them that do work with most of our manufacturing companies, like machine turners, *et cetera*, should be called to give evidence. This type of working class should be able to catch the attention of the Labour Committee so that we would really know what these people suffer. We should be able to know how much they pay as transport fares for their children to go to school everyday, irrespective of the part of the country in which they live. When we are fixing the minimum wage, it would be realised that even the ₦200 minimum wage, which was proposed by an Amendment and negated may not even be enough at the present time. We might come to realise that the ₦200 minimum wage was an amount that was probably enough last year; probably before the elections.

I appeal to the House and the Committee on Labour in particular, that there should be a serious view of all the working classes.

With these few remarks, I beg to support the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Thank you. Yes, Professor Ola.

**Professor O. Ola** (Ekiti West) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Ladies and Gentlemen, in rising to talk on this Motion, I would like to say that it is a very important Motion, and it is national in nature precisely because we all know that the labour force is very important if we are to transform and develop the economy.

I think our hon. Speaker said some time ago that this House could not afford any open confrontation with the workers of this country. That was a very able and frank observation. In regard to the importance of the labour force in the country, in terms of national unity and the development of our economy, I would like to give my support to the Motion. I hope that we all see it as an inter-party national Motion which is not to be regarded as partisan in nature.

[Professor Ola]

The reasons why I am giving my own support are as follows: When you look at it, the gap between the poor and the rich in this country has become so considerable that it is now intolerable. The minimum wage in the country today stands below ₦1,000; whereas, there are some people earning ₦10,000; ₦50,000 and ₦100,000. There are also hundreds of millionaires who have extras stored in the Bank both in this country and overseas. So, in effect, we have two Nigerians—the Nigerian of the poor and the Nigerian of the rich. I do not think that we can constitutionally support this division of the country into a permanent confrontation between the rich and the poor. It seems to me, therefore, that if we are to uphold the Constitution and build national unity and national brotherhood, we should bridge the gap between the rich and the poor. If we do not do this, then, we are calling for revolution and revolt in the future.

I would like to say, Mr Speaker, that the standard of living of the poor workers of this country is falling more and more because of the scarcity of goods and increasing inflation. So, what is happening in this country is that we have refused to give increased wages to the workers and, at the same time, we have refused to give them welfare in terms of real improvement in their material circumstances of living. It seems to me that we cannot refuse to do both. We cannot refuse to improve their welfare and, at the same time, refuse to give them increased wages. We either have to do one or both of them; and I would suggest that we do both of them.

When you look at it, Mr Speaker, you would agree with me that either in Lagos, Minna, Kano, Benin, Enugu or Port Harcourt, it is almost impossible for anybody in this country today to live on a wage of ₦60 or ₦80 or ₦100 per month. We know fully well that a wife and a husband with two children cannot feed on ₦100 per month not to talk of housing, transportation, *et cetera*. What we have succeeded in creating in this country is not only the division of the poor and the rich, but we have created millions of shelterless and shirtless people who are, more or less, what Mr Fanon called the wretched of the earth.

In view of the fact that workers cannot live with a manageable domestic budget, it is very reasonable that we bridge not only the income between the rich and the poor, but we should do what hon. Prince Sangha suggested yesterday, that is, that we should improve the welfare of the workers by raising the standard of the material circumstances in which they live.

In view of this, I would like to support the idea of sending this Motion to the Committee and the Committee doing a real, thorough, objective and scientific work of seeing how the minimum wage of the workers in this country would be increased. At the same time their living conditions in terms of housing, health, education, and transportation should be increased. I would like to suggest, Sir, that nothing short of between ₦150 and ₦250 would be adequate as the minimum wage. Thank you very much. (Applause)

**Mr Abiodun Afonja (Oyo Central):** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to lend my support to the Motion on the Floor of this House.

I think it was the late President John Kennedy of the United States who said that a nation that could not provide for the many who were poor, could certainly not protect the few who were rich. I think this is more true of a nation like our own where we have a large population of people who are really very poor. I would like to recommend to the Committee on Labour to investigate thoroughly the circumstances under which the poor and the common people of this country live. I would also like that we examine the circumstances in which a lot of the money that should have been used for the welfare of a lot of these people got stolen one way or the other. I think it is impossible to think of a minimum wage without thinking of what we have in our pocket. I also believe that it is impossible to think of what we have in our pocket without thinking of how we make this money and how it is being pilfered. I have my mind on a lot of things going on as far as the conduct of business in this country is concerned.

A lot of our businessmen apparently do not know the difference between business and fraud. Any time they can get away with a lot of money then it is business. So, I believe that we cannot debate—

**An hon. Member:** Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Yes.

**Mr Yusuf Amoka (Okene):** Mr Speaker, my point of Order is 26 (2). We are here concerned with the minimum wage and improvement of workers. We are not to discuss the life of businessmen which this man is introducing.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Will you continue please, hon. Member for Oyo Central (*Mr Afonja*)?

**Mr Afonja:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think we should try to see the problem from the point of view of how much money we really have to disburse in this country and the method of disbursing this money.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not want to waste any further time. All I just want to say is that the problem should be taken in its totality so that we can come out with a reasonable minimum wage. Thank you very much.

**Mr A. O. Omisore (Oranmiyan Central):** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, as had been rightly said by the former speakers, not only this morning but even yesterday, it is high time we took steps to see that the conditions of workers in this country are improved. We cannot over-emphasise in this Assembly the importance of workers. Without them the economy of this country will come into chaos. Without them we cannot have a go-ahead in all our industries; so we must take this opportunity to see that we improve the lot of the workers of this nation. By this, we must see that their income is increased.

The other day we were talking of ₦200 per month for the workers of this nation. I am glad today that we are now discussing it in this Assembly that

[Mr. Omisore]

these workers must be paid something reasonable. It is the duty of this House to decide what we should give to these workers. In my own opinion I suggest, in all honesty, that workers of this nation should be given ₦200 per month.

Some hon. Members : No !

**Mr Omisore :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members of this august Assembly, there are clear reasons for this. ₦200 per month is only ₦2,400 per annum for an average man or woman in this country. Apart from this, Sir, we must improve the lot of the workers by seeing that they live in good houses, that is by giving them good shelter, and seeing that they have enough food.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member, we are talking about the minimum wage, not food and shelter.

**Mr Omisore :** Mr Speaker, the Motion does not say minimum wage alone ; it says : *living conditions of the workers of this nation*. With respect, Sir, I will suggest to this House that everything should be done to improve the lot of these workers from whose toil those of us in this Assembly will be earning our wages.

I will summarily say, Sir, that nothing is too much for these people but we must see that there is enough food for the workers because increment alone does not solve their problem. We have to fight inflation and we have to see that whatever these workers are given does not just go into the drains. I think if we can do this, we will be able to sustain this nation. Unless we do this we shall continue to be in trouble, not only with the workers but even with ourselves.

**Alhaji Yahaya Bichi (Bichi) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I really congratulate the hon. Members who moved this Motion.

In supporting the Motion, I would like to say that they have really favoured the junior workers of this country. The hon. Member for Ekiti West (*Prof. Opeyemi Ola*) compared the condition of the junior staff of this country with the condition of a worker who is earning between ₦60 and ₦100, having a wife and children. May be he has no house of his own and also no means of transportation. Therefore, Mr Speaker, if the present government will favour the masses, this is what to do to help the junior workers of this country so that they can perform their jobs efficiently. They will stay in Government Service instead of running away to join the Private Companies.

Mr Speaker, I really support this Motion and once again I would say that the Movers of this Motion have favoured the junior workers of this country. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Isyaku Gumawa (Gubasawa) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, in supporting this Motion, I wish to associate myself with the previous Speakers who have so far emphasised its importance. The Motion is also national in nature and one of the duties we have to do here. Junior workers are really suffering and something has to be done.

We always complain about the disparity between the rich and the poor. The gap is very wide. Also, the gap between junior and senior workers is so wide that no government would look at it and keep quite. One cannot expect a worker earning less than 100 naira to work efficiently. There must be absence from duty and disobedience in some cases because workers are frustrated. You will find that workers are not obedient, not because they really do not want to, but because they come to the office with so many unsolved problems. How do you expect such workers to concentrate?

Mr Speaker, I think the Motion is demanding something that is very clear and straightforward. This does not need much argument. Everybody knows clearly what the Motion demands and the government has to do something. So, I support the Motion and I hope that the Committee entrusted the job will do their homework properly and bring to this House a reasonable and acceptable minimum wage.

I will not say that a minimum of two hundred, three hundred or one hundred and fifty naira should be fixed. We trust the Committee, we know that they can do the work and they are going to do it. Therefore, let the Committee come out with something that will make the workers feel happy and alleviate some of their sufferings, if not all. Thank you.

**Mr Michael Akpabio (Uyo II) :** Mr Speaker, I rise to support the Motion in its entirety. In supporting the Motion, Sir, I need hardly say that one does not need to be a labour expert as my Colleague, the hon. Member for Anka South (*Mr Abutu*) said yesterday before, one would appreciate the hardship which those within the lower-income bracket have to go through. This is a Motion that is in the best interest of the nation, having regard to the consequences that usually follow industrial unrest.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it may be a very laudable suggestion to introduce Workers' Welfare Scheme as an hon. Member suggested yesterday. Certain things in our social life are not free. Let us think of those in the lower-income bracket wishing to marry. There are certain parts of this country where dowries stand at one thousand to five thousand naira. This cannot be free. Wives are never free. If junior workers or those in the lower-income bracket are supposed to marry, then they have to be given something reasonable.

Mr Speaker, Sir, there is no point suggesting a minimum wage of, say, ₦200, ₦300 or ₦500. In fact, workers in this country deserve more in order to enable them live very well with their families and discharge most of their obligations to the various communities. It is, therefore, the responsibility of this honourable House, Mr Speaker, Sir, to come to the aid of workers and redeem the lower-income group from the plight in which they now find themselves.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to mention that the Committee on Labour should be charged with the responsibility of finding some formula, having regard to certain demands put up by some Labour Unions towards what they might consider a mini-

mum wage for workers. Having this at the background, the Committee should come out with something that may have the blessings of this honourable House.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I belong to that school that has the concern of workers at heart, the school that believes in the happiness of the greatest number, and those in the lower-income group seem to form the greatest number in this country. So, Mr Speaker, Sir, this is a Motion over which there should be no splitting of hairs. It is a very good Motion insofar as the welfare of the majority of those who elected us to this honourable House is concerned.

With these very few observations, Mr Speaker, Sir, I very strongly support this Motion. Thank you very much.

**Mr Audu Mbicho (Gwoza)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, all of us know that this Motion is very comprehensive. To my mind, Mr Speaker, there is no need for any long debate on this Motion. But so far as you want to fulfil your promise of yesterday, then there is need for everybody to say a word or two.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the determination of a minimum wage for a nation like ours is a very, very essential issue which all of us should consider. Mr Speaker, all of us are aware of the standard of living of workers in this country. We have been seeing in some cases how most youths are roaming about and cannot afford to maintain themselves not to talk of thinking of marrying or having shelter for themselves because they are not adequately paid.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is necessary for the Committee to determine a minimum wage for workers in this country Mr Speaker, workers in this country and in fact, almost everybody is completely under a situation which is not really desirable. It is necessary, Mr Speaker, to direct the Committee on Labour to see to the issue because the situation has reached a point that this House should decide what to do about it. It should also fix, at least, ₦150 to be the minimum wage for every worker in this country.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Can you round up please?

**Mr Audu Mbicho** : Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir, I think even if it is less than that we have all experienced the prevailing condition. There is nobody who is new to this situation. With this in mind, Mr Speaker, the Committee on Labour should suggest a reasonable amount for every worker.

Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker** : is anybody opposing the Motion ?

**Mr C. K. Gutus (Pankshin)** : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion. I am doing so not only because it speaks for itself, but because it deals with the welfare of people whose interests must be protected by this honourable House. As a matter of fact, Mr Speaker, the disparity in the living conditions of low and high income workers in our country is great and requires an adjustment. As such, I believe, Mr Speaker, that these workers must enjoy the protection of their employers in terms of accommodation, facilities and salary.

In my humble opinion, I sincerely believe that this is one of the greatest services this House will be doing to eliminate corruption in the society. As Nigerians, we all go to the same market, buy the same food-stuffs and eat the same food. So, I see no reason why there should be so wide a gap in the standard of living between the low and the high income groups.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I beg to sit down.

**Dr I. B. Ufodu (Enugu)** : Mr Speaker, my hon. Colleagues, I rise to support this Motion, not because I am concerned with confrontation with workers, nor because David Ojeli is a personal friend of mine, but because, Mr Speaker, Nigeria has one of the lowest per capita income in the world and yet enjoys the unenviable reputation of being the most expensive country in the world perhaps with the exception of Tokyo.

Mr Speaker, our country is also one of the few countries in the world where monthly house rents are higher than the salaries of workers. Further, our country is one of the few countries in the world where prices of basic commodities are allowed to sky-rocket perhaps in the name of free enterprise while salaries are fixed under such idiosyncratic nomenclatures as Adebo Award, Mbanefo Award and Udoji. I am supporting the Motion also because once we establish minimum wages for our hard-working people, we would begin to constructively fight corruption and ten *per cent* in our country.

What is needed Mr Speaker, is a minimum wage law for Nigeria to be enacted by the National Assembly. We need to re-vitalise the Price Control Board that will peg prices so that workers can benefit from the increase in salaries. It is working well in other parts of the world such as the United States of America. So, it can also work in our country.

Mr Speaker, Sir, what is also needed is a national rent control law that will control arbitrary and illegal rental increases and make it illegal for landlords, in any part of this country, to charge workers and the poor more than three months advance rent.

Mr Speaker, Sir, on a specific minimum wage legislation, as a starter, I would like to propose at least, as food for thought for the Committee on Labour, a minimum wage of 60k per hour or ₦104.40, that is, computing on 42 working days per month with a total legal maximum work-day of eight hours. This is because some of our workers work ten to fifteen hours per day for ₦2 a day. We also have to make it legal to work for a maximum of 40 hours per week. Anything above the 40-hour week, Mr Speaker, must be considered as overtime and must be paid for on a time-and-a-half basis for every hour worked.

Mr Speaker, Sir, this is the time to help the poor and workers are some of the poorest in our society.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mrs Justina Eze (Uzo-Uwani)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Ladies and Gentlemen of this honourable House, I stand to speak in support of this Motion. In supporting this Motion, I do not support mainly



[MRS EZE]

the idea that increase of salary is the answer to the suffering of the masses of Nigerian workers. We had increased the salaries of workers many times but, on the other hand, farmers and importers had taken the money away.

I want to say that in as much as an increase in wages is of importance, I feel that lifting of the ban on the importation of food items should be a priority in order to improve the living conditions of our workers. I very much would say also that before the imposition of the ban on the importation of food items, most workers lived very well on 60 to 80 naira a month; but it was the drastic step taken on the importation of food items that worsened the whole situation. As of now, if workers are paid ₦200 a month in Nigeria, there is no worker who will live comfortably with that amount. (Applause)

With these points, Mr Speaker, I would suggest to this honourable House that the Committee on Labour should take into consideration the increase in wages and the lifting of the ban on all food items. At the same time, I support the Motion and would like to say that building houses for workers should be a priority to enable them live and pay rents. Finally, in later part of their lives, they should inherit those houses. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The hon. Member for Gamawa (*Alhaji Abubakar Tuggar*) is to speak.

**Alhaji Abubakar Tuggar (Gamawa) :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I believe, Mr Speaker, I am the only dissident voice as far as this Motion is concerned. I crave the indulgence of the Speaker for a very tight protection. Mr Speaker, if the protection is guaranteed me, I humbly wish to tell my hon. Colleagues that I am here to oppose the Motion. (*Interruptions*) However, I would not be frightened by your hecklings because I had envisaged that; so it made me very well prepared.

Mr Speaker, I have my reasons for opposing this Motion.

**Mr Irmiya D. Hassan (Dase-Tafawa Belewa) :** Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Point of Order on what? What has he said for you to raise a point of order?

**Mr Hassan :** My point of Order is Order 3 (2) :

*A Member may speak only from the seat allocated to him.*

**The Deputy Speaker :** The hon. Member for Gamawa (*Alhaji Abubakar Tuggar*), you can go ahead please. You have only five minutes.

**Alhaji Tuggar :** First of all, Mr Speaker, the Section of the Constitution mentioned in the Motion has not made mention of workers only. It is talking about the welfare of all the citizens of Nigeria. If we select workers as a group who work in factories and in urban cities and forget the rest of the population as a basis of our argument in promoting the welfare of workers, I think, the Motion becomes discriminatory. It would have been

otherwise if this Motion was based on the Chapter having to do with the Exclusive Legislative List where our responsibility for fixing minimum wage is clearly mentioned.

**Mr Mike J. Akpabio (Uyo II) :** Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, point of Order. What is your Order number?

**Mr Akpabio :** The point of Order is on the Constitution, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Which number in the Constitution please?

**Mr Akpabio :** The Nigerian Constitution, Section 16 (2) (d).

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, read it.

**Mr Akpabio :** *The State shall direct its policy towards ensuring—*

*(d) that suitable and adequate shelter, suitable and adequate food, reasonable national minimum living wage, old age care and pensions, and unemployment and sick benefits are provided for all citizens.*

**The Deputy Speaker :** You have not finished reading it.

**Mr Akpabio :** I am coming Sir. The point of Order, Sir, is that the stance taking by the hon. Member for Gamawa (*Alhaji Abubakar Tuggar*) is, in effect, a wrong interpretation placed on that particular Section of the Constitution.

**The Deputy Speaker :** In your own opinion?

**Mr Akpabio :** In my own opinion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** It is not a correct opinion.

The hon. Member for Gamawa (*Alhaji Abubakar Tuggar*), you can continue please. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr S. G. Laosebikan (Iwo West) :** Point of Order.

**Several hon. Members :** On who?

**The Deputy Speaker :** Who are you pointing to Order?

**Mr Laosebikan :** Only workers earn wages and we are to fix wages for workers. (*Applause*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, Section 16 (2) (d) of the Constitution talks of: *suitable and adequate shelter, suitable and adequate food, reasonable national minimum living wage, old age care and pensions, and unemployment and sick benefits are provided for all citizens.*

The hon. Member for Gamawa (*Alhaji Abubakar Tuggar*), please continue.

**Alhaji Tuggar :** Yes, Mr Speaker, some of my hon. Colleagues that raised the point of Constitutional Order have gone further to prove my point right. The provision in the Constitution, Mr Speaker as I was saying, speaks of the promotion of the welfare of all citizens of Nigeria. Now, to forget the

unemployed and at the same time to forget the poor farmers whose annual turnover is even less than what the workers are being paid now, less than the minimum wage, and speak of a few people who work in the factories in the urban cities, is sheer hypocrisy.

Tell me, have we thought about the increases in the prices of cocoa, cotton, groundnuts, palm-kernel and so on, to raise the earning power of the farmers who are the teeming millions that brought us to this honourable House? (Applause) So, Mr Speaker, Sir, because this Motion is discriminatory, I really object to it and I oppose it vehemently. (Interruptions)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Will you round off please?

**Alhaji Tuggar :** Mr Speaker, Sir, if we come to think about it again, we have to find out what it is really that we intend to do by increasing salaries and wages. What are we out to gain? What I think we should be out to gain is the welfare, comfort and happiness of the maximum number of people in this country. I believe it is not by raising salaries and wages that we can achieve that. There are quite a number of measures. If the Speaker can give me an extra minute or so—

**The Deputy Speaker :** No, you had better round off please. You are entitled to five minutes.

**Alhaji Tuggar :** I would have given an alternative to this proposal of raising salaries. (Interruptions) If only you will listen, then you will learn—

**The Deputy Speaker :** Will you round off and please address the Chair.

**Alhaji Tuggar :** Mr Speaker, Sir, if we take for example the customs duty or the excise duty that all the textile factories in this country pay to the Government and we are able to reduce them, say, by seventy-five per-cent, the prices of all those goods will come down. Let us go round all the factories in this country, reduce the excise duties and in cases where they cannot produce except by importing some raw materials from abroad, let us reduce the duty so that we can have cheaper things. Then even if we fix fifty naira per month for a worker, the workers will live more comfortably in this country.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Time please.

**Alhaji Tuggar :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to oppose this Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The Leader of the House should please move that the Question be now put.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I think this Motion has been exhaustively. Although my hon. Friend Alhaji Tuggar has opposed it, I feel he has no seconder to his opposition. (Interruptions)

Mr Speaker, I now propose that the Question be now put because it is a motion that has no opposition at all.

*Question, That the question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

**Resolved :** That in pursuance of Section 16 (2) (d) of the Nigerian Constitution and considering the apparent inadequacy of living standards of Nigerian workers, this House directs the Committee on Labour to seek ways and means of determining a reasonable national minimum wage with a view to improving living conditions for Nigerian workers.

## NOTICES OF MOTIONS

### Equitable Distribution of Capital Investments

**The Deputy Speaker :** We will now go to the first Motion on the Order Paper. The Motion is on Equitable Distribution of Capital Investments and it stands in the name of Mr M. O. Ugwu.

**Mr M. O. Ugwu (Udi) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members I rise to move the Motion standing in my name :

That in pursuance of Section 16 (2) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, this House hereby calls upon the Federal Government to ensure the equitable distribution of its capital investments throughout the States of the Federation.

I beg to move.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Is there anybody to second the Motion? Yes, Mr S. O. Alu.

**Mr S. O. Alu (Afikpo) :** I beg to second the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, Mr Ugwu.

**Mr Ugwu :** Mr Speaker, Sir, the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy stipulate that the State should manage the major sectors of the economy. It is, therefore, a very important issue that affects the various component parts of the Federation. This has two things to achieve.

The first is that wherever the Federal Government is to site an industry or make a substantial investment, employment opportunities should be made available to the inhabitants of that State. The second objective is that the State Governments do have revenue from the industries sited in their various States independent of the one they received from the Distributable Pool. This country of course had in the past about three comprehensive development plans. Before I go on to name them, I wish to say also that the State Governments generate about seventy-five per-cent of their income from the Federal Government. Moreover, we see that the States have got very low income generating capacity which means therefore that they are totally dependent on the Federal Government. Of course, there is a set-back here because of the marked tardiness of Nigerians not willing to pay their taxes to State Governments. It is, therefore, very important that we should consider in this House the effect of Federal Government's investment in various States of the Federation.

[MR UGWU]

We have, in this country since independence, operated three comprehensive Development Plans. The first was from 1962-68 on which the Federal Government invested about ₦2.2 billion. The Second one was immediately after the Civil War which was 1970-75 and the Federal Government's investment was about ₦3 billion. I must say, of course, that the Indigenisation Decree came into effect during this planning period. Unfortunately, the clever ones in Lagos area bought the businesses all over the country. This, of course, also affected the capacity of the State Governments to generate income. The Third Development Plan was from 1975-80 and the Federal Government's investment was about ₦32.9 billion. Unfortunately, about 80 per cent of the States of the Federation have not seen anything as regards these huge Federal Government's investments. I have here a catalogue of the investments all over the country and, of course, I have listed them State by State. If anybody goes through this, in fact, he will realise that the disparity is so obvious, that we do not need any argument on the Floor of this House.

In Anambra State the capital investment is ₦32.7 million. The Federal Government's investment is ₦16.3 million. In Bauchi State, the capital investment is ₦21.1 million and the Federal Government's investment is ₦7 million. In Bendel State the capital investment is ₦291.1 million and the Federal Government's investment is ₦253 million. In Benue State the capital investment is ₦47 million and the Federal Government's investment is ₦20.5 million. In the Cross River State, the capital investment is ₦122.3 million and Federal Government's investment is ₦105.2 million. In Imo State, the capital investment is ₦15 million and the Federal Government's investment is ₦10.5 million. In Kwara State, the capital investment is ₦72.7 million and the Federal Government's investment is ₦56 million. In Gongola State, the capital investment is ₦65 million and the Federal Government's investment is ₦43.2 million. In Kano State, the capital investment is ₦19.6 million and Federal Government investment is ₦7.3 million. In Kaduna State the capital investment is ₦19.53 million and the Federal Government's investment is ₦6.3 million. In Plateau State, the Federal Government has no capital investment but there is a Steel Company in process of incorporation. In Niger State, the capital investment is ₦164.8 million and the Federal Government's investment is ₦146.6 million. In Lagos State, the capital investment is ₦136 million and the Federal Government's investment is ₦68.4 million. In Ondo State, the capital investment is only ₦7 million and the Federal Government's investment is only ₦1.45 million. In Ogun State, the capital investment is ₦151.5 million and the Federal Government's investment is ₦102.9 million. In Sokoto State, the capital investment is ₦20 million and the Federal Government's investment is ₦10 million. In Oyo State the capital investment is ₦35 million and the Federal Government's investment is ₦23 million. In Rivers State, no capital investment and in Borno State no capital investment.

**Several hon. Members :** Shame! Shame! The Federal Government does involve itself, not only in the major Sectors but—

**Mr Fola Omidiji (Egba Alake) :** Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, what point of order ?

**Mr Fola Omidiji :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I oppose vehemently the statistics being supplied by the hon. Member for Udi (*Mr M. O. Ugwu*). We should continue to do those things that will unite this country and not those things that will divide us.

**The Deputy Speaker :** What is the Order number ?

**Mr Fola Omidiji :** I contest the authenticity of the statistics he is reading to us. I therefore refer to Order 28 (5).

**The Deputy Speaker :** Order 28 (5) says :

*Members shall not make unseemly interruptions while any Member is speaking.*

So, you are making interruptions now ; you are pointing yourself to order.

**Mr Omidiji :** All right, I withdraw.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes Mr Ugwu continue. There is no point of observation in our procedure. It is either you are in order or you are not.

**Mr Ugwu :** My computerisation of these figures is purely on industrial investments. As you know, the Federal Government gets involved in things like Water Resources, Agricultural Research and distribution of infrastructural facilities like roads, electricity and communication. We know that all these have direct impact on the economy of the nation. I feel, therefore, that this country needs a balanced economy or balanced Federal Governments investments so that the inhabitants of this country can have equity in economic activities, and of course the various parts of the Federation can have a share of the Federal Government's investment.

We need a balanced development in this country in order to ensure good education, medical care and qualitative education. To achieve these, obviously we need a political will to do it. This project, if concentrated only in one section or one area, will, of course, give advantage to those areas where the industries are sited. This will produce disaffection and dissatisfaction among the neglected States and possibly will polarise the haves and have-not States in this country, and will sow possible social revolution in the future. As we know, we have the Federal Government, the State Government and the Local Government. The Local Government is dependent on the State Government, and the State Government is dependent on the Federal Government. Therefore, it is possible for us to learn how to solve our economic problems and activities because I believe that the Federal Government's investment took no cognisance of the population before siting the various industries. The catalogue of industries which were established is available in the Federal Ministry of Industries, that is, for those who think I have just come here to mention figures. It is computerised in the Federal Ministry of Industries.

We, as the elected people of this country, will serve this country in the best interest we can, in the best knowledge and of course it is our duty to meet

the desire and make the change we require in this country. The only way the National Assembly can ensure this is to make sure that there is no discrimination against any component part of this Federation in sharing out what I call the national cake. This is the only way we can have stability, peace and harmony in our father land. I beg to move.

**Mr J. K. Ugo** (Gwer East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion, and in doing so I will briefly comment on the figures for Benue State.

In Benue State, what we have is a strong military presence. The investments in Benue State are in form of defence capability of this country. We have the Air Force Headquarters, and we have the Training Wing of the Engineering Division Corps. So, saying that Benue State gained from Federal Projects is somehow not quite true. What we would like to have is productive investments as the Mover of this Motion has rightly said.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Have you not got the Cement Factory in Benue State ?

**Mr Ugo** : Well, it is still in the making. It is true that the Federal Government invested in Cement Factory in the State but it is still in progress. Most of the investments are military projects. As the Mover of the Motion has rightly said—

**The Deputy Speaker** : Hon. Member for Gwer East (*Mr J. K. Ugo*) what this Motion is about is the distribution of capital investments in the country. Are Military establishments not part of capital investments of the Federal Government ?

**Mr Ugo** : That is what I am saying that it is misleading. If you take that figure quoted by the hon. Member, you might think that Benue State has got something. What we are saying is that Benue State has got no productive investments and we would like capital projects to be taken there. As the Mover has rightly said there are lots of advantages to be derived from having a federal project or capital project in a State. The people there gain by having employment, they have additional revenue by taxing people working there and businessmen there are able to get contracts. So, this Motion is really very good and I urge every hon. Member here to support it.

I will now suggest that in establishing federal capital projects the new States should be given serious consideration. The new States are poor and least developed, and if we really want to have equitable development in this country, we must aid the new States by taking Federal Projects there.

With these few remarks I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr D. Agi** (Oju) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon Members, I rise to support this Motion. When we talk about urging the Federal Government to ensure that capital investments are equitably distributed throughout the States of the Federation, we have at the back of our minds investment projects that yield direct revenue and also yield employment opportunities. It is the lack of this category of investments in some of the States that an earlier speaker tried to comment upon. There is no use investing in projects to the

tune of a hundred million naira or above when a single million naira may not be realised from this project and not a thousand employment opportunities can be got from such an investment. Those who have any idea or knowledge of Economics would know that, investments are the means of bringing about quick employment and reducing drastically unemployment problems facing any nation.

This Motion cannot be more timely than it is being given the attention of this honourable House and calling on the Executive arm of the Government to take action and ensure that investment projects and opportunities are fairly distributed. It is true that the Constitution talks about the Federal character to be reflected in all the organs and instruments of activities throughout the nation. But you really cannot make much out of this unless you begin to take a hard look on investments and a hard look on employment in the Services—both in the private and public sectors.

The Federal Government should now take a proper census of all the investment activities throughout the States and make sure that during the next Development Plan, the lopsidedness in these investments is corrected. If we want to talk about the per capita income of this nation, we normally say it is about ₦200 or less. But this is not true for everybody in Nigeria. In some States the per capita income is only ₦50, while in others you have up to ₦600. This situation should be corrected. One of the things that can go a long way in correcting it is the sort of Motion we are now receiving in this House. This will help particularly in decongesting or de-concentrating some of these investment projects in a few States so that the employment opportunities and the revenues that go with them are fairly distributed.

Mr Speaker, with this comment, I beg to support the Motion and take my seat.

**Mr Ime J. Ikpatt** (Etinan I) : I rise to support the Motion.

In supporting the Motion, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Member for Udi (*Mr Ugwu*) to where he specifically mentioned the Cross River State as having as much as ₦102 million (if I am not mistaken) on investments. It is most embarrassing to the people of the Cross River State to learn of such an investment. I do not know the source of this information, but I think if one could compare what is happening in Cross River State with what is happening in Lagos State and other States, the people of the Cross River State would be very much surprised about this figure. I think this information should be looked into. Every part of this Federation is pitying a State called, the Cross River State. As a matter of fact, I am here to tell the nation that we have not got much investment there. I am even trying to put up a Motion calling on the President of this country to make sure that we have investments there because the people there are roaming about the whole country. I am surprised that this type of information should come up. While I support this Motion I think we should check on the source of this

[MR IKPATT]

information. If we compare the Cross River State figures with the figures in Lagos and other States, it is most embarrassing.

While I support this Motion, I think the figures are wrong.

**Chief S. Alete** (Ikwere/Etche I) : I rise to support the Motion and I believe nobody in this honourable House will oppose this Motion because if we do so, we shall be violating the Constitution itself and we shall be opposing all the Political Parties who promised our people even development. This Motion seeks even development which we have no argument about. In line with what the Mover of this Motion has said, I would suggest that an exercise should be carried out to determine all the capital investments in the various States in the proportion in which they now stand. When that exercise is done, all the Federal capital investments should be concentrated in the States that have never shared in these investments. Unless that is done, what we are aiming at in this Motion to correct the imbalance in Federal capital investments will still remain with us.

If you take a State like ours, the Rivers State, where we can be likened to the goose that lays the golden egg, the Federal capital investment there is nil. It is something not only lamentable but very shameful. So in that wise, Mr Speaker, I would advise that this thing should be corrected immediately.

I want to draw your attention to another thing that is, the present method of concentrating investments in the cities to the utter neglect of the villages of this country which we call the grass-roots. We have been promising these people, particularly this present regime, that we would take the Government to the door-steps of Nigerians. Taking the Government to the door-steps of Nigerians means giving a feeling of belonging. How could they belong if they do not share in the national cake at all? I would suggest that while we are doing this exercise of trying to even up the capital investments of the Federation, we must make sure that these investments are brought down to the grass-roots so that the generality of the people in this country would realise that really they belong to the Government of the Federation.

With these few words, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr E. N. Kanu** (Ikwano/Umuahia) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, before the Motion was presented by my friend, the hon. Member for Udi (*Mr Ugwu*), I had a different impression ; but from the information he gave us I was disillusioned to hear that the bulk of capital investment had been concentrated in a few States like Bendel and Rivers. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker** : You are trying to provoke other hon. Members. Can you confine your observation to your State ?

**Mr Kanu** : Because of the information which he has given, I think there is need to further check the figures he has given us. I would suggest that the appropriate Committees—Finance and Industries—should check his figures and come back to give us the true position of capital investments in the country.

I have a feeling that the bulk of capital investments are concentrated in Lagos, Kaduna, Kano and Ibadan. (*Interruptions*)

Nonetheless, I support the Motion in the sense that it is calling for an equitable distribution of the national cake. This is necessary because, if it is not done, there would be a drift of people from the rural to the urban areas of the country, thereby congesting the areas that are already over-congested like Lagos, Kaduna, *et cetera*. My suggestion, therefore, is that—

**The Deputy Speaker** : There is a point of Order.

**Mr A. S. Ibrahim** (Kiyawa) : Standing Order 26 (6) says—

*No Member shall impute improper motives to any other Members.*

Well, the hon. Member cannot cite exactly what the Mover of this Motion brought to the House. He is referring to Kano, Kaduna and other States which have not got the highest capital investments in the country.

**The Deputy Speaker** : I have already told the hon. Member to confine his observation to areas that concern us because he could not have kept the figures that were given by the hon. Member for Udi (*Mr Ugwu*).

**Mr Kanu** : With due respect, Mr Speaker, I think what I am citing is very relevant because everybody knows it in this country. I would however, conclude by saying, as the hon. Member who spoke before me suggested, that the less privileged States like Imo, Anambra, Rivers, Ondo and Ogun should be given preference when the next exercise for the equitable distribution of capital investments is being considered. That is my submission. Thank you very much.

**Mr J. O. Iwuagwu** (Mbano West) : Mr Speaker, Sir, in supporting the Motion which I think is a very well thought-out one, I must refer the House to Section 16 (2) (c) of the Constitution which says :

*The State shall direct its policy towards ensuring that the economic system is not operated in such a manner as to permit the concentration of wealth or the means of production and exchange in the hands of a few individuals or of a group.*

I am laying emphasis on this subsection of the Constitution because so far, so good all the previous Federal Governments have violated the provision of this Section. What I mean by saying that this has been violated previously is that now that we have this provision in the Constitution, we must try to correct the imbalance and there has been a terrible imbalance.

The concentration of investments in a few States in this country has led to so many problems which should not occur at all in a well-planned society. There is the problem of traffic, housing and shortage of most basic infrastructures which every society requires.

I am going to submit that the Federal Government should concentrate on decentralising its capital investments, by, first of all, removing some of the capital investments from the areas of heavy concen-

[MR IWUAGWU]

tration to other States where there are basic facilities for incorporating those investments. Again, the Federal Government must actively encourage investors, private capital investors, to site their industries in other States. They must do this by positively directing the investors to go to this or that State, where those things are not there.

Now, Sir, I remember during the sixties, the British Government decided to stop any investment whatsoever in London because it was over-crowded. They channelled investments, for instance to Newcastle, Birmingham, Northampton and other cities outside London. By doing this, they decongested, for one thing, the traffic and the housing problem in London was solved half-way.

I would urge the Executive to do this now before it is too late in this country and before we get every farmer in this country concentrating in the State capital.

From the statistics the Mover of the Motion read to us and from information which has already been given in this House, it would appear that Permanent Secretaries who come from the States and who have benefited so much from capital investments, simply submitted position papers which were carried out. I hope this type of situation will no longer be allowed and we would have an equitable distribution of investments in this country.

I beg to support the Mover of the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** GNPP please.

**Mr Hamza M. Nganjiwa** (Biu North) : Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the question of equitable distribution of capital investments in this country, to the best of my knowledge, lies at the very foundation of the existence of this country as a Federation. Mr Speaker, Sir, if you create a triangle from Ibadan, Lagos, Benin; another from Jos, Kaduna, Kano; and a third from Enugu, Onitsha and Port Harcourt, you would have got 95 per cent of capital investments in this country. Mr Speaker, Sir, there is no doubt about this and within these three triangles that I have created in your mind, you will be rest assured that the area concerned does not account for up to one quarter of the land area of this Federation. The entire Sokoto, Borno, Gongola, Bauchi, Ondo and Niger States to name a few, have hardly got any capital investment. Mr Speaker, Sir, they are essentially part and parcel of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. When you want to maintain the existence of the whole Federation, you will go to all parts of the country, seeking support in order to hold the bull by the horns; but when it comes to milking it, it is limited to these triangles. This is lamentable, deplorable and obnoxious in a Federation like ours.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to say that we have witnessed at least, three Development Plans in this country. The Third has just been extended by nine months. I wish to say that in future Development Plans in this country we have to rectify this very deplorable situation. Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to say also that as this Motion seeks to equalise all parts of this country, in terms of equitable distribution of investments perhaps it is the one that can save

this country from collapse and enhance equal development like the President of the country mentioned to the hon. Members of this august Assembly a few months ago.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to say that our Federation cannot exist if some parts of it are neglected. Our existence as a Federation is unquestionable. We have to live forever as the Federal Republic of Nigeria. We have, therefore, to share equally the benefits of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and I hope all the hon. Members of this House will support the Motion. This is the only mandate that we can take back to our people, namely, that we have shared the benefits of the Federal Republic of Nigeria equitably.

With these few remarks, I wish to take my seat. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker :** PRP.

**Alhaji Sarki Adamu** (Dawakin-Kudu) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of the House, I rise to support this Motion. In supporting it, Mr Speaker, Sir, I must say that the equitable distribution of capital investments in this country is necessary because some States were cheated. I cannot say they are cheated because I was not aware of how the distribution was made before; but all I know is that when you go to some States in the Federation, you will find that the development—

**Mr B. A. Chaha** (Katsina-Ala) : Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes.

**Mr Chaha :** My point of order is Standing Order 3 (2). The hon. Member has left his seat. I am saying that he is not speaking from his seat.

**Alhaji Sarki Adamu :** Can I continue, Mr Speaker?

**The Deputy Speaker :** You should be speaking from your permanent seat.

**Alhaji Sarki Adamu :** Mr Speaker, Sir, up till now, I cannot say exactly where I was allocated. I do not know exactly my seat.

**The Deputy Speaker :** We know exactly your seat.

**Alhaji Sarki Adamu :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I would be very grateful if you could from now, allocate a seat to me.

**The Deputy Speaker :** We already know your seat.

**Alhaji Sarki Adamu :** I do not know it, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Already, your seat is in the computer.

**Alhaji Sarki Adamu :** I will ask the man in charge of the computer. Thank you very much, I will do that later.

Mr Speaker, Sir, an equitable distribution of investments in Nigeria is necessary because some States are left behind as far as capital investments are concerned, especially if you go to some Northern States such as the Niger, Sokoto and Kwara States

[ALHAJI ADAMU]

and a few Southern States which I have not visited. I am sure, Mr Speaker, that you will agree with me that if these investments are equitably distributed, we shall have no problem and shall not be blaming the government today.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I should also like to appeal to the National Assembly to think of creating a very good method or formula for the distribution of capital investments. While we may come here and talk about our desire to distribute capital investments equitably, we would not know how it is going to be done. We are not going to do it ourselves; the Executive is going to do it. I do not think there is any justification in leaving this matter to the Executive without any supervision or control by the National Assembly.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these few comments I beg to support this Motion. Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Speaker : UPN.**

**Chief Olushola Omonira (Ilaje/Eseodo) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, we have to ensure that industries are equitably distributed. For this reason, I would like to support this Motion; but in doing so, we must not overlook the question of economic factors.

Economic factors really militates against certain States. Let us take the example of Benue State. Whether we like it or not, if we are going to have a soya bean industry, it has to be in Benue State. Whether we like it or not, if we are going to have a textile industry, it has to be as near as possible to the cotton growing area. Whether we like it or not, if we are going to have a refinery, it has to be either in Port Harcourt or in Warri. There are certain things we have to bear in mind. We are, therefore, left with the point that, if certain industries must be sited in certain States, because of the nature of the economic factors of such States, then it is only the Federal Government that can do so. It cannot be by private investments at all. This is because most of the private investors would want to go where they can reap the optimum for their investments. We cannot site an industry in a place where the raw materials have to be brought from three hundred or perhaps one thousand kilometres away. This fact must be borne in mind.

I would personally request the House to commit this particular Motion to the appropriate Committee for further study and a report should be given before we can begin to talk about the statistics which had earlier been enumerated. Based on my own observation, I do not personally think that the research is absolutely correct.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I support the Motion for it to be committed to the appropriate Committee. Thank you.

**Mr Bayo Akinbisehin (Ifesowopo) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, in contributing to this Motion, I would say, without any reservation, that I am in support of the Motion.

The Motion calls for equitable distribution of capital investments in the whole country. Nobody would ever doubt the sincerity of such a call. I

believe that in a country which is as vast as ours, we need to consider the need for industries and investments to be established in every Local Government area which the Federal Government may have to undertake. I would say, for instance, that in the Rivers State where they have an oil refinery, nobody would go against them if they also have something like a fishing industry. The same thing goes for Bendel State because they are in the riverine areas. In the Northern States, we need a lot of shoes. Our hides and skin are reputed to be the best in the world, but what have we done with them? How many tanneries have we got in the Northern States? Yet, we go about buying foreign shoes. We import what is called Morocco leather; this Morocco leather is the Nigerian leather which we send abroad for refining. When it is refined, shoes are made out of it for which we have to pay exorbitantly.

So, when we talk about industries in the Northern States, we can improve this type of thing. The mining industries in the Northern States could also be improved. We need groundnut oil processing factories too. As one of our Colleagues here said the other day, assuming that we are eighty million and a local Government is given an average of, say, five million naira for industries, the banks could come to its aid and something tangible would be done. In the light of that, we would be having equitable distribution of investments in our country.

I would say that as far as the Southern States are concerned, we cannot expect the Government to champion the cause of all the people. We expect the Government to do what it can, but not that it can satisfy everybody. I would take this opportunity to call on this honourable House to direct the Minister of Industries, when the time comes, to give licence to those who are interested in setting up their own industries. We should not have a monopoly of industries. For example, we have talked about car or truck assembly factories; the Government has closed its doors to others, giving licence to only four manufacturers, even though there are some individuals who have interest in assembling cars and trucks. If these people were allowed to set up their own industries, it would augment the Government industries. By this, we would be able to achieve whatever we want to achieve in this regard.

We have recently found that the Government has come into the aid of the banks. The Government bought some shares in the banks. If individuals have their own industries, there would come a time when the Government could go into these industries and buy some shares thereby making the industries to be very viable.

With these very few remarks, I support the Motion and commit it to the whole House for approval. Thank you very much.

**Mr T. O. Badejo (Mushin Central I) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, this is a very laudable Motion; but as an hon. Gentleman from Lagos State, I have to try as much as possible to define what capital is.

Capital is the combination of factors of production so as to generate profit, either directly or indirectly. In my view, in order to create equitable distribution of capital projects, Sir, the essential capital which

[MR BADEJO]

We have to create to give an industry a good idea of planning, discipline, and profitability, is to create infrastructures in different aspects of our political and economic life.

I will give an example. No matter how laudable an industry is, if there is no water, no electricity, no telephone, no telex and no good roads, Mr Speaker, Sir, that industry would just be a white elephant project. I will suggest and urge the Committee that will go into this exercise that for any industrial society or any simple society that wants to take a leap forward to technological know-how, the essential thing is infrastructure. I do not care a fig, Mr Speaker, Sir, with all respect, whether a project is located at Sokoto or at Katagum or at Minna or in Bauchi or in Lagos, but if the infrastructure is not there, it is a futile exercise.

I will give example of Lagos, Sir. We, the people in Lagos State are a virile, imaginative and creative lots. We are ready to have our own industry because Lagos is Nigeria and Nigeria is Lagos. We are virile enough to create everything we want in this world, but what is the set-back? It is lack of infrastructure.

So, Mr Speaker, Sir, the first phase of an equitable distribution of economic projects and capital is equitable distribution of infrastructure. Then other things will follow.

Thank you, very much.

**Mr Fola Omidiji (Egba Alake):** Mr Speaker, Sir, while I support this Motion I have a few comments to make.

Some time last year I did mention on the Floor of this House that there was no single Federal industry in Ogun State. I was surprised that hon. Ugwu was able to produce a figure of Federal investments totalling ₦102,000,000 in Ogun State. This is very wrong, and in saying so, I would like, before this Motion is put, the Permanent Secretary or the official who gave him that information to be asked to see the Committee on Public Works of this House for further verification. It would also be wrong for an hon. Member to bring statistical figures of this nature to this House without finding out the authenticity. For example, in Rivers State he said there was no federal project. That would be wrong. The Liquefying Natural Gas Industry in Bonny is in Rivers State and it costs billions of naira. The Oil Refinery is also there. I am also convinced that hon. Ugwu was confusing capital investment with—

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II):** Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Yes.

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel:** My point of Order is 26 (2). The hon. Member should confine himself to the issue on the Order Paper.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Please go on, hon. Member for Egba Alake (*Mr Omidiji*).

**Mr Omidiji:** I think we also need to differentiate between capital investment to stimulate social welfare services and capital investment to yield revenue. I

think the Oil Refineries are capital investments to generate funds for the country while some of the overhead bridges my hon. Member is referring to are things to provide social amenities and ways of increasing the development of the country as a whole.

Secondly, Sir, I would like to correct the impression that capital investments in States like Bendel or other areas are military investments. This is wrong. Military investments or otherwise are geared towards developing the country as a whole. Other factors like equitable distribution were taken into consideration before these military locations were sited in other parts of the country.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Please round up.

**Mr Omidiji:** Finally, Mr Speaker, I would like to remind hon. Ugwu for the second time that I remember the other time when he brought in figures of this nature that were too controversial. He should try to find out the authenticity of his figures when coming to the House because we must continue to do these things that will unite this country and not things that will divide us. For example, some time ago in Rivers State, non-indigenes were being driven until the mobile police had to come in. They were not wanted there because of this type of thing that the hens that lay the golden eggs are not allowed to share in the eggs. This is one of the things that bring that type of situation. This is because when you continue to bring things out that will divide the country and incite other parts of the country, it will not help us. Thank you.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East):** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, the Motion has been exhaustively debated and I think there is consensus. I respectfully move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

**Resolved:** That in pursuance of Section 16 (2) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, this House hereby calls upon the Federal Government to ensure the equitable distribution of its capital investments throughout the States of the Federation.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Members, this House is suspended till three o'clock.

*Sitting suspended : 12.48 p.m.*

*Sitting resumed : 3.15 p.m.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Mr Fagbamigbe will now move his Motion.

#### High Cost of Consumer Goods

**Mr Olaiya Fagbamigbe (Akure):** Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not know whether you want me to go on.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Yes, we are not talking about quorum until 4 o'clock. You should continue whether we have three people or not. The fact is that whatever you contribute is going into the *Hansard* and you can take that to your constituency? (*Laughter*)



**Mr Fagbamigbe :** If you will permit me, Mr Speaker, I would like to crave the indulgence of the House that this Motion be postponed till tomorrow according to Standing Order 30.

**The Deputy Speaker :** It will not be proper that we bring up this Motion in tomorrow's Order Paper because other Motions are coming up. You should move your Motion now.

**Mr Fagbamigbe :** Mr Speaker, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name—

That this House directs the Committee on Commerce to examine the systems employed in the exchange and distribution of goods in this country and the role played by middlemen in creating artificial scarcity thereby raising the prices of consumer goods, and to recommend ways and means of improving the present system of distribution with particular reference to Federal Government controlled commercial and industrial enterprises.

I beg to Move.

**Mr Faji Fajobi (Ekiti South) :** I beg to second.

**Mr Fagbamigbe :** Mr Speaker, Sir, in arguing this Motion, I want to call the attention of the hon. Members to certain indisputable facts of the economy of this nation as the economy is today.

It is a fact that there is scarcity of goods in this country. It is also an indisputable fact that because of the scarcity of consumer foods, prices are unreasonably high and furthermore, it is also a fact that because prices are unreasonably high, consumer goods are not within the reach of the common people. They are not within the purchasing power of the common people. This Motion, therefore, is to implore the Committee on Commerce to study the distribution of goods in this country, the systems employed and to find out the reasons for this unsatisfactory state of affairs so as to make recommendations which will ameliorate, if not completely remove, the hardship encountered by the common people of this country.

The Motion therefore, Mr Speaker, is not a controversial one and it is one which I believe deserves the support and the approval of this honourable House. Section 16 (1) (a) of the Constitution says and with your permission I read :

*The State shall, within the context of the ideals and objectives for which provisions are made in this Constitution—*

*(a) control the national economy in such manner as to secure the maximum welfare, freedom and happiness of every citizen on the basis of social justice and equality of status and opportunity,*

Further, Section 16 (2) (a) and (c) says—

*(2) The State shall direct its policy towards ensuring—*

*(a) the promotion of a planned and balanced economic development ;*

*(c) that the economic system is not operated in such a manner as to permit the concentration of wealth or the means of production and exchange in the hands of few individuals or of a group ;*

Mr Speaker, Sir, the situation as it is today is that the systems of distribution of goods in this country have given rise to three classes of middlemen, whose behaviour is inimical to the interest of the common people of this country.

Before I go on to classify these middlemen, I want to address the minds of the hon. Members to the goods which are actually involved. I mean by this the following types of consumer goods :

(1) Essential food items such as rice, beans, milk, flour, *et cetera*.

(2) I also have in mind building materials in all their ramifications—Iron rods, cement, roofing sheets, *et cetera*.

(3) Textiles—These are wearing apparels, shirts for men and beddings.

(4) Then we have drinks of all sorts and household utensils, office equipment, vehicles, especially cars.

(5) Of course we have the essential and indispensable means of disseminating knowledge and spreading culture—books.

All these come under consumer goods, they are scarce in the country ; they are not easily obtained by the common man.

When you compare the prices paid in Nigeria on articles of the same quality, and when you take into consideration the time and the effort involved in going round to look for these articles and the amount of underground work that you have to do, the association you have to make with people in high places, you would come to the conclusion that for every item that you consume in this country, you are paying three times what a consumer in Britain pays. You are paying five times more than what the consumer in Western Germany pays and six times what a consumer in United States of America or Italy pays for the same quality of article. Why is this so ? The reasons are obvious. It is because of the roles played by the middlemen and these middlemen can be classified into three categories.

First, we have a Nigerian middleman who is operating under a cover or under the patronage of people who are in managerial positions in the distributive trade. Without any intention of casting aspersions on any Government Department or quasi-Government Department, I want to say categorically and I would like to quote the example of the Nigerian National Supply Company.

It is the common complaint of people all over the country that the goods which the Nigerian National Supply Company brings to this country for sale find their way into the shops of the wives, friends, and relations of the people in managerial positions in this particular company. The result is that even on paper the prices at which the Nigerian National Supply Company sells these goods look reasonable and competitive but in actual fact, these are the prices at which they sell to their own relations who keep a chain of stores from where the common

[MR FAGBAMIGB]

man will then buy at very exorbitant prices. That is an example of the inimical role of a middleman in the distributive trade of this country. Then, of course, you have the fact that most of the expatriate companies operating in this country, as a result of certain flaws in the Indigenisation Decree, are competing vigorously with the Nigerian private distributors. This is because there are certain flaws which enable companies like the U.A.C. G.B. Ollivant, John Holt and other big companies to engage in distributive trade to the detriment of the common people of Nigeria.

Then of course, you have the most dangerous middlemen who do not operate in this country, but operate abroad. These people are not necessarily Nigerians, in fact, they are mostly Europeans and they operate in the United Kingdom under the guise that Nigeria is a Commonwealth country. So, these people go quickly, and they secure what they call Commonwealth rights on goods manufactured in America and some other countries. This is particularly common in the Book Trade. You find that when a book is published in America, the British middlemen will not allow the book to come directly to Nigeria. They constitute themselves into middlemen; they open offices in London and they get these books imported from New York or wherever they are manufactured in America to London from where they are shipped into this country. This has been one of the problems of those who are engaged in the book trade in this country and I know that other goods suffer this fate before they eventually get to the Nigerian consumer.

One of the disadvantages of our association with the Commonwealth is the fact that the British still regard Nigeria as a commercial appendage of Britain and therefore, they still make a lot of money from us to the detriment of business in this country. What is more, you find that these Europeans who suck Nigeria dry have become very arrogant simply because the present Form M requirements make goods a lot difficult to get into Nigeria. Under that guise they insist that you have to open a Letter of Credit so that the British entrepreneur who has no money sits down in London, he gets a Letter of Credit from the Nigerian businessman and on that, he purchases goods on trust from the people who manufacture the goods in Britain and then ships them to Nigeria. So, without any capital at all, the British feed very fat on Nigeria and yet they still go round and blackmail our people and give us very bad image to manufacturers in other European countries.

Another cause of the high cost of consumer goods in this country cannot be treated without dwelling at length on the role played by our own people. I have just referred to the Nigerian National Supply Company. There is an example which will actually make one tremble when one hears of the facts. This was information reaching me. For example, about the 25th of January this year, a bag of rice in Kano cost about ₦24.50 but now some big people who have influence with the Nigerian National Supply Company have invested a lump sum of money (about seven million naira) to purchase all the stock of the Nigerian National Supply Company.

At the moment, the Nigerian National Supply Company, has no rice to sell to the people in Kano and what you have is that a bag of rice now costs about ₦50 in Kano, that is, from ₦24.00 on the 25th of January to ₦50 on the 10th or 11th of February. You can see what is happening in this country, that some people, because of their position, because of their wealth and because of their connections, hoard goods to the detriment of the economy of the nation. You find that the poor people are suffering because they cannot have food to buy.

The situation is very dangerous. This morning, somebody warned that we could not afford a confrontation between the labour force of this country and the ruling class. In the same way, I want to warn that we cannot afford a situation where the common people of this country will become so hungry that they will take to the streets and a sort of confrontation will ensue. This is because if you increase people's salaries without making food and consumer goods available to them, the salary will be useless. So, no matter what you pay, unless you can bring down the prices of commodities and make commodities available—

**Chief S. Alete (Ikwere/Etche I) :** Point of Order

**The Deputy Speaker :** There is a point of Order.

**Chief S. Alete :** My point of Order is 26 (4). If I may read :

*It shall be out of order to attempt to reconsider any specific question upon which the House has come to a conclusion during the current session except upon a substantive motion for rescission.*

I am saying that the whole of this Motion is dealing with price control and this honourable House has exhaustively dealt with price control. By reopening it, whether you call it distribution or what have you, the total argument of the Motion deals with controlling of prices. We had dealt with price control as much as we could during this session, unless we are bringing a substantive Motion for rescission of that decision.

That is my point of Order.

**Several hon Members :** No ! No !

**The Deputy Speaker :** The Motion moved on the Floor of this House was for the abolition of the Price Control Board. That was the Motion that was passed in this House and the House agreed that the matter be referred to the Committee on Commerce. The Motion on the Order Paper today is to examine the systems employed in the exchange and distribution of goods in this country and the role played by middlemen in creating artificial scarcity thereby raising the prices of consumer goods, and to recommend ways and means of improving the present systems of distribution with particular reference to Federal Government-controlled commercial and industrial enterprises.

Now, the only point of Order you would have raised is if the hon. Member had not confined his discussions to the subject matter of this Motion; then your point of Order might be valid. A motion

## [THE DEPUTY SPEAKER]

to abolish the Price Control Board has nothing to do with what this Motion is talking about and therefore the Motion is in order.

**Mr Fagbamigbe :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I thank you very much for your protection.

Now, what I was saying is this. It is absolutely necessary for the Committee of this honourable House that is responsible for Commerce to study the problems arising from the non-availability of consumer goods and the consequent high prices of these goods so that recommendations may come from it as to what could be done to ameliorate the sufferings of the common people of this country of which hon. Members are among.

Furthermore, Mr Speaker, Sir, it will be recalled that before the 1966 emergence of soldiers in the Nigerian public life, it was possible for common people to get goods to buy. There was no hoarding and there were no restrictions. But when restrictions came, some highly placed soldiers and civil servants brought goods that were under restriction into this country. They kept them with those who enjoyed their protection. It was then that we started to have hoarding of goods and the advent of non-availability of consumer goods. We also had the Udoji Award which brought in more money than goods.

We, therefore, had a situation where a lot of money was chasing a little quantity of consumer goods.

Restrictions were imposed to conserve foreign exchange and to help home industries, but what did we have? We found that production from home industries was not sufficient to meet the needs of the people. Not only that, they were not coming out in the right quality so that people engaged themselves in illegal practices in order to bring goods into this country.

So, one of the points which the Committee on Commerce will have to look into is the possibility of making recommendations as to what goods come under luxury items that ought to be banned or restricted.

Of course, there are also other factors which, at present, are beyond the control of Nigerians such as industrial unrest in countries where goods coming to Nigeria are produced. When that happens, these goods do not come in the right quantities and their prices become very expensive. It will, therefore, be the duty of the Committee on Commerce to make recommendations for the acceleration of industrialisation of this country. Many of the goods which are, at the moment coming from abroad can be produced in this country.

We cannot discuss scarcity of goods and leave the question of Form M aside. Form M is responsible, in many ways, for the scarcity of goods in this country. Form Ms are not quickly processed in the banks. The other day, there was an announcement that, if Form M got to a bank, it would be approved within seventy-two hours. That may be true of when it gets to the Central Bank; but a lot of paper work is required to be done before Form M gets to the Central Bank. We know that our commercial banks

are very slow and intransigent. In the past, we could get goods into the country within 8 to 10 weeks; but we cannot now get goods into this country in less than 9 months because of the long and circuitous processes through which Form M must go. It is, however, not necessary for me to waste the time of this honourable House by enumerating these because I can count them on my finger tips.

In the past, all you needed to do was to send an order to either America, Western Germany or to wherever the goods concerned were manufactured. As soon as your supplier received the order, he made out an invoice, shipped them to you and you would obtain them, say, in less than 6 or 8 weeks. So, there were only three processes; firstly, placing your order; secondly, your manufacturer assembling the goods; thirdly, shipping them; and fourthly receiving them in Nigeria. But now when you have to book for Form M, the very first thing you do is that you send this order to your manufacturer that you require these goods. Then, your supplier, probably a middleman, has to look round for people to manufacture these things. He gets a quotation from them and that takes some time. Then he sends you a proforma invoice. When you get the proforma invoice, you will take it to your bank in Nigeria. Maybe it takes your bank two weeks to open a Letter of Credit for you, that is, if you are a big man in the bank; otherwise, that may take you up to four, five or six weeks.

Now, when you get this letter of credit, you will post it back to your supplier. Because of the postal system in this country, it takes about two weeks for a letter to go from Nigeria to Britain and it takes another two weeks for your letter to come from Britain to Nigeria. So, when you post your letter, it will take two weeks for your supplier to get it. He shops around for quotations and that may take him another two weeks. Then, he writes his reply which gets to you in about two weeks. Already you have spent six weeks. It will also take you about two weeks to get your bank to give you a proforma. This will then go to the Central Bank. I do not know how long things take at the Central Bank. A Central Bank official said it would be about 72 hours but I had an experience of three months. I lodged a proforma invoice on Form M with the Central Bank and it never came back until after three months. Let us say that was an extreme case. So, let us take an average of two weeks.

Now you are reckoning on ten weeks. Form M will then go back to your supplier and it takes two weeks on the way. That takes you to 12 weeks. Then the supplier will begin to manufacture the goods because most people do not really assemble goods in warehouses. They will wait until they get orders before they arrange to manufacture and supply.

When this is done, maybe it takes them about four, five or six weeks to assemble their goods, then they send for SGS inspection. The fact is that this inspection is operated in about six or so centres in Britain. You will find them in London, Birmingham, Liverpool and Glasgow. Well, I do not now know again; they may be in just four places. So, they

[MR FAGBAMIGBE] have to book an appointment and it takes them time to inspect the goods. Sometimes you make an allowance of about four weeks.

There was the experience of an importer who between the time he got the proforma invoice and when the goods were manufactured, there was a variation of 10p in the price. Because of that, the SGS refused to approve the goods, that is, to give a clean bill of finding. So, the whole process is a very long one and for essential goods, you just cannot get them in less than 9 months because of the present system.

Of course, when you get the goods, it takes such a long time before you can make payment through the banks. The result is that even genuine businessmen in Nigeria already have their names soiled abroad because of the intransigence of our banks. This is because they want to do their work at leisure. You are dealing with people who are operating in overseas countries, where they will just phone their bank managers and they will say: *Your account is good, you can draw your cheque*; but that is not in this country. You have to go to your bank manager. Even when you have the money there, you still have to queue up. Sometimes you spend days and you do not see the manager. If the money is big, sometimes you get to the bank and there will be no cash. As a matter of fact, in this connection I would like to mention a situation that I know about.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Member for Akure (*Mr O. Fagbamigbe*), you have to round up.

**Mr Fagbamigbe:** In rounding up, Mr Speaker, I would say that there was a situation in Ondo State where for about four or six weeks there was no money whatsoever in the Bank. As a result, people who paid in their money into the Bank could not withdraw their money to buy things for their children during the last Christmas. This was another suffering on the part of the people.

Then you have the discrimination about issuing import licences to people who want to import consumer goods into this country. The import licences went to people who have friends in the various sections of the Ministry of Trade and the Central Bank. So, even though there is a restriction, some people are enjoying certain privileges while others are suffering.

Mr Speaker, hon. Members, the situation in this country, as at the moment, as far as the availability or non-availability of consumer goods is concerned is very serious indeed. I would, therefore, appeal to hon. Members to support this Motion by calling on the Committee on Commerce to study and examine the problems that cause the non-availability of consumer goods in this country so that it can make suitable recommendations which, when applied, will solve and ameliorate completely the sufferings of the masses of this country.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you the hon. Member for Akure (*Mr Olaiya Fagbamigbe*). I believe, from the contribution you have made, you told this honourable House that you had a solution to your problem or that you had already solved your problem. Since you have provided the solution to the problem in your Motion, you should have been appointed the sole Member of the Committee on Commerce.

The time now is five minutes to four o'clock. Unless there is anybody opposing your Motion, we may as well dispose of it; otherwise it would lapse after four o'clock as we have no quorum.

Is anybody opposing the Motion?

**Chief Stephen Alete (Ikwere/Etche I):** Yes, Mr Speaker, I am opposing the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker:** If you start speaking you may not speak for long before it will be four o'clock and there is no quorum.

Yes, Alhaji Tuggar.

**Mr Abubakar Tuggar (Gamawa):** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, in view of the circumstances prevailing that the Motion may lapse being a very important Motion, I am sure that if it is committed to the Committee on commerce it will give that Committee some work to do. I, therefore, beg to move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

**Resolved:** That this House directs the Committee on Commerce to examine the systems employed in the exchange and distribution of goods in this country and the role played by middlemen in creating artificial scarcity thereby raising the prices of consumer goods, and to recommend ways and means of improving the present system of distribution with particular reference to Federal Government controlled commercial and industrial enterprises.

## ADJOURNMENT

**Alhaji Tuggar:** I beg to move that the House do now adjourn until ten o'clock tomorrow morning.

**Mr Fola Omidiji (Egba Alake):** I beg to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Resolved:** That the House do now adjourn until ten o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 4 p.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Thursday, 14th February, 1980

The House met at 10.10 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, I have gone through the Votes and Proceedings for Wednesday, 13th February, 1980, and they reflect the true position of matters that were raised on the Floor of this House as at yesterday. I have, therefore, approved them.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members' Photographs

I have just one or two announcements. A photographer will be here tomorrow as from 9 a.m. to take the picture of Members who have so far not had their photographs taken for the issue of their identity cards. It is also understood that some Members have lost their identity cards; they also could have their photographs taken tomorrow.

Committee Meetings

We have the following Committee Meetings today. The Committee on Veteran Affairs and Social Welfare will meet in Committee Room 3 at 11 a.m., Committee on Water Resources will meet in Committee Room 4 at 11 a.m., the Business Committee will meet at 12 noon in the Staff Committee Room, Committee on Public Service Matters will meet at 1 p.m. in Committee Room 3 and the Committee on Housing, Community Development and Environment will meet in Committee Room 4 at 2 p.m.

In regard to the Committee Meetings, I think we will require a Resolution or a Motion in this House to the effect that as much as possible we will adjourn the sitting of this House at 1 o'clock and use the afternoon period only for Committee Meetings. Henceforth, as much as possible, the Chairman of Committee should desist from holding meetings during the sitting of the Assembly in the morning. So far, the Senators have their Committee Meetings in the morning while they sit in the afternoon, to allow us the use of the Committee Rooms. I also feel that if we, on the other hand, hold our Committee Meetings in the afternoon while they are in session, we may have more rooms for our Committee Meetings.

Circulation of Documents

We have noticed that there has been circulation of documents to Members by outside bodies. Such documents should first be deposited in the office of the Clerk of the House of Representatives who would clear with the Speaker or Deputy Speaker before directing the Paper Office to circulate such

papers to Members. With regard to Members, own documents which they require for circulation they can do the personal clearance with the Speaker or Deputy Speaker or with the Leader of the House.

With regard to Amendments to Motions or Bills which have been passed to Committees, the procedure allows Members wishing to move Amendments to pass such Amendments through Members of the respective Committees and present themselves as witnesses before the Committees when holding hearings. By doing this, they are assisting the Committees to reach a proper conclusion. Furthermore, if they are not successful at the Committee level, they could, with the permission of the Chairmen during the Committee of the Whole House, re-propose their Amendments on the Floor of the House.

Order Paper

On the Order Paper for today, Thursday 14th February, 1980, we have three Motions. Motion No. 3 will be the first Motion to be taken on the Floor of this House. Would hon. Members correct their Order Paper. One of the Movers of Motion No. 3, who is Mr Ambrose Gapsuk, is being replaced by Mr David Atta. As agreed with Party Leaders, we are simply moving this Motion and immediately it is moved, the Question is going to be put for the decision of the House.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Deportation of Shugaba Abdurahman

**Mr Hamza M. Nganjiwa (Biu North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name and in the names of three other Colleagues Messrs David Atta, Effiong Ononokpono and Alhaji Sarki Adamu.

**Mr G. Adewumi (Osogbo South) :** There is a point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** What is the order number?

**Mr Adewumi :** It is a very serious legal point of issue under the Constitution, that is, Section 33. It is a matter which is Subjudice, and Section 33 states—

*In the determination of his civil rights and obligations, including any question or determination by or against any government or authority, a person shall be entitled to a fair hearing within a reasonable time by a court or other tribunal established by law and constituted in such manner as to secure its independence and impartiality.*

What I am saying, Sir, is that since this matter is before—

**Several hon. Members :** No! No! (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Adewumi :** What I am saying, Sir, is that we should not discuss this matter at all.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, if a Member is making a Constitutional point of Order, it is only fair that you allow him, irrespective of your feelings on this matter, to make his observation and allow the Speaker to give his ruling. I will allow the Movers of this Motion to move it and I will immediately put the Question straightaway. After the Motion has been carried either way I intend to make my own observations.

**Mr Nganjiwa :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Motion standing in my name and in the names of three other Colleagues reads as follows :

That in furtherance of the initiative already taken by the Parliamentary Leaders of the five political parties to acquaint the House of the Shugaba Abdurahman's deportation affair, this House hereby resolves that an Observer Team of five comprising one member from each political party in the House should represent the House at the sittings, in Maiduguri, of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the deportation, commencing from Monday, 18th February, 1980, with a view to obtaining a first hand information of the proceedings, and reporting back to this House.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Amos Idakula (Keffi) :** I rise to second the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** As I have said we are going to make an Amendment substituting the name of Mr Ambrose Gapsuk with that of Mr David Atta among the names of those moving this Motion.

**Mr Aliyu Mahmud (Yola) :** I now move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

**Resolved :** That in furtherance of the initiative already taken by the Parliamentary Leaders of the five political parties to acquaint the House of the Shugaba Abdurahman's deportation affair, this House hereby resolves that an Observer Team of five comprising one member from each political party in the House should represent the House at the sittings, in Maiduguri, of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the deportation, commencing from Monday, 18th February, 1980, with a view to obtaining a first hand information of the proceedings, and reporting back to this House.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The House having taken a decision, I want, for record purposes, to make the following observations.

As the Deputy Speaker, I am holding fort for the Speaker, Mr Ume Ezeoke, who is away in the United States. I would like to make it clear to the House that in holding fort for the Speaker, any decision that had been taken by Mr Ume Ezeoke has my one

hundred *per cent* support. I am not here to undermine the decisions already reached by the Speaker. Any new issue that comes up before the return of the Speaker is now my responsibility.

I want to put it on record that the Speaker, Mr Ume Ezeoke, with the Party Leaders that travelled to the United States, deliberated on this Motion and agreed that it was pointless that an Observer Team be sent to Maiduguri to watch the proceedings of the Tribunal set up on this matter. I was met yesterday by the Party Leaders who are acting for those Party Leaders who have gone to the United States and they insisted that this Motion be brought before the House. I have satisfied their request, but I want this point to be made clear that I will not under any circumstance reverse the decision already reached by the Speaker, Mr Ume Ezeoke. This is just for record purposes.

Hon. Members, I would want Members of the Select Committee to meet in my office at 1 o'clock to choose those Members that are going to Maiduguri. *(Applause)*

#### The DC 10 Aircraft

**Mr D. M. Onwuzulike (Aguata North-West) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name on the Order Paper :—

That, in view of the fact that DC 10 aircraft have in recent times been involved in disasters claiming almost 1,000 lives in different parts of the world, this House views with the greatest concern the reported near-crash on Wednesday, 16th January, 1980, of a London bound Nigeria Airways DC 10 aircraft with 106 passengers and a crew of 13 on board and accordingly directs the Committee on Aviation to investigate and report back this incident and the advisability or otherwise of continuing the use of DC 10 aircraft by Nigeria Airways.

I beg to move.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr F. C. Ugwu (Nsukka) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Onwuzulike :** Mr Speaker, Sir, this Motion is self-explanatory and non-controversial.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member for Aguata North-West (*Mr Onwuzulike*) just a second please.

Are there any Members of the Science and Technology Committee who are supposed to be visiting locations in Lagos and who are supposed to meet in the Foyer at 10 o'clock ? There seems to be only three or four Members outside. Will Members of the Science and Technology Committee that are still sitting here be reminded that they are holding up the bus waiting outside ?

**Mr Onwuzulike :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. This Motion as I said is self-explanatory and non-controversial. The aim is to implore this House to exercise

[MR ONWUZULIKE]

the Legislative powers which we have as contained in item 2 Section 1 of the Constitution. If I may read with your permission—

Second schedule, Legislative powers, Exclusive Legislative List says—

*Aviation, including airports, safety of aircraft and carriage of passengers and goods by air.*

This Motion seeks to protect the interest of the Nigerian tax-payer who travels by air regularly especially the international routes. It seeks to protect those who usually have no choice but to travel on the DC 10 aircraft and often with apprehension.

This Motion stems from incidents which have involved the DC 10 aircraft in different parts of the world and which have claimed almost one thousand lives and, in particular the recent incidents involving Nigeria Airways DC 10 aircraft.

Firstly, there was the incident of the 16th of January, 1980, involving a Nigeria Airways DC 10 aircraft bound for London, carrying 106 passengers with a crew of 13 who were mostly Nigerians. The Code Number of that aircraft was 5M-ANR. This aircraft was forced to come back to Murtala International Airport because one of its engines developed trouble in mid-air.

Secondly, on the 24th of January, just five days after the first one, there was a similar incident involving another Nigeria Airways DC 10 aircraft with Code No. 5N-ANN in far away Rome, Italy. This time the trouble was with the number one engine.

Prior to these incidents, on the 30th October, 1979, the number one engine of another Nigeria Airways DC 10 aircraft, Code No. 5N-ANN, stopped during take-off at Robertfield Airport in Monrovia. That engine had to be changed before the aircraft continued its journey.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the DC 10 we all know is a wide-bodied aircraft capable of taking about half the Members of this Assembly. It is designed and sold by McDonald Douglas Corporation of United States of America. The DC 10 has, in recent times, been known to develop a series of faults in very awkward situations, during take-off, landing, or sometimes, in mid-air. These faults and problems have resulted in terrible disasters. I would recount a few of them with regret.

In May 1979, there was an accident which involved an American Airways DC 10 aircraft. On take-off at Ohio Airport, Chicago, United States of America, one of the engines of the aircraft dropped on the runway and that resulted in the aircraft crashing and the death toll was 272.

On November 11, 1979, there was another accident which involved a Western Airline DC 10 aircraft at Mexico City International Airport. On landing, the DC 10 aircraft veered off the runway and crashed into a cluster of hangars and burst into flames. The death toll in this incident was 72.

Following the incidents that I have mentioned and others, DC 10 aircraft all over the world were grounded for mechanical and structural check-up.

After about two weeks of this exercise, they were all declared airworthy and were allowed to fly again. No sooner they took off, on November 28, barely three weeks after the Mexico City incident, another DC 10 aircraft, on a sight-seeing tour of the Antarctic, crashed on Mount Erebus with 256 passengers on board. Efforts have been made by the manufacturers of these aircraft to shift the blame from structural or mechanical defects to human errors, but this, I refuse to buy. It is on record, however, that in the long history of aviation, there had been four disasters which had been classified as major and the DC 10 has, to its credit, two of these major disasters.

Mr Speaker, Sir, in view of the foregoing, this House would like to know, through the Committee on Aviation, firstly the circumstances surrounding incidents involving Nigeria Airways DC 10 aircraft which were acquired only in 1976 and which almost narrowly on the 16th of January deprived Nigeria of 119 citizens, but for the skilfulness of the Pilot. Secondly, this House deserves to know from the Committee on Aviation whether or not the Air Registration Branch of Ministry of Civil Aviation has carried out its statutory obligations on the DC 10. I would quote from a publication by the Ministry of Civil Aviation titled Airport Development in Nigeria. On page 69 of this booklet, the functions and duties of the Air Registration Branch are enumerated. With your permission, Mr Speaker, I would read :

#### **Air Registration Branch**

*The Branch recommends for publication, regulation, orders, instructions and standards concerning the design and testing of engines and equipment, maintenance, repair, overhauling and flight test of aircraft including plant inspection.*

Further down, it says :

*The Air Registration Branch investigates aircraft defects and failures including those arising from air safety incidents and reviews Nigeria's airworthiness standards to ensure conformity with international requirements and current practices and procedures.*

On airworthiness of aircraft, this document says:

*No aircraft may fly without certificate of airworthiness which is issued by the ARB.*

Therefore, this House will want to know, through the Committee on Aviation, if the ARB has fulfilled its obligations, I mean, if it has carried out conscientiously its duties as regards the DC 10 and other aircraft belonging to the Nigeria Airways. In two short weeks, we had two serious incidents involving this aircraft as a result of the failure of engine number one or engine number two. Mr Speaker, Sir, this House wants to know also from the Committee on Aviation if it is desirable or otherwise for the Nigeria Airways to continue the operation of this aircraft which has given abundant signs of unpredictability and uncertainty.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not wish to over-flog this issue since it is a straightforward and non-controversial one. It touches on the safety of fellow Nigerians, tax-payers, who pay for this aircraft. One engine of this aircraft costs two million dollars or more,

Nigerian taxpayers, therefore, want to know, through the Committee on Aviation, how safe they are on this aircraft. The maintenance of this aircraft is done overseas because they cannot be maintained in Nigeria. Nigerian taxpayers also pay for this.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the catalogue of the incidents I have enumerated, involving the DC 10, speak for themselves. Those incidents involved not only the Nigeria Airways but also other Airlines. One day, it was the engine dropping off; another day, something went wrong with engine number two; and yet another day it could not take off because the engine stalled. Mr Speaker, Sir, I therefore implore every Member of this House to give this Motion the support it deserves so that the Committee on Aviation will settle down to work immediately and conduct this investigation in the interest of the taxpayers we are representing.

Mr Speaker, Sir, in conclusion, may I ask: can we afford to stand and stare while the lives of our citizens are in possible jeopardy? My answer is no. I ask again, can we afford to continue to patronise MacDonal Douglas Corporation of the United States of America by our continued purchase of their spare-parts? When these engines get bad, they will expect us to buy more. We stock-pile them. We have got about three or four reserved engines and one engine cost over two million dollars. Is that what we have to continue to do at the expense of our own citizens? My answer again is no.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to remind this House of the adage which warns that a stitch in time saves nine. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Anybody in support of the Motion? UPN.

**Mr A. O. Omisore** (Ife Central): Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I am not in support of the Motion and probably you may allow me to speak regardless of my opposition.

**The Deputy Speaker:** You are allowed to speak.

**Mr Omisore:** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I would seize this opportunity to inform the House that the sky power of the world today belongs to the two big powers, that is the United States of America which is number one, closely followed by the Soviet Union. All over the world, you will find that DC 10 aircraft is bought by most countries. Even in Britain, France, Germany and in most other countries, there is no power that can compete with America in the race for the sky. So, I cannot personally see what we can do with regard to the Motion of the last speaker.

I am in sympathy with him because of what he has said. He has done quite a lot of work and has tried to educate us about a number of accidents occurring here, there and all over the world as a result of engine failure. To the best of my mind, however, this cannot help the situation. I would like to remind the Mover of this Motion that no matter the make of the aeroplanes we may try to buy, there will still be engine trouble or disaster when it will come. There is no aeroplane which

has been made that is disaster free. So, with the greatest respect to the Mover of this Motion, I would advise him that there is nothing we can do. It is one of those things that follow the adventure of man. If I take a risk by travelling in an aeroplane or a ship, I must have to put up with whatever occurs during the course of my journey. In a nutshell, I am saying, with respect, that there is nothing that Nigerian can do as of now. Even if we go to Britain and say we want to patronise them by buying their planes, we would be surprised to know that they too buy DC 10 aircraft engines from America into their planes. Even if we go to Germany, they also buy the DC 10 aircraft engines and put them in their planes. Both Britain and Germany, of course, sell these to whoever wants to buy. It means going from one trouble to another if we change from American DC 10 to another brand of aircraft.

I, therefore, advise that what we should do is to forget about accidents, but in the meantime, we should inform the manufacturers of what is happening. We should warn them that we may not be patronising them any more unless they improve on their performance. I feel that whether they improve or not, it appears that there is nothing we can do. We have no alternative as regards the purchase of DC 10 from the USA. Thank you.

**Mr Peter Olayemi Obaoye** (Irepodun): Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to support the Motion brought by Mr Onwuzulike on various grounds.

Firstly, of all the uncertainties in the sky, it now looks that the greatest uncertainty is that of the DC 10. I have read for the past two or three years about crashes, and I have discovered that, one after the other, the DC 10 has always been involved. At least, it has the largest number of accidents. The accidents occur either at the take-off or at the landing, or even due to engine failure in the sky.

I agree that America is very good technologically, especially in the sky but that is no reason for us to continue killing ourselves if we know that American technology would kill us. Everyone of us knew what happened in the US a few months ago when a DC 10 was about to take-off and a small bulb fell off. This resulted in the death of about 250 people. I do not see any reason for allowing this sort of thing to continue. When the investigation panel came out with a report, they said that unless all the planes manufactured by MacDonal were grounded for a specific period and specifically checked to see the desirability of continuing to use them, it would be very unsafe. After that they discovered that the load-work at the tail of the present fleet of DC 10 is heavier than the body, and the screw that ties the thing down is not always stable. In which case, it has to be checked every seventy-two hours.

With all other technical things to be carried out on the plane, I believe that if a particular section of the plane would have to be checked every seventy-two hours, it is very dangerous. This is because it is very possible for one to forget what should be done. After all, a single nut is not what makes a plane. My feeling is that if we have to look at a particular section of the plane in every seventy-two hours, it is very dangerous. Since we have discovered that



[MR OBAOYE]

the DC 10 has recorded the largest number of air crashes all over the world, I do not see any reason for our fearing the consequences of changing from one brand of plane to another. We know how many people we lost in this country as a result of the 1969 air crash at the Ikeja Airport. We should not allow this sort of thing to continue.

With these small points, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr Isaac Ayodeji Olaleru (Oyun) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to oppose the Motion.

I am opposing the Motion not because the Mover of this Motion has bad intentions. I only want to oppose the Motion on the ground that, in the first place, DC 10 is not the only plane, if you would observe very well, that is having accidents all over the world. As I am speaking now, I want to assure you that I have travelled in many planes, and I know that there is no single plane in the world which one can boast of as being accident-free.

If we adopt this Motion, we are going to give our friendly manufacturers of DC 10 a very bad feeling. (*Interruptions*) Secondly, Mr Speaker, we do not need to make more enemies for ourselves than we can make friends. Thirdly, I also want you to observe that we can call on the manufacturers of DC 10 to improve because there are still a lot of grounds for improvement.

Mr Speaker, you will find that there is no mode of travelling in this world which is not susceptible to accident. Even when one travels in a car, or rides on a bicycle, or on a motorcycle, one is still susceptible to a lot of accidents.

With these few comments, I beg to oppose the Motion.

**Mr Olaiya Fagbamigbe (Akure) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion which has been ably moved by hon. D. M. Onwuzulike.

The argument that the manufacturers of the DC 10 are friendly with us is absolutely immaterial. We are considering the safety of our citizens who would be involved in flying in DC 10 planes if Nigeria continues to patronise that particular brand of plane. Where we are thinking of safety, friendship should melt into insignificance. Therefore, the argument that we might be offending the country that manufactures DC 10 planes is immaterial. It is not even our duty to suggest to the manufacturers that they should improve on their DC 10. It is left to them. We believe that they have done their best and that their best is not sufficiently safe for us. Therefore, if we try to make them improve their standard, we shall only be flogging a dead horse.

I agree with those who say that of all the uncertainties, as far as Aviation is concerned, DC 10 appears to be the most uncertain. The history of accidents in which DC 10 planes have been involved is proof positive of that argument. The mysterious thing is that nobody has actually been able to say what is wrong with these DC 10 planes. We just found that when an accident was to happen nobody was able to contemplate it, and nobody has been able

to locate the cause of the accidents. I believe that DC 10, as it is at the moment, is not safe. Therefore, this Motion should be given a chance. It should be committed to the Committee on Aviation to study and make recommendations as to the advisability of our continued patronage of DC 10 planes.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr Mohammed Lawal Na-Rogo (Karaye) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise not to support the Motion but to condemn it in totality. Mr Speaker, Sir, it is unfortunate that we do not even manufacture a bicycle in this country but we tend to condemn other countries' handwork. It is unfortunate that while a Nigerian in Maiduguri in the name of Alhaji Mustapha is just trying to fix his mini-aeroplane, we are condemning it. Today, the Mover of this Motion is trying to condemn the DC 10, tomorrow we may wake up to find that we are condemning the whole aeronautic world. Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not know where we are heading to.

Mr Speaker, I am highly in sympathy with the Mover of this Motion but maybe he is bringing up this Motion with a sort of clandestine intention. If we look at this sort of issue it seems as if the whole country is trying to judge it from a certain angle. We are neither to please nor to displease any country ; we have to base our judgment upon objective criticisms after weighing the pros and cons of each and every area of aeronautic engineering. It would have been all right if the Mover of this Motion had wanted the Committee to at least ask for advice from the experts of the Ministry of Aviation so as to ascertain what might have been the causes of incessant accidents involving DC 10 in the world. To my mind there has not been any DC 10 accident in this country. Maybe DC 10 is quite enough for Nigeria and other African countries, but what of other countries like America ?

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, the Mover of the Motion is asking the Committee on Aviation to investigate and report back a particular incident and the advisability or otherwise of continuing the use of DC 10 aircraft by Nigeria Airways.

**Mr Na-Rogo :** All right, Mr Speaker, before I go on, I would like to mention that whenever America catches cold it is Nigeria and other third World countries that sneeze. I would like to point this out to the House. Again, Mr Speaker, the reason why DC 10 aircraft normally have air collision or air blast or any sort of accident may be due to the aeroclimatic condition of that area. It is not just because of any other thing. DC 10 aircraft are not worse than Boeing 707 or any other aeroplane.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would end my comment here by saying that maybe the Mover of the Motion wants to attract attention to DC 10 aircraft so as to have another Lockheed issue in this country. If that is not so, maybe he wants to be noticed. I never try to say that I will do what I am not capable of doing ; no, I cannot say so. I have to be frank and sincere to myself. I can no longer allow myself to be deceived.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with this short contribution and some other points raised, I beg not only to sit down but to condemn this issue and ask that we throw it out of the window into the dustbin so that we no longer hear anything like that. Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to sit down.

**Alhaji Sidi H. Ali (Dambatta)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not only rise up to support this Motion but also to congratulate the person who brought this Motion. I am sure that from the very minute he conceived this idea he might have spoken to one or two people. I am also sure the powerful forces in MacDonald might have started their work to prevent it because they are first class all over the world in this type of business.

At the moment the most dangerous aircraft is DC 10. The fact that even America, the country that makes so much money out of this aircraft, stopped its countrymen from using it for sometime, should have been an eye-opener to developing countries and Nigeria in particular to be very suspicious of this aircraft. This is not the only time things of this nature are dumped in our country but just because some people manage to get ten per cent from MacDonald or Lockheed the dangers inherent in them are ignored until something dangerous takes place.

Mr Speaker, as recent as 1965, a particular motor company, the Ford, produced a car called *Comet* which was sold all over the United States. Some five years after, it was discovered through a book called *Accident at any Speed* that it was dangerous. The American Government paid back almost 80 million dollars to anybody who bought that car in order to protect the interest of their countrymen. Why are we always like this? If you go to many countries you will find that safety devices in cars which are manufactured in those countries are not brought to this country. Mr Speaker, I went to Britain recently and saw an MG car with all the safety devices in it and asked one of the salesmen why they do not bring these devices to Nigeria. He replied that our Government did not ask them to do so. They just produce and send to any country according to whatever measure of safety that country wants to take. I believe the Committee of this House should accept this Motion and investigate or get experts to advise us so that if it is dangerous we should stop using this brand of plane.

I am sure all of you are aware that a former Commissioner for Aviation from Kano State, Alhaji Shuaibu Kazaure, resigned his post as Commissioner for Aviation during the last regime in connection with this very company we are discussing. Some engineers in the Nigeria Airways wrote a very strong memorandum telling him how dangerous this plane is and suggesting that we should not use it. This Commissioner passed them fit and in fact one of the pilots in the Nigeria Airways was threatened by this man, saying that if he did not want to fly it, he would still get their leaders to fly it. What happened? Those pilots were dismissed. The matter became a very serious national issue before the former Government decided to take them back. But this

Commissioner said that he got the authority from the Head of State to dismiss them and that if the Head of State went back to talk to them and take them back, he, the Commissioner had been abused. He said he would rather resign his post as Commissioner than accept that type of dictatorial tendencies. I blame him because if you accept a post of Commissioner under a Military ruler you must expect these dictatorial tendencies. So, Mr Speaker, it is on this point that I appeal to this honourable House to take into consideration the lives of our people and the millions of naira we invest. We know people who are agents of this Company, who make at least a million naira on every deal.

In fact, the spare-parts of the Company are never advertised. They are never published. Who can tell me he has ever seen the Ministry of Aviation advertising to buy spare-parts of any plane? A particular group of ten per centers have been given this job and when they buy these spare-parts the profit is shared among themselves. Recently, Mr Speaker, an American paper published that a Commander of the Air Force of one of the African countries was given a bribe of five million dollars in order to get his country buy their planes. The country concerned denied this, but what happened later? After the Government was overthrown in a *coup* and *Rawlings* came into power, that Head of Air Force was executed.

Mr Speaker, we should not ignore this and keep quiet when we know that dirty things are going on. Although we do not want *Rawlings* to come, but we must be very careful. When we have *Rawlings* things will be wonderful. (*Applause*)

Mr Speaker, with these few points I support the Motion hundred per cent. Thank you Sir. (*Applause*)

**Mr Mohammed Yelwa (Yauri)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, looking at the Motion, the Mover of the Motion is asking us to agree and refer the matter to the Committee on Aviation. Personally, I do not think this is necessary.

The previous speaker was accusing DC 10 and other Companies of offering ten per cent. I think this is irrelevant. It is the nature of the people involved and not the Company. Even if you do not buy DC 10, but you buy another brand of plane and the person wishes to get bribe, he knows how to get it and he will get it. It is the human nature and not the company itself. It is not in Nigeria alone; it is all over the world. To me, DC 10 is safe and it is well known all over the world. Unless we get an alternative, we should not condemn it.

People talk of accidents. Accidents can happen anywhere, anytime and in any place. Therefore, accidents can happen in any plane. As far as accident is concerned, we have to accept the will of God over death. There used to be an old man who once said : *do not fly if you know you do not have wings*. So, if you are fearing death in a plane and you do not have wings, why are you flying? As far as I am concerned, there is no need for us to refer this Motion to the Aviation Committee. Therefore, I oppose the Motion.

**Mr Bukar Mele (Matchina)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, we are in this House to represent the interest of the common man in Nigeria. In fact, anything that threatens the life of the common man, it is our

[MR MELE]

obligation to condemn it in its totality. The issue of DC 10 is a universal phenomenon. A lot of things had been said and we have seen how the DC 10 has threatened the lives of many human beings all over the world. It has claimed the lives of over one thousand people and has threatened the lives of so many Nigerians. Why then should we come here and say we are going to support the use of DC 10 in Nigeria?

It is our duty, Mr Speaker, to refer the issue to the Committee on Aviation to investigate the use of DC 10 and submit its report to the House. Therefore, we should condemn the use of DC 10 Nigeria and with these few remarks Mr Speaker, I beg to sit.

**Mr Amos Idakula (Keffi):** I rise to support the Motion. Mr Speaker, I think that the crux of the matter is simple and we do not necessarily have to belabour the point.

The fact is that an allegation has been made. Whether the allegation is correct or not, we need to find out. In the course of this, I think the Committee should be given the chance to find out this allegation. For one thing, the problem of purchasing this particular aircraft is not the primary thing as at now because if Nigeria can purchase DC 10, it can as well purchase a different aircraft which is not of the DC 10 make.

Looking at the whole issue squarely, it is important that the plane we should purchase should be the best for the people using it day-in-day-out. It is not in fact very good for us to purchase planes that pose a threat to the lives of the common people in the country. If the Committee comes out with its findings that we should continue to use DC 10, that is the end of the matter.

We have not, as at now, heard from the experts, that is, the engineers who work on the aircraft. We have not heard from the pilots who operate the aircraft and we have not even heard from the manufacturers of DC 10. I know for certain that DC 10 aircraft are so many and perhaps it is because of the number that makes the accident rate to rise. This notwithstanding, it is good for this House to act on facts and not to depend on hearsay. Therefore, it is important for the House Committee on Aviation to find out the facts and figures about the aircraft and recommend to this House the desirability of our continued use of them.

Mr Speaker, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr G. N. Ozugha (Anambra South):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, I rise to support the Motion. In doing so, I would like to call the attention of the House to some of the incidents that happened prior to the purchase of the aircraft.

Three of our best pilots, Captain Hayes, Captain Tokunbo Williams, and Captain Nnachi were all suspended because they were against the purchase of the aircraft. These Pilots had over twenty years' experience and they have what is called in Aviation DC 10 ratings. Among them was Engineer Dikibo who is the best Engineer we have got in the Nigerian Airways today. These four pilots were suspended because they were against the buying of this aircraft,

not because of 10 *per cent* as they were saying. Having done that, the authorities purchased the aircraft. They recalled them after the purchase and told them that they had no choice but that if they would fly the aircraft, they would get their arrears. That was after the suspension for six months.

Now, coming to another point. The hon. Member for Aguata North-West (*Mr D. M. Onwuzulike*) had pointed out some of the areas where DC 10 aircraft were involved in accidents. We found one in Chicago and the worst of the lot was the O'rly Airport incident where the door blew open. Some of us who are engineers would tell you that when you are flying at 35,000 feet and the door opens, it will siphon everybody out and that was precisely what happened. Under normal conditions, a good aircraft, even in a Toyota Car, if the door is not properly closed, you will see a light indicating that the door is not properly closed. That was not the case with this DC 10. Do not forget that this is an aircraft which is being purchased at over six million per aircraft. One engine in this DC 10 is over two million, not to talk of other spare-parts and so on and so forth. The one that happened in O'rly and killed all the passengers. We can also think of that of Chicago. But the worst of it all happened in New Zealand during what they called the sight-seeing flight where the pilot carried about 256 passengers. As far as I am concerned, this accident is still a mystery. In fact this morning I was talking to the representatives of the Ministry of Aviation and I told him that it was still a mystery to me with my ten years' experience in Aviation. The Pilot went so low as to hit a mountain—the Etruscan mountain—which was the fault of the instrument. It is unfortunate that when these things happen the pilots are not alive to tell their story. So, I am drawing the attention of this House to this Motion with all seriousness. It costs enough to train a pilot and we do not train these boys only to see them die through no fault of their own. This is a fact.

Some people are saying that we do not build DC 10. No, we do not but we have options and these are better options. We have the Boeing series. We have 707, 727, 737, and 747 as better alternatives for DC 10. The advantages of 747 is that the spare-parts are compatible with the other Boeing series. You can swop one spare-part for the other; so it makes sense to buy one type of aircraft instead of buying DC 10 which we know is a very unsafe aircraft. Go to the airport, if a passenger asks you which aircraft is on flight today and you tell him it is DC 10, he would say, *no, I am not going*. It is as simple as that. But in most cases, unfortunately, the passengers have no choice. It is for us as the highest legislative body in the country to protect them. The Nigeria Airways is now trying to buy two more DC 10 aircraft. I would like this very Motion to be committed to the Committee on Aviation to examine the ramifications connected with all DC 10 accidents. It should investigate whether it is advisable for us to go on buying this type of aircraft or to go in for a better one which is 747, which anybody will advise is a better aircraft.

Mr Speaker, with these few remarks I beg the honourable House, in the interest of safety, (afterall Aviation has the largest accident rate when you

[MF OZUGHA]

compare it with another means of transport) to support this Motion. We are the buyers, we have the choice, let us not be committed to one type of aircraft to our detriment. Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Any NPP Member opposing or supporting the Motion?

**Chief S. Alele (Ikwerre/Etche):** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion. I disagree with some Members who are arguing that because we do not manufacture aircraft we have no power or authority to query those who manufacture them. I will have to point out that even though we are not manufacturers of aircraft, we are consumers of this equipment. As consumers, we have the right to prevail on the manufacturers to either improve on the equipment they are selling to us or they should withdraw them where we find that using their equipment is dangerous for us. On that basis, I think Nigeria has a right and this honourable House has a right to prevail on the manufacturers of DC 10 to improve it.

Now, going through the catalogue of accidents involving DC 10, to my mind, I do not suppose that such accidents are just natural. They are accidents resulting from technical faults in this equipment. Even though we have no right to legislate on things over which we have no control—which is natural accident—in this particular case, I want to refer to it not as a natural accident, but a definite technical fault which is the fault of the manufacturers. I would then go further to expatiate a little.

After investigating and finding out, we are not going to concern ourselves with only the desirability of the Nigeria Airways using DC 10; we should go further to include other airlines that use DC 10 in our airports in Nigeria. I am saying this because if we just limit it to the Nigeria Airways, considering the desirability of using DC 10, we are limiting our protection to only those citizens who use DC 10 through the Nigeria Airways. What about the other citizens?

**The Deputy Speaker:** Are you demanding a substantive Amendment to this Motion? That is not what this Motion is talking about.

**Chief Alele:** I am making a suggestion, Mr Speaker, which I think will be useful to the Committee that will go into this. Even where they have exhausted the provision of this Motion, they should also consider extending the implication of this thing to other airlines that use DC 10 in our airports.

**The Deputy Speaker:** You will stop them from using Nigeria Airports?

**Chief Alele:** Pardon?

**The Deputy Speaker:** If Nigeria Airways decides not to use DC 10 aircraft, then other countries should not use it?

**Chief Alele:** I mean airlines that use DC 10 to carry our citizens in our own land. For example, the British Caledonian Airways use DC 10 and they ply between Nigeria and Gatwick and they carry a lot of Nigerians more than the Nigeria Airways even carry. If we are protecting a section of our citizens using DC 10 under the Nigeria Airways and we leave out the British Caledonian Airways

using DC 10 to continue to carry the same citizens, then we are not protecting all our citizens. So, that is why I am suggesting, Mr Speaker, Sir, that when we authorise the Committee to deliberate on this issue, they should not just limit themselves to the Nigeria Airways; they should extend it to all the airlines that use DC 10 in our Airports. We have the right to say that.

On that basis I beg to support this Motion that it is very important to protect the citizens of this country. Thank you very much.

**Mr B. A. Chaha (Katsina-Ala):** Mr Speaker, I think it is wrong if I say I rise to support a Motion like this. In the first place, Mr Speaker, I want to draw the attention of this House to the embodiment of this Motion and say that up till now, I have not seen any reason for bringing this Motion to this House.

We are talking of DC 10 aircraft claiming lives in the world. I am pretty sure that there is no Nigerian who has come before this honourable House to say that, up to this point, the DC 10 has claimed so many Nigerian lives. We are trying to introduce unnecessary fears to this country, fears about things that we do not know. To my surprise, the Mover of the Motion has said that a stitch in time saves nine, where? It is not here. We are talking of the DC 10 that has done nothing to Nigeria. What about the Mercedes Benz 911, and other cars in Nigeria, destroying Nigerian lives every now and again? We have nothing to say. What about train disasters in Nigeria that had claimed so many lives? No Motion was moved about them in this country. We do not know this aircraft, the DC 10.

It appears, Mr Speaker, Sir, that we do not know how death comes to people in Nigeria, not only Nigeria but also the whole world. It may be destined that I shall die in water, fire or anywhere. Without the DC 10, we would die naturally.

My other fear, Mr Speaker, Sir, is that by introducing this Motion in this honourable House, we shall one day ask all our students in countries like India and Japan to come home. The reason being that they have drought in India and earthquake in Japan. We would therefore move a Motion that our children and students should come back to Nigeria. It is in the light of this that I say that this is not a good Motion.

I think it will be much better to think about what is happening here in Nigeria, say, on the roads. Right now, outside there, you will find Nigerians lying dead. What have we done? If care is not taken, we shall go without machines in this country because there is no single machine that does not claim some lives. Although I seem to sympathise with the Mover of this Motion, but I think there is no point in entertaining this Motion whatsoever. Unless this honourable House moves that we stop driving, riding and walking, there would be accidents. You see, even in the course of walking, you can be killed by a snake. Therefore, there will be a Motion that nobody in Nigeria should walk about because he is going to be killed by a snake.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The hon. Member for Minna South (*Alhaji Yinusa Paiko*) should then speak.

**Alhaji Yinusa Paiko** (Minna South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion. Hon. Members, I associate myself entirely with the remarks made by previous speakers who supported this Motion on the ground that it contains nothing of controversy at all. It is not disputed by anybody here that this aircraft has been involved in different parts of the world in accidents or near accidents which had claimed a large number of lives.

On the contrary what is being adduced in opposition to this Motion is the fact that death or accident is an inherent part of life. There is nothing you can do about it.

Hon. Members, we are all adults, we accept and recognise that. Every man has a day when he will die, a natural death by sickness, by doing a dangerous act or by doing something as completely harmless as eating food ; but the duty of every reasonable mature adult is to do his best to minimise the risks to which he exposes himself.

The fact is that the aircraft, as an instrument, is inherently risky, but then nobody compels any person to use it. On the other hand those who use it have a claim on the manufacturers of this aircraft to make it as safe as it can possibly be. That is all that this Motion is asking for. The aircraft, DC 10, now under discussion has proved itself, in different parts of the world, to have behaved with a lower degree of safety than other models of aircraft. There is the Boeing, there is the Tristar 1011, there is the Covair, very different types ; but there is only one DC 10 which has consistently shown different types of fault—be it doors, be it engines falling off the wings, be it the instruments misleading the pilot to think that he is flying high when in fact he is flying down to the ground.

As far as we are concerned here in Nigeria, I believe that we should follow the example of the other developed countries. I remember certainly, when the accident over Chicago happened, over one thousand DC 10s were grounded in America by the order of the Congress. There is what they call there, in the United States, the Civil Aviation Control Board. It is a very powerful, independent regulatory agency there which has power to regulate air traffic. They passed this order on the aircraft industry over a large degree of resistance and opposition by the lobbyists of the industry, but for three months none of these aircraft flew. Unfortunately, in Europe where the air flying capacity is not as high as in the United States, the airlines there could not afford to ground their planes for as long as three months. All of them, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Holland and others, did it for at least one month when they went through a list of very exhaustive checks on different parts of the plane. I believe a little of it was done here in Nigeria.

Nevertheless, what happened was that countries outside the United States found that they needed the capacity provided by the DC 10 earlier than

the United States. They, therefore, took them back into service. That is what is happening in Nigeria. But the alarming thing is that as recent as 16th January, 1980, we have had what this Motion calls, a near accident again. I believe, hon. Members, this is an important indication that whatever DC 10 aircraft Nigeria Airways is using, have not had sufficient of those checks which I mentioned before. That is one possibility.

Another possibility, of course, may be that the standard of maintenance, the standard of airtraffic control or the standard of piloting within Nigeria Airways itself was responsible for the particular episode of 16th January. But whatever the case, we have to know it is important that we know. If it happens to be that the near accident was caused by mechanical faults, then, of course, the reason for this Motion is justified ; it would have been vindicated. If it is the question of poor maintenance, pilots' error or poor training on the part of the Nigeria Airways, we have a different problem on our hands :— what to do to improve the operational performance of our pilots and personnel within the Nigeria Airways. Therefore, this Motion serves two useful purposes. Firstly, against the specific aircraft and secondly, against the personnel manning our aircraft in this country.

I also believe that this should be the beginning of a more important endeavour by us in this honourable House, trying to improve as much as possible the quality of all types of machinery imported into this country. If you look at the standard of Mercedes Benz cars in this country or Peugeot cars and compare them with what is imported from other countries, you will find that there are many differences in the bumper size, in the height of the vehicle, in the breaking system or in the cooling system. These differences are not accidental at all. They only arise from the fact that different countries give specific instructions to the manufacturers of these articles on what and what to have, as a matter of law, on these vehicles before they are imported into the market. We can do that in this country too not only in respect of aircraft but also in respect of every kind of machinery.

Hon. Members, I plead with you to let us try this very first experiment to exercise our power over the quality of instruments, scientific or mechanical gadgets, being imported into this country. Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Speaker :** I would only allow two more Members to speak, one in favour of the Motion and the other against.

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel** (Degema II) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion. In doing so, I would try to give a brief history of the DC 10.

About fifteen years ago, the Nigeria Airways used the VC 10 and the engine in VC 10 was the Rolls Royce Engine, the most reliable Aircraft Engine in the world. The Americans were using the Rolls Royce Engine in their Jet Clippers. They called it 707 Jet Clipper. After that, they introduced the

Douglas Engine in their Aircrafts. Originally, the body was manufactured in America and Rolls Royce engine was fitted into it. They introduced the DC 10 into the market to supersede the Rolls Royce Engine.

There was a very big politics about purchasing this engine all over the world. They sent their people into the world market to induce people to buy those aircraft instead of the good aircraft backed with Rolls Royce engine. Since they succeeded in their intention, we have experienced considerable loss of lives all over the world.

Nigeria Airways pilots protested vehemently against the purchase of the DC 10 aircraft and as a result some of them were removed from office. I have known these pilots for more than twenty-one years. They have been flying the Rolls Royce engine and they know how reliable it is. They recommended that DC 10 was not air worthy. That being the case, they resolved that they would not fly it. But, they were forced to fly it instead of the 707. Presently, the 707 is the best aircraft because it has the Rolls Royce engine.

The only thing the Motion is seeking is to find out whether or not this aircraft is reliable to carry Nigerian citizens safely to wherever they are going and whether or not this country will continue to buy them. We were voted here to protect our people and not to find ways and means of destroying them. So, the Committee on Civil Aviation should find out whether these aircraft are reliable to be used by the country. If not so, let us leave the aircraft alone and get better ones. We do not manufacture aircraft, but we buy them with our money. Since we buy them with our money, it is only natural that we should buy the best and leave the bad ones to their owners. We can only copy their method of government which we are doing at the moment but we should not just import anything they manufacture into our country. It does not mean that because we have gone presidential, we should also do what they do. We should protect our people. Let us leave these aircraft alone and find a good alternative for our people.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I support the Motion. I appeal to the entire Members of the House to support this Motion and commit it to the appropriate Committee for investigation.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Is anybody opposing the Motion ?

**Mr I. J. Ikpatt (Etinan I) :** I rise to oppose this Motion, Mr Speaker. In opposing this Motion, I would like to ask Members of this House certain questions. Why do we bother ourselves with aircraft manufactured elsewhere ? Somebody in this country in the far north, has attempted to manufacture an aircraft. Instead of encouraging this fellow and ensuring that people like him are encouraged, we keep on bothering ourselves about what others have done elsewhere. Those people who manufactured these aircrafts which we are using now might have started that way. If you find that the aircraft called DC 10 is not good enough for us, why not go to another country and buy another type of aircraft ?  
(Prolonged interruptions)

**The Deputy Speaker :** The hon. Member for Etinan I (Mr Ikpatt) the fellow who is manufacturing the aircraft you are talking about in Maiduguri is looking for a passenger. Are you volunteering ?  
(Laughter)

**Mr Ikpatt :** Mr Speaker, Sir, it is our duty to encourage that young man so that in future we might have our own aircraft and stop bothering ourselves with what some other people have done.

I knew a man in Ibadan who tried to brew something out of cocoa. After some time he called on the Federal and State governments to come to his aid but up till now—

**Mr F. C. Ugwu (Nsukka) :** Point of Order, Mr Speaker. My point of Order is Order 26 (2). We are not talking of cocoa but aircraft.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, we are talking of Douglas and Rolls Royce Engines. Please confine yourself to the subject under discussion.

**Mr Ikpatt :** Thank you, Mr Speaker, but I just wanted the House to know that such people should be encouraged. Finally, I oppose this Motion because I want the indigenes of this country to be encouraged in whatever they do and we should stop bothering ourselves with what others have manufactured. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

**Resolved :** That, in view of the fact that DC 10 aircraft have in recent times been involved in disasters claiming almost 1,000 lives in different parts of the world, this House views with the greatest concern the reported near-crash on Wednesday, 16th January, 1980 of a London bound Nigeria Airways DC 10 aircraft with 106 passengers and a crew of 13 on board and accordingly directs the Committee on Aviation to investigate and report back this incident and the advisability or otherwise of continuing the use of DC 10 aircraft by Nigeria Airways.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The third and last Motion on the Order Paper is on Federal Government Corporations standing in the names of Mr E. D. N. Uwandu and Mr Debo Akande.

#### Federal Government Corporations

**Mr E. D. N. Uwandu (Mbaitolu) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, before I proceed to move this Motion may I refer the hon. Members to paragraph (iv) of the Motion. There is a typographical error in it. It should read thus :

Annual Reports of the Corporations shall be laid by the appropriate Minister before the National Assembly, and not by the Executive.

It should read *appropriate Minister*.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, we are operating a Presidential System and no Minister has a right to send any report direct to this House without sending it through the Executive.

**Mr Uwandu :** That may be correct but he must obtain the permission of the President before he sends it here.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The Minister is part and parcel of the Executive but he does not send reports direct to the House. He sends them through the Executive.

**Mr Uwandu :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I have to say on this Motion that we cannot consider the problem of this country—

**The Deputy Speaker :** You have not moved the Motion yet.

**Mr Uwandu :** I am sorry please. Mr Speaker, Sir, I move—

That this House directs the Committee on Public Service Matters to seek ways and means of removing all Federal Government Corporations from any connections whatsoever, with, and from the influence of the Civil Service, with a view to making them commercially-oriented ; that towards this end,

(i) A Statutory Board, with responsibility to the appropriate Minister, shall be set up for each Corporation.

(ii) Permanent Secretaries and any Civil Servants of whatever titles, shall be excluded from membership of such Board.

(iii) Remunerations and other service conditions of the Servants of such Corporations shall be outside the ambit of the existing Civil Service system.

(iv) Annual Reports of the Corporations shall be laid by the appropriate Minister before the National Assembly.

I beg to move.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Is anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Debo Akande (Ibadan North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, Mr Uwandu.

**Mr Uwandu :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, before I proceed with this Motion I have to say that, in considering the social and economic problems of this country, we have to take a look at all the Corporations, Companies and Agencies established by the Government. For example, during the last Administration the civil servants, especially the Permanent Secretaries, were members of all the Boards of Corporations and Agencies. In doing so they interfered with most of the decisions of these Corporations, and most of the things they did were mainly for their own benefit and nothing more. These Corporations and Agencies of the Government have been established in order to help the Government achieve certain ends whether in the economy of the country or through public utilities.

One of the disadvantages of having these civil servants on the Boards, as you all know, is that we are always experiencing bureaucratic control by the civil servants. As we all know, the Civil Service is overburdened with other activities and it is very difficult, if not impossible, for them to leave the job they are doing in the Civil Service and control the activities of the Boards. Secondly, the Boards have not got the managerial and technical capabilities, and the reason is not because they cannot get these things but because they cannot afford to pay for the services of experts. This is due to the fact that salaries they pay have been streamlined with those in the Civil Service. If Boards can be extricated from the bureaucratic control of the Civil Service, there is no doubt that the workers will achieve maximum productivity which may be commensurate with the amount of money they are paid. If they do better job they will be paid very well.

It is my humble opinion that these people should be removed from the ambit of the Civil Service so that they can have separate Statutory Board which can take charge of the particular Boards or Corporations or Agencies in which the Federal Government has got some shares. Let us take NEPA for example. We are all witnesses to the intransigence, negligence and inefficiency of NEPA. This is not because NEPA cannot do its job very well but it is because they have not got the right materials. They cannot get the materials because they cannot pay them. As a result many of the good Engineers in NEPA have resigned from the service to open up their own private business. At least I know about eight Engineers who have left NEPA in the last two years. The reason they gave was that NEPA could not pay them. It is because they are under the control of the Civil Service.

On the other hand, if the civil servants can check their interventions in the Boards they will be able to cope with the work they are doing in the Ministry. I am quite sure that with the present situation and complexities in the economy and the burden especially in the Ministries of Trade, Commerce, Industries and Finance, it is highly impossible for the civil servants to cope with the activities in the Corporations.

Now, this one takes me to the annual report which deals with accounts. The I do not care attitude of the people in the Civil Service has affected the people in the Corporations and Boards owned by the Federal Government or the State Governments. In fact, they are not making as much profits as they should have, and that is why we want them to lay their accounts before us so that any one of them that is not making good profits we can carry on an investigation into so as to find out what is happening. Is it because they have not got the tools ? Is it because they have not got the materials ? Or is it because the Organisation is not well structured ? So, these are the reasons why we want the accounts to be laid before us. It is not because we do not trust the Managers, the Managing Directors or the Ministers in-charge. But it is for us to find a way to check the inactivity, the inefficiency and other things involved in most of the Corporations.

In fact, I wanted to bring a Bill here before this Motion overtook it. That Bill was going to deal with the question of having Corporation officials and Company officials to be Members of other Corporations, or Boards of other Corporations. Because the Federal Government has got some shares in certain Corporations the staff there also behave like civil servants. I do not see any reason why the Managing Director of NIDB or any officer there should be a Chairman or a Director in ICON Security. It is simply because the Federal Government has got interest in NIDB, and because the NIDB is owned by the Federal Government and it has some shares in ICON Security, the Managing Director of NIDB becomes the Chairman of ICON. This is wrong. In Nigeria we have got a crop of businessmen, we have got intelligentsia. We have also got people who are versed in business, in economics and in most of these things. In fact we have people who can become Chairmen and who can be Members of the Boards, and yet, somebody who is already a Managing Director of a Corporation or a Bank is appointed to be Chairman of another Corporation. What time has he got to look into the activities of another Organisation. So, it is my humble opinion that this type of people should not be asked to be Chairmen or Board Members in such an Organisation.

Another point is that management in the Corporations which are controlled by the Government is very poor. In fact poor management of NIDB is reflected on the Federal Military Government's views on the Report of the Industrial Enterprises Panel. This Report was published in 1976. This is an example of bad management. With your permission, Mr Speaker, I wish to read the section of the Report that deals with NIDB—Nigerian Industrial Development Bank Limited. It reads :

*During the four-year period, 1970-71 to 1973-74, total national capital formation in Nigeria is estimated at ₦5,300 million of which the economic sector component was about ₦4,200 million. In a situation where shortage of funds never constituted problems, NIDB's outstanding investment of ₦35.43 million in all its twelve years is a poor showing, being as it is a meagre 0.6 per cent of total national capital formation. This is well below performance of other similar institutions in other countries, e.g. the Bank of Brazil where in 1974 alone, it approved investments equal to 20 per cent of that year's capital formation and disbursed ₦900 million, an amount equal to about 10 per cent of the fixed capital formation.*

Within the period I am trying to review, civil servants injected themselves into the NIDB. They did give the operational autonomy to the Managers in that Bank, but they did not allow these Managers to use their initiative to carry on the objectives of that Bank. Most of them in fact favoured giving loans to aliens which is very bad. You will be surprised to know that aliens got over sixty-eight per cent of the loans in NIDB in 1970 and now they have thirty per cent. I am happy to say that this Report mentioned it and it says once more—

*As regards indigenisation, NIDB's track record*

*has moved from very poor to fair. As at 1970, the cumulative record showed that 68 per cent of its investment were in alien enterprises. That was the year the Federal Government openly expressed dissatisfaction. Today, only 30 per cent of approved cumulative investments are in alien enterprises. This is a definite improvement, but in the opinion of the Panel, more room still exists for improvements as it does not appear right for public funds such as are channelled by Government to NIDB to be loaned to alien enterprises at will.*

So, what I am trying to say is that the purpose of the Government establishing some of the Corporations, some of the Companies and some of the Agencies has been defeated by the way they are being managed. It is not that the Managers do not know what to do but it is because some civil servants have got vested interest in most of the Corporations. Most of them did this so that when they left the Civil Service, they could easily go back to these Corporations and either become Managers, Personnel Officers or anything else.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these comments I have to conclude that the way Government Corporations were managed in the past is inadequate for us in this present situation. Our position is a new one and we must think anew and act anew

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these, I better take my seat.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Thank you. Yes, Mr Debo Akande.

**Mr Debo Akande (Ibadan North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to join hon. Uwandu in co-moving this Motion which, on the face of it, should not be controversial.

We all agree that one of the drawbacks of the Military Regime was the injection of civil servants into all spheres of State matters in the last thirteen years. Unfortunately this has set the hands of the clock back in all Public Corporations. Hitherto before the Army Regime, all the Federal and State Corporations (they used to be called Regional Corporations) were all free from Civil Service influence. No sooner the civil servants became entrenched under the Army Rule than they found themselves in all Corporations and rendered them unserviceable to the citizens of this country.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Motion has been formulated under four lanes and I am sure, Sir, that hon. Members will agree with me that in order to get these Corporations to be more efficient and to be more commercial-oriented there will be need to establish a Statutory Board with responsibility to the appropriate Minister rather than the Permanent Secretary who is at present, the dominant figure. Under the first Civil Rule, this Board used to control all the Corporations and regulated their affairs. The Board used to make them really efficient, really profitable and really of service to the citizens of this nation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I submit with all the emphasis at my command that the first leg of the Motion should find favour with all the hon. Members of the House. Let us take the Corporations out of



[MR AKANDE]

the Civil Service Commissions and let us have a separate board to cater for all the Corporations.

Now, the second leg, Mr Speaker, Sir, is interwoven with the first leg. It is also saying that both the Permanent Secretaries and all the Civil Servants should be taken away. I think I would like to digress a bit because my co-Mover, the hon. Member for Mbaitoli (*Mr Uwandu*), in moving the Motion mentioned the Corporations generally and dealt in detail with the NIDB. I would like to say before the House that we have in mind all the Federal Corporations and I would name some of them, Sir. I have in mind, a Corporation like NEPA which is of no use to anybody at the moment.

In the last three weeks we had suffered from the inefficiency of NEPA in this House. Several sittings had to be adjourned simply because NEPA in the last few years could not render a good service to the nation.

I also have in mind, Mr Speaker, Nigerian Railway, which does not move, which is dirty, which does not leave in time and which the Civil Servants had found necessary to travel to India to negotiate an agreement with Indians to come and run it for us. Whatever reasons they had in doing that are best known to them.

I also have in mind the Nigeria Airways which is popularly called the Nigeria Air Waste. I also happen to know Sir, that there are some standing Motions to come up specifically on this. In fact I have put in one because Nigeria Airways is rendering one of the most useless services to this country and it needs a real re-organisation under a separate board, free and independent of any Civil Servant.

I also have in mind, Sir, the Banks generally which include both the Commercial and other Merchant Banks like the NIDB as enumerated by my co-Mover. I also have in mind, Sir, the Insurance Corporations, the Coal Corporation, the Oil Corporation, the Nigerian National Supply and the Newspapers. Of course, Sir, I also have in mind the Universities which Civil Servants had infiltrated into and caused to be run at a low ebb.

Now, Sir, there is no doubt that the exclusion of Civil Servants from the realm of affairs of these Corporations will bring good services to the nation. The reasons are obvious. The bureaucracy of Civil Service does not allow for quick action. There is need for the Executive to execute the policies agreed and formulated by the respective Boards of the Corporations and there is need for decisions to be taken in time so that execution of matters can be set in Motion.

I can say, Sir, without any doubt, that there were several cases during the last few years where actions in some Corporations could not be taken because the Permanent Secretaries or the officials who were to give the final word were not available or were on tour. In fact, there were cases, Mr Speaker, Sir, of files being carried overseas to meet the officials just to append their signatures. What a country, to have to travel about chasing officials to sign documents before actions could be taken in Corporations!

Now, Sir, in the case of Nigeria Airways which I also mentioned, the degree of inefficiency, recklessness and mis-management has got to such a stage that we were told recently even before the Army left that the Nigeria Airways had not had an audited account for some years. I believe, Sir, that under a proper management, surely, there would be need to have an account audited annually. Of course, that is the first leg of this Motion.

Sir, the officials had also found it necessary, in respect of Nigeria Airways, to go to Holland and call the KLM people to come and run the Airways for us. There is no doubt that we have enough Pilots, efficient and good Pilots, enough accountants in the Accounts Section, enough Administrators in the Administrative Section, but they are being frustrated by the officials in the respective Ministries. It is not that they cannot discharge the duties, they can do it properly. They probably did not need the KLM to come and run the Nigeria Airways for us. But here we are today, the officials have loaded us with KLM officials. As I said, a Motion is coming under which we shall call for that agreement because it was one of the agreements that were hurriedly undertaken and signed in the last few months before these people departed.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to touch the third leg of the Motion. Hon. Members, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that before the Military Regime, when these Corporations were running properly, they had their own remunerations outside the Civil Service. The Army set up Udoji and directed Udoji to harmonise the conditions of the Service of the employees of these Corporations with the Civil Service. This affected the Nigerian workers generally. We are unhappy about this situation; it has taken us nowhere. On the contrary, it has demoralised the members of these Corporations. It has set them back and they are no longer as productive as they used to be.

In fact their hours of work had been brought into line with the hours of Civil Service. If I recall rightly, Mr Speaker, Sir, they used to work till 4.35 p.m. in those days with a short break between 12.00 and 1.00 p.m. But now, because of the harmonisation, they have had to toe the Civil Service line. Since they earn Civil Service salaries, they are no longer anxious to produce as they used to do. It is my humble submission, Sir, that there is need to take the remunerations of the Corporations outside the Civil Service so that those Corporations can regain their image. The officials there can regain their morale and productivity if the respective Corporations can be revived.

Sir, the last point is in respect of the Annual Report. Once these Corporations are revived, as enumerated in this Motion, there would be need to bring an Annual Report before this House which we shall consider. I believe, Sir, that a Managing Director or a General Manager of a Corporation that knows that at the end of the year the Report of his organisation is going to be laid before the Parliament for consideration and for looking into, will ensure that the Corporation runs properly in the year.

If I may cite an example, in the early sixties, Mr Speaker, I recall (those of you who were in England would remember), the case of the British Railways when it was not running well. They had to go to city and get a Dr Beeching to come and run the Railways on a salary of £35,000 when the British Prime Minister was then on £24,000. Dr Beeching was brought from the city to come and run the Railways and he was given an appropriate salary. He was given the condition that he had to bring to the Parliament at the end of each year a Report of his services so that the Representatives of the people could decide whether he justified the confidence which they reposed in him by entrusting the services to him.

Sir, what the fourth leg of this Motion is saying is that we should put in the appropriate Corporations people who are efficient and people who have the merit and knowledge to run the Corporations. Let us ask them at the end of every twelve months to bring their Reports to the House for necessary consideration.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these few remarks, I jointly move with hon. Uwandu this Motion and commend it for the approval of Members. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, Mr R. O. Apalara is proposing an Amendment and this will involve the suspension of Standing Order 24 (b). It is a substantive Amendment because this Motion is calling for a commercially-oriented Corporation. He wants *commercially-oriented* to be substituted with *more efficient* and I believe that these two are totally different views. I think it is better for him to bring a substantive Motion on this issue and not an Amendment.

Now, I have to use the Kangaroo closure for this Motion to make sure that it is taken one way or the other by one o'clock. Yes, Dr. Oreh.

**Dr O. O. Oreh (Arochukwu) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to oppose this Motion and I do this for the following reasons.

First, the Motion is contradictory in terms and in substance. It says that the Corporations should appoint Boards. Now, if there are Corporations, you must assume that they have Boards. Secondly, it says that these Statutory Corporations should be responsible to the Ministers, yet it does not want the Permanent Secretaries to be involved when, in fact, the Permanent Secretaries are the organs through which the Ministers control the Corporations. So, I cannot see how you can remove the Permanent Secretaries from being involved and yet you want the Ministers to be involved.

Thirdly, he wants the Annual Report of the Corporation to be laid before this House. That to my mind, is an attempt to usurp the functions of the Executive. We are not an auditing body ; we have investigative powers. If we suspect that a Corporation is not doing well and if there is fraud in the Corporation or it is not well run, surely we have a responsible Committee that can go into the affairs of the Corporation and invite

its Managing Director to this place, if we like. But for us to ask for the Annual Reports, we will be turning this House into a place where the meeting of the shareholders is taking place to consider the Annual Reports of the Corporations.

I consider that this Motion merely wants to catch the newspapers headline and I regret to say this. For these reasons, Mr Speaker, Sir, I am opposing this Motion. I think the Executive are competent to appoint people to the Boards of these Corporations. In fact, if it is considered by the Executive that a Permanent Secretary in a Ministry should go into a Corporation for a specific duty, he should do so. Maybe the Movers of this Motion would have confined themselves to merely asking that competent persons should be put in the Boards of the Corporations as the hon. Member for Ibadan North (*Debo Akande*) has just said. I have no quarrel with that but to say that the Annual Reports should come to us, is neither here nor there. This Motion should not in fact be carried.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Just for the benefit of the last Speaker, if you look at Section 79 (3) of the Constitution it says :

*The Auditor-General shall submit his reports to each House of the National Assembly, and each House shall cause the reports to be considered by a Committee of the National Assembly responsible for public accounts.*

The reasons why the Corporations should be independent are that whatever fund is required to run these Corporations must be appropriated by the National Assembly. Therefore their Report goes through the Auditor-General for presentation to the National Assembly in accordance with Section 79 (3) of the Constitution. That is just a point of explanation.

Anybody supporting the Motion ? Hon Member for Okpe (*Mr A. E. Ayomanor*)

**Mr A. E. Ayomanor (Okpe) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise in support of this Motion. Now, that Mr Speaker is using Kangaroo method in this debate, I will then restrict myself to one specific example out of all those that the hon. Member for Ibadan North (*Mr Debo Akande*) has enumerated and that is the Insurance Industry.

There are two Statutory Corporations at the Federal level in the insurance industry in this country. These are the National Insurance Corporation of Nigeria and the Nigerian Re-Insurance. The National Insurance Corporation of Nigeria was established in 1969 with specific instructions to train personnel to man the industry and give a lease to the Insurance Industry in this country. Now they found with experience because of this Civil Service type of mentality and the Civil Service payment, that after training a lot of personnel, they were not able to pay the salary demanded by these trained people. The result was that after the training, these people went to other insurance companies to work. The pity of it all is that the insurance companies employing these people trained by NICON, were in competition with it. This was because the structure of salary was incompatible with the type of personnel you wanted for the industry. I am therefore in total support of

[MR AYOMANOR]

the Motion in respect of the salary structure, that the Corporations should be totally removed from the Civil Service salary structure. The Movers of the Motion were saying that the harmonisation came about through Udoji, which was a pity for these Corporations.

If you want competent people to work and get the right productivity for these Corporations, you must pay their personnel handsome salaries. If you cannot pay them, then they would not work for you. There is nothing more disturbing for a Corporation to spend its own money to train personnel, send them overseas and expose them to various seminars and places where they can get proper instructions, than to return home and lose these personnel to competitors. This is what is happening in the Insurance industry.

The Corporations in Nigeria are classified into two categories, there are those on category A, and there are others on category B. These two categories go with the salary structures. Unless the Corporations are removed from the Civil Service salary structure, we would not get the right type of efficiency that we are looking for ; neither would we get the right type of productivity expected from them, nor would we get the profit that we expect these Corporations to make.

Usually, there are two types of Corporations. Corporations are set up either to provide some public service, in which case we do not care whether or not they make profit ; or they are set up in order to make profit in addition to providing some public service. For instance, in the Insurance Industry, these Corporations were set up, firstly, in order to stem the profits that were being carried away by expatriates in this country. Secondly, they were set up in order to provide services to the public in this country. Thirdly, they were set up to make profits. I know, from personal knowledge, that NICON is making a huge profit every year. But the profit would have been more than double or tripple if the NICON were given a chance to employ the right type of personnel with the right knowledge and, of course, with the right pay. NICON cannot do that because the Civil Service Rules forbid them from employing the right type of personnel with the right type of pay.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, I am in total support of this Motion. It will, in effect, remove these Corporations from the strait-jacket provided by the Civil Service so that they can operate independently and autonomously of the Civil Service. They would then make the right profit, attract the right personnel and the right calibre of person to work in these Corporations whenever it is possible. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**Chief Yomi Akintola (Ogbomosho Central) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am taking this opportunity to thank the civil servants for the able way they directed the affairs of this nation during the difficult period we had.

Unfortunately, during this period, some of them allowed their new-found powers to corrupt them. Power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely.

It was during this period that some of them felt that the salaries earned by the personnel in Corporations should be streamlined, and that none of them should earn more than a Permanent Secretary. I remember that during the civilian regime, the one preceding the Military Era, the General Managers of NEPA, NPA, NRC, NIDB, *et cetera*, were earning more than the Head of State. During this period, we had very little problem from most of these Corporations. What did we have ? There was the period of these powerful Permanent Secretaries when the salary structures were streamlined in such a way that none of the General Managers earned as much as the lowest paid Permanent Secretary. As such, most of the competent personnel in most of these Corporations had to resign.

There was the exodus of engineers from NEPA ; there was also an exodus of engineers, accountants, *et cetera*, from NPA, NRC and to some extent, a similar incident happened in the NIDB. So, if you look back, you would remember that there was a time when some Permanent Secretaries were Chairmen of two, three, four, or even six Corporations. As such, most of them wielded so much influence to the extent that they turned the General Managers and others working for the Corporations to nothing more than mere clerks. The effect was that efficiency dropped. This is the anomaly which, I believe, this Motion is seeking to rectify, and make sure that the Permanent Secretaries or their agents are no more Chairmen of Corporations or members of the Boards. (*Applause*)

We are all aware of the normal governmental procedure, that is, when these Corporations wish to pass whatever problems they have, they must pass them through the Permanent Secretaries. We are not in a position to correct this. What we are saying is that the Permanent Secretaries should allow these Corporations to do their work in the normal manner. They should not allow the types of problems that were encountered during the Military era, whereby when a Corporation decided on a project, it had to report to the Permanent Secretary and as provided for by the Civil Service Rules, it must go through a process. During that process, the original contract sum of the project which was say one-quarter of a million naira, would have risen to, probably, about three-quarters of a million naira by the time the final approval was given.

In order to correct this, we are asking that Corporations should be allowed to function independently. They should be allowed to take blame for whatever ills that may befall them. They should also take credit for whatever they might have achieved.

I am grateful for this opportunity. So, I am requesting hon. Members to, please, give their total support to this Motion. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Is there anybody willing to speak against the Motion ? It seems nobody is opposing the Motion.

**Dr E. C. Emekekwe (Onitsha South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Ladies and Gentlemen, I rise to speak in support of the Motion. It would have been a very grave omission if such a Motion were debated and voted on without hearing the voice of the people.

[MR EMEKEKWUE]

Before I make my point, I would like to crave the indulgence of our faithful, loyal, long suffering civil servants, that even though this Motion may be passed in this House, let them not take it as our casting any aspersions on their devotion to duty, on their integrity and on their honour. Our effort in passing this Motion is only to increase efficiency, production and dynamism of this newly elected civilian government. We reckon that we have the know-how and the experts. We also reckon that no gun-totter has any right to civil administration and so we want to live up to our ideals. These are the only reasons why we have put forward a Motion such as this.

We know for sure that where self-interest is to be considered, where the interest of a worker's security is at stake, there is bound to be increased vigour, vigilance, and efficiency. So, by creating corporations that are made self-sufficient, that are made to work towards the objective of being able to pave their way, we are creating for such a corporation a standard that must be attained willy-nilly, or else the whole fabric crumbles with everybody concerned, all and sundry thrown out of job. These are the humble reasons why we have tried to make you pass this Motion.

**An hon. Member :** Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** What is the order number ?

**An hon. Member :** 31

**The Deputy Speaker :** Do you want to close the Debate ?

**An hon. Member :** Yes, Mr Speaker because you have asked that the Question be put and it was put.

**Some hon. Members :** No !

**The Deputy Speaker :** Let us have the last contribution on this Motion.

**Dr Emekekwe :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I was about to conclude.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member for Onitsha South (*Dr Emekekwe*) you had three minutes.

**Mr F. A. Akinbisehin (Ifesowapo) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, in supporting this Motion I would like to clear some anomalies which a Colleague here brought into the show. He mentioned NICON. I believe that the essence of this Motion is to get the Ministers responsible for Statutory Boards and Permanent Secretaries and quasi-officials—

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II) :** Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes.

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel :** My point of Order is Constitutional. I am quoting Section 16, sub section 3, of the Constitution. This Motion is calling on the Committee on Public Service Matters, while we have authority to control Ports Authority, Nigeria Airways and all the corporations. The Section says :

(3) *A body shall be set up by an Act of the National Assembly which shall have power—*

(a) *to review from time to time the ownership and control of business enterprises operating in Nigeria and make recommendations to the President on the same ; and*

(b) *to administer any law for the regulations of the ownership and control of such enterprises.*

So, the Movers of the Motion can bring a Bill to control it. This one is an ordinary Motion telling us what to do.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Please round up.

**Mr Akinbisehin :** Mr Speaker, Sir, thank you very much for allowing me to continue after the hon. Member for Degema II (*Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel*) had made an irrelevant observation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the point in issue and which I believe the Movers are after is for the Permanent Secretaries and other officers to desist from being members of the Boards. I think that is where the emphasis lies. The emphasis is also on remunerations.

I would talk, first of all, in respect of NICON. NICON has a monopoly which is a bit disastrous. If in a year I have about five vessels which have total losses of about eighty million naira, NICON will be in great disaster. Hence, through this Motion, we suggest that whenever the Committee that is responsible is going to have anything to say, it should try and break the monopoly and ask that more re-insurance companies be established either by State Governments or individuals whereby they would be able to share out of any burden that a disaster might create.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Please round up.

**Mr Akinbisehin :** Mr Speaker, Sir, the other thing is that since the past five months that we have been elected here, we would find that Policemen and Naval Officers are still Chairmen and Directors of Institutions.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Which Policeman do you know of ?

**Mr Akinbisehin :** I know of a policeman who is still a Chairman of a Committee.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Who ?

**Mr Akinbisehin :** I cannot remember his name but I know the one of Tafawa Balewa Complex. Commodore Oduwaiye is still a chairman of one of the Board and Committees and we are in a civilian regime.

I believe that what we should do is to pass this Motion so as to disallow civil servants, who think that they are masters of all, to stop directing affairs in areas where they do not have specialised interest.

**Mr Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) :** Mr Speaker, I move that the Question now be put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That this House directs the Committee on Public Service Matters to seek ways and means

[MR KALTUNGO]

of removing all Federal Government Corporations from any connections whatsoever, with, and from the influence of the Civil Service, with a view to making them commercially-oriented : that towards this end,

(i) A Statutory Board, with responsibility to the appropriate Minister, shall be set up for each Corporation.

(ii) Permanent Secretaries and any Civil Servants or the Servants of whatever titles, shall be excluded from membership of such Board.

(iii) Remunerations and other service conditions of the Servants of such Corporations shall be outside the ambit of the existing Civil Service system.

(iv) Annual Reports of the Corporations shall be laid by the Executive before the National Assembly.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr Yunusa Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I rise to move that this House stands adjourned till 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

**Mr Effiong Ononokpono** (Oron I) : I beg to second.

#### Procedure in the House

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam** (Oron II) : Mr Speaker, speaking on the Motion for Adjournment, I have a fundamental issue of procedure. (*Interruptions*)

**Some hon. Members** : Point of Order ! (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Etienam** : We passed a Resolution here this morning, but I want it to be placed on record that the Resolution which was passed was a violation of Section 26 (3) of the Standing Orders of this House. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker** : Will hon. Members please sit down. This House is still in session. (*Interruptions*)

If you are suspending the sitting of the House, at exactly 1 o'clock I am out of this place.

As a matter of fact, the matter which Mr Bassey Etienam is talking about needs a Substantive Motion which I believe can best be done when the House is full here, if it is necessary. (*Interruptions*)

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That this House stands adjourned till 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 12.57 p.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Friday, 15th February, 1980

The House met at 9.30 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Votes and Proceedings

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members I have gone through the Votes and Proceedings of yesterday and there was only one amendment on the Movers of Motions : Mr Gapsuk should read Mr David Atta. The Votes and Proceedings are, therefore, approved as amended.

Photographs

I would like to remind Members that the photographer is present today and he would be available as from 9 a.m.

Committee Meetings

The Committees that are going to meet as from Monday are : Committee on Agriculture at 1 p.m. in Committee Room No. 3 ; Committee on Communications at 1 p.m. at Committee Room No. 4 ; Business Committee at 1 p.m. in the Staff Committee Room ; the Standing Orders Committee at 2.30 p.m. in Committee Room No. 4 and the Committee on Internal Affairs at 3 p.m. in Committee Room No. 3.

Reports

If you will remember, on Wednesday, I told you that we had received Reports from the Remunerations Committee and that we were going to cyclostyle the recommendations for distribution into your pigeon-holes. Now, the Remunerations Committee has called back the Reports for amendment. The Reports have, therefore, been sent back to the Committee and we are awaiting their final recommendation which would be passed to Members.

**Mr T. N. Ochiama (Ikeduru) :** Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** On what ?

**Mr Ochiama :** On something very vital.

**The Deputy Speaker :** What is that something very vital ? We have to know the subject matter you want to discuss. The House has the right to know the subject matter, you know.

**Mr Ochiama :** Mr Speaker, Sir, the subject matter is in regard to the Remuneration which you have just spoken about now.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Are you speaking on Remunerations ?

**Mr Ochiama :** Yes, Mr Speaker, Sir, hon.

Members, it is very very unfair for us to work for five months without knowing how much we should earn.

**The Deputy Speaker :** That is all right.

**Mr Ochiama :** Just a moment, Mr Speaker, unless some people are sitting over this, we cannot continue to listen to you here.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member, it is not correct to say that you have worked for five months without pay.

**Mr Ochiama :** Yes, but we should know how much we are entitled to. Mr Speaker, Sir, what you should understand is that in any department where one has worked on probation for five months one should know how much one is entitled to. We cannot keep on living on allowances.

**Several hon. members :** Sit down ! No ! No !  
(Interruptions)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Mr Ochiama, could you sit down please ?

**Mr Ochiama :** If the Members of the Remunerations Committee feel that they are not competent they should tell us.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No ! (Interruptions)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, you really have to be very, very cautious on the matter of remunerations.

Deportation of Shugaba Abdurahman

**Mr Umaru Sadiq (Kumbotso) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to say something about the amendment of the Motion of yesterday.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Which Motion ?

**Mr Sadiq :** The joint Motion by Alhaji Sarki Adamu and Mr Atta.

**The Deputy Speaker :** What is wrong with it ?

**Mr Sadiq :** The Motion was passed yesterday ; but when you went to a Committee meeting, you later changed the thing, you said the Members of this honourable House should not go and watch the proceedings of the Tribunal or Commission that was set up by the President.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Who changed what ?

**Mr Sadiq :** The Speaker, of course, and the Select Committee. We have learnt that hon. Members would not be allowed to go and watch the proceedings.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Please the hon. Member for Kumbotso (*Mr Sadiq*) whatever you might have been told, the meeting of the Select Committee was postponed till today and nothing was discussed on the matter yesterday. Whoever might have given you that information is misleading you. This is what we are trying to avoid. We are trying to avoid people who would go and mis-represent things and say that this or that has been done. It is up to you to check the facts of a matter from the Leader of your Party. That meeting did not take place ; it was postponed till today.

**Party Leadership**

**Mr Sadiq** : Mr Speaker, Sir, on this question of Leaders, I think it is a hypocrisy. Some people or the Executive think that by influencing the Party Leaders and the so-called Chief Whips and other Leaders in this House, they think that the National Assembly will—

**Several hon. Members** : No ! No !

**The Deputy Speaker** : That language is unparliamentary : *the so-called Chief Whips*. They are Chief Whips as of right.

**Mr Sadiq** : All right, I beg to withdraw that, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker** : You have made your point. Can you sit down, please ?

**Mr Sadiq** : Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Now, I have to explain this question of Party Leadership in the House. The House sat and approved Party Leaders in this House. Whether we like it or not, if any Party wants to change its Leaders in the House, it is not the responsibility of this House to do that. It is the responsibility of the Party concerned.

The Speaker has received letters from Party Headquarters appointing Leaders and Chief Whips of Parties. We have also received a specific instruction that unless we receive a letter to the contrary from the Party Headquarters, we are not to act with any other Leader outside the names sent to us from the Party Headquarters. I think that is clear.

The first thing on the Order Paper for today is the Report of the Public Petitions Committee. The Report of the Public Petitions Committee must first be laid formally on the Table. When that is done, it is left to the House to decide on a specific date to discuss the Report.

**NOTICES OF MOTIONS****Report of the Public Petitions Committee**

**Mr G. N. Uwechue** (Aniocha) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I report that your Committee on Public Petitions met on the 4th day of February to consider certain petitions presented to it. We deliberated and I hereby lay on the Table the Report of my Committee.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Yes, Mr Uwechue, will you please give us the date that you want this Report discussed ? Members will now go through your Reports.

**Mr G. N. Uwechue** : I thought that Members, having got the Report since yesterday, had gone through it and are willing to consider the Report now.

**Some hon. Members** : No !

**Mr Uwechue** : All right, we can have it on Monday.

**The Deputy Speaker** : There is a point of Order.

**Mr Aka Ogbobe** (Igbo Etiti) : I think the Business Committee should fix a date for the consideration of the Report and not Mr Uwechue.

**Mr Uwechue** : I beg to move that the Report of my Committee be received.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Any seconder ?

**Mr Adeagbo** (Ero North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker** : The Chairman of the Public Petitions Committee has now laid the Report on the Table and wishes the House to receive it.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That this House receives the Report of the Public Petitions Committee dated the 4th February, 1980.

**Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree, 1977**

**The Deputy Speaker** : Motion Number two is the Nigerian Enterprises Promotions Decree, 1977 and it stands in the names of Messrs S. A. Adeagbo, G. N. Uwechue, J. Y. Mallo, B. Omole and F. C. Ugwu. I am told that Messrs Omole and Ugwu are not here. Yes, Mr Adeagbo move your Motion.

**Mr S. A. Adeagbo** (Ero North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name and two other colleagues of mine, hon. G. N. Uwechue and hon. J. Y. Mallo :

That in furtherance of the economic objectives in Section 16 (2) (c) of our Constitution and in view of the need to promote active indigenous participation in all aspects of the economy, this House directs the Committee on Industries to ascertain the extent to which the affected enterprises have so far complied with the provision of Section 11 (i) (d) of the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree of 1977 to sell or transfer to their Nigerian employees at least 10 per cent of the shares of these enterprises.

I beg to move.

**Mr S. A. Adekunle** (Iseyin) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Yes, Mr Adeagbo.

**Mr Adeagbo** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree is indeed a very wide subject. Today we are considering just a fraction of one of the elements of this Decree, and that is in relation to 10 per cent equity shares for Nigerian workers. Before I continue, I would like to give you a short history of this Decree.

In the early sixties and immediately after Independence, the training sector and the industrial areas, were controlled by the British. In effect, that was the second type of colonial domination. Shortly after Independence, Companies from various parts of the world started to establish in Nigeria but before then the companies we used to know were UAC, GBO, CFAO, UTC, Barclays Bank now Union Bank, and so on.

Mr Speaker, Sir, this control was not very conducive to us as a sovereign nation as at October 1st, 1960. Consequently, Decrees were promulgated in the early seventies and this was done in the Second National Development Plan of our country. In effect, one of these Decrees was to establish total control of our economy, thereby removing us from the yoke of imperialism in the economic sector. If I may add, Mr Speaker, Sir, in those good years, most of these companies were subsidiaries to multinational companies in Europe where they had their Headquarters. From there, directives were issued after discussing programmes regarding their business interests in Nigeria. In effect management positions were extremely limited. Not only that, equity shares were not known. The introduction of this Decree in 1970-74 gave this country the first taste of an opportunity to have Nigerians sharing in her own economy. I am happy to tell this honourable House that in the 1970-74 Indigenisation Programme, well over 500 million shares were transferred from foreign companies to Nigerian hands. This, in effect, amounted to well over ₦450 million. At the same time, I love to tell you this also covered a range of businesses well over 2,000.

Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, this Decree of 1970-74 was passed, not without having some flaws. I am happy to say that in 1977 a new page was opened in our economic life whereby Decree No. 3 was enacted. This, in effect, was for the establishment of the Enterprises Promotion Board which was given all the authority to look into the possibilities of ensuring the take-over of our economy, particularly those in the trading sector and the manufacturing concerns.

Regrettably enough, this Decree No. 3, as I said earlier, had some flaws. One aspect is that enterprises were grouped into one, two and three. It is stated that enterprises in Schedule one were meant for Nigerians, but regrettably there was a sub-special provision which again empowers a few alien enterprises to continue to enjoy participation in this section of the economy. This meant, that all alien companies having businesses in at least ten States of the Federation and having a total turn-over of well over ₦25 million would still continue to be in schedule one. This is why we now have companies like the UAC, GBO and John Holt sharing in the distribution of locally-manufactured goods. This, to my mind, is not good for Nigeria at this stage. Today is not the day for discussing this part of the Schedule. I am confining myself to Schedules 2 and 3.

Again, Mr Speaker, we have a few anomalies under this Schedule. We have business which we ought to transfer to Schedule one and from two to three. Also, today is not the day for discussing this subject but I would like to put on record that Nigeria being a developing country, should develop in producing manpower, should develop in marketing and should develop in industries and trading. It is my belief that Schedules 2 and 3 should not remain permanently within the list. Take for example the manufacture of matches, warehousing and storage. These could be done by Nigerians.

The issue we are really talking about is the possibility of ensuring that 10 per cent of the equity shares in Schedules 2 and 3 is given to the Nigerian workers. If I may explain, Schedules 2 and 3 of this Decree state that 40 per cent and 60 per cent equity shares should be set aside for the Nigerian public including the Government. Out of these, ten per cent of the equity shares is meant for the Nigerian workers. What this honourable House is now to examine is how far has these alien companies complied with this aspect of the Decree.

I am pleased to confirm to you that I visited the Inspectorate Division of the Board to ascertain to what extent this had been done. I regret to tell you that as at now, a number of companies in this country have submitted their application forms, quite duly, but have not been backed up by full payment. Regrettably also, the Board which has been established nearly four years ago, is not in a position to have its final report whereby you will be able to see at a glance the list of the defaulting companies as well as the companies that have actually complied with the Decree.

Another aspect of my question is this. If we have no list from the Board to give us an assurance that this part of the Decree has been complied with, what do we do? I am pleased to tell you that in the aspect of the Board's activities, it was agreed that certain companies might not be in a position to give out the ten per cent shares to their employees for the fact that the employees would not be in a position to pay for these shares. Then, it was suggested again that trust funds should be established whereby these shares are kept in trust till such a time that the employees would be in a position to be able to pay for the shares.

I regret to mention again that many companies in this country have not been able to comply, particularly the Enamelware of Nigeria Limited. It is the only example I would like to give you. I would also like to tell hon. Members that 10 per cent of the total equity shares which is set aside for the Nigerian workers, to my mind, is no more adequate when you think in terms of the entire layout of the successes that these enterprises are making. I hereby, through you, call on such giant enterprises in this country like the UAC, John Holt, Leventis and so on and so forth that are able to make a turnover and profit amounting to well over ₦10 million a year to realise that if Nigerian workers have 10 per cent of the equity shares, the profit which will go to them in the form of dividends will assist in improving their lives.

I will also call on this honourable House to please make it a point of duty and priority to ensure that these defaulting companies over this 10 per cent equity shares, are given an immediate warning to ensure that this 10 per cent equity shares is not only a thing of the Decree but an opportunity to give the Nigerian worker a sense of belonging, to ensure that he is not working for the alien companies but for himself.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I had a look also into the areas of this Decree and I think this Decree is a bit discriminatory in the sense that Nigerian enterprises



[MR ADEAGBO]

in Schedule 1 that are owned by our brothers and sisters are not even giving consideration to any percentage of the shares. I will also call on this honourable House and the Committee on Industries to look into the relevant possibility of ensuring that Nigerian enterprises in Schedule One are considering it, as a matter of urgency, that our brothers leaving the alien companies and coming to our own businesses should be able to partake in the cake of their own sweat. You already know a number of Nigerian enterprises which grew as high as the mountains but after the death of the owners, they disappeared and all the workers again went back to the labour force to look for jobs. To be able to have continuity of business for all Nigerians, to be able to have our names immortalised in assisting the development of the economy of this country, I sincerely call on the Committee on Industries to please take the following conditions into account.

Firstly, it should look into the enterprises in Schedule 1 to remove the bottleneck where some alien companies are still taking a lion's share in the distributive trade, particularly in textiles, breweries, and motor industries where you have spare-parts, tyres and other locally produced goods. The Committee should look into Schedules 2 and 3 to see if some of the businesses could be transferred, for the benefit of our brothers and sisters in the Eastern States who were unable to buy shares shortly after the Civil War because there were no funds. They should have an opportunity once more to be able to purchase businesses and at the same time have a reflection of what the people call the Nigerian character.

Hon. Members, this Motion is non-controversial. I would like to urge all Members to please see that this Motion is the Workers' Motion for the 1980 in which I feel that the 10 per cent equity shares which is now mandatory on all companies should be increased from 10 per cent to 15 or 20 per cent so that generation yet unborn would be able to enjoy the economy of our country.

I beg to move. (Applause)

**Mr G. N. Uwechue (Aniocha)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to speak in favour of the Motion standing in my name and in the names of other co-Movers.

Firstly, I would like to point out that the essence of this Motion is not to censure foreign companies or companies operating in this country. It is not also to censure the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Board. We are only interested in seeing full implementation of the provisions of the Decree. My co-Mover has ably laid the background of the Decree. I would like as a professional man, to go a bit further and explain before I go into the substance of the Motion, the main background behind this Decree.

Before 1972, the only way to ensure that Nigerians were given a say in enterprises involving alien participation in this country was an undertaking which the expatriates were required to give to the Ministry of Internal Affairs that within a time set out they would ensure that they trained Nigerians

to take over the management of their affairs and that Nigerians would be given some participation. It turned out that some of these alien firms were not fulfilling this obligation and there was no way to check them. So, in 1972 this Decree No. 4, the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree was promulgated. This Decree categorises Enterprises into two classes.

Those in first class were the enterprises exclusively reserved for Nigerians and in the second category were enterprises in which aliens could participate subject to certain conditions. The main condition then was that the paid-up capital for enterprises in which aliens were going to participate under Schedule Two must exceed ₦400,000 or the turn-over in those enterprises must not be less than one million naira. It turned out that Nigerians were thereby prevented from participating in these enterprises. In the construction industry for instance, where the paid-up capital is supposed to be ₦400,000 minimum, if Nigerians were going to have 40 per cent paid-up shares before that enterprise could function, it was difficult to find enough Nigerians who were able to pay-up in cash 40 per cent of ₦400,000. So, in 1977, we found that this Decree had failed and we amended it and then promulgated the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree, 1977, which removed this obstacle of ₦400,000. The Decree insisted that foreign enterprises carrying on business in this country must strictly comply with the provisions of the Decree.

At this point, I would come back to the main substance of the Motion which is providing 10 per cent equity shares to the Nigerian workers. I would like to make an explanation. This is provided for under Section 11 Subsection 1 (d) of the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree 1977. The Decree did not say that in all enterprises involving alien participation that the workers should have 10 per cent. No, it did not say so. I will give an example. In the construction industry where the maximum equity participation of alien is 40 per cent, if an alien was operating with 60 per cent equity under the old Decree, now he has to transfer 20 per cent in order to comply with the Decree. The Decree says, out of this 20 per cent which is being transferred, 10 per cent must be reserved for Nigerians. It is not true to say that in all enterprises involving alien participation, 10 per cent must be reserved for Nigerian workers.

That is where we are concerned. We are concerned about the Nigerian workers, and that is why we are concerned about the provisions of this Decree. It only says that where you are transferring, in the case of sale or transfer of shares in compliance with the Decree, that 10 per cent must be reserved for workers. It also says that where an alien enterprise has complied, in other words, say in a construction industry the enterprise has 40 per cent, then it has to transfer its shares after it has complied. Under the law, this enterprise is not required to give 10 per cent to workers because it has complied and the amended provision Decree of 1977 merely relates to sale of transfer of shares in compliance with the provisions of the Decree.

We found out that even if the law allowed alien enterprises or mandated alien enterprises to allot 10 *per cent* shares to their workers, very many alien enterprises had failed to comply. They had a time limit within which to comply. The time limit was 31st December, 1978, and this is 1980. We are merely urging the relevant Committee to investigate the cause of this a normaly, this delay, in transferring these shares. As I have said, it is not every alien enterprise that is bound to transfer its shares. It is only a few of them. What is responsible for their inability to comply ?

I would also like to urge the Committee to consider the possibility, (though it is not so specified in the Motion) of extending this allotment of 10 *per cent* equity participation to Nigerians in all enterprises. That is the main substance of the Motion ; maybe through typographical error we failed to put it in that way. This is because only very few enterprises are affected and there are so many enterprises in this country in which expatriates are participating. The people who actually carry on the affairs of the business have no shares in them. For instance, the labourers in the construction industry who carry the blocks, lay the mortars and do all the jobs, should be allowed to reap a meagre part of the profits of these enterprises.

Another problem which we have found out and which we would like this honourable House to direct the Committee to investigate is the difficulty of these Nigerian workers. Their difficulty is in getting enough money to buy the shares. In the case of an enterprise with about ten million naira capital, to transfer about 500,000 shares to workers. I wonder how these workers with their meagre income can provide the money to buy these shares. We are recommending to the Committee to find out ways and means of getting the Executive to set up a special fund to assist the workers. There should be a special fund from which these workers can be financed so that they can realise the benefit conferred on them by the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree of 1977.

Hon. Members, this is a Motion being moved by five hon. Gentlemen. It is not a Motion in respect of which I expect heated debates. I thereby support this Motion as a co-Mover, and I urge this honourable House to vote in support of this Motion. Thank you.

**Mr J. M. Mallo (Akwanga)** : I wish to comment on the Motion standing in our names and in doing that, I only want to take a look at the economic aspect of the whole Motion. The two people that have already spoken have taken a very good look at the historical and legal aspects of it.

Now, looking at the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree of 1977, we are saying that all the Enterprises in Schedule 3 should go to Schedule 2. We are doing that because there is no reason for the provision that Enterprises that are reserved in Schedule 3 should offer Nigerians only 40 *per cent* equity participation. We have been talking about the transfer of technology and all the enterprises in Schedule 3 involve high level manpower. We have to make the necessary remedy, we have to make approach

now so that the transfer of technology can definitely come to Nigerians within the shortest possible time.

The other issue is that we are not trying to stop the Board from doing its own work, but we have discovered that most of the measures that had been taken under this particular Decree were not really done in the interest of Nigerians. They really contravene Section 11 of the said Decree.

Now, we have found out that there are a few individuals who colluded with foreigners and bought up shares with very many names. We have also got information of certain Nigerians going to the Ministry of Works to register as contractors with about 20 different names and these are the same people who actually colluded with foreigners and they have now thwarted the efforts of our Government. What I am saying now is that the Committee on Industries should ascertain the extent of damage and report to this House. All the equity participation in all the enterprises that have been affected by this particular Decree must be seen to reflect the Federal character of Nigeria.

We noticed that just when the Decree was promulgated, which was after the civil war, a lot of people at that particular time were not in a position to raise money to buy shares. Once we transfer enterprises from Schedule 3 to Schedule 2, the facilities will now be available so that most of the people who were not able to purchase shares in 1977 will now have the opportunity to do that.

Now, I am recommending to the Committee on Industries to really bring out proposals to meet Section 16, Subsection 3 (a) and (b) of the Constitution so that all the operations of the Nigerian economy may accordingly reflect the Federal character, of Nigeria in view of the fact that all the facilities that have been provided by the Government must be seen to benefit the masses and not just a few disgruntled elements.

On the transfer of enterprises in Schedule 3 to Schedule 2, we have found that this will really save us from foreign exchange problem because there are a few foreign companies which, because of the provisions of this particular Decree, still operate in areas that Nigerians can sufficiently do well. Once that is done, then the money that should be paid to the foreign sources will be retained in this particular country. We shall have more money for our own development and we do not have to rely on foreign sources to finance our own development. We are appealing to the Committee to really take a very close look at this area because emphasis is now on domestic financing of our own economy. By relying on foreign resources, we have found that there are a lot of political strings attached to most of these things.

With this, Mr Speaker, Sir, I hope this honourable House will give this Motion the support it deserves.

**Mr F. C. Ugwu (Nsukka)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to speak on the Motion standing in my name and in the names of four others. Mr Speaker, Sir, my co-Movers have touched on the legal aspects and the economic aspect. I will now touch on the constitutional aspect of this Motion.

**Mr Godwin Alo-Nwokocha** (Abakaliki East-Central): Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion. In doing so, I want to remind this House of the points raised by the last Head of State in his valedictory speech on 1st of April, 1979 when he was trying to evaluate the extent to which the Indigenisation Decree had worked. He said, *inter alia*, that before Independence the business scene in Nigeria was dominated by a few foreign firms but that after Independence, these foreign firms continued to dominate and increase their dominance of the Nigerian business scene. This was the prelude to the enactment of the Decree. But this Decree was perforated by not more than one month after its enactment because in just two weeks, twenty companies published in the newspapers their desire to sell their shares. Now, it is not possible for anybody to apply for participation in one company today and in another tomorrow and in twenty companies within just two weeks. Again, it would be noticed that the position where the business scene of a country is dominated by others has caused a lot of controversy in Africa, to say the least. The case in Uganda is a case in point. The deportation of the Shah of Iran has also come to remind us that we have to do something to control our own economic stability. Now, it is noticed that some of these foreign firms employ their brothers and sisters who are only here in the country to siphon money generated in this country back to their home. One such company hired a house for a foreign worker at ₦58,000. This money would pay four Nigerians for a year and leave the company with ₦1,000 extra.

The implementation of the Enterprises Promotion Decree had its loopholes and I would very much support the idea of the Committee on Industries finding exactly, as the Motion says, the need to promote active indigenous participation. The need is there. With this I beg to support the Motion.

**Alhaji Sa-idu Ibrahim** (Kiyawa): Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion. In supporting this Motion, Mr Speaker, I would like to urge this House to give full support to it. If the workers in every enterprise are given the chance to buy shares, it would encourage them and promote industrial harmony. In the second place it will give Nigerians a good opportunity to take over the enterprises in the near future.

But Mr Speaker, before we go further, I would say that we have a lot of problems about the Enterprises Promotion Decree. Most of the time it happens that before any advertisement is placed for the sale of shares, they are sold out. The Stock Exchange is here in Lagos. So, before the people in the Northern States can get the advertisement in the newspapers, the shares would have been sold. In this connection, Mr Speaker, I would like to ask the Committee on Industries to make sure that we get the advertisement in time before it is sold to the public. That is one point.

The second point, Mr Speaker, is that I think if the Committee does its work very well, it will also implement Section 16 (3) (a) and (b) of the Constitution. With your permission Mr Speaker, I would read Section 16 (3) (a) and (b):

(3) *A body shall be set up by an Act of the National Assembly which shall have power—*

(a) *to review from time to time the ownership and control of business enterprises operating in Nigeria and make recommendations to the President on the same; and*

(b) *to administer any law for the regulation of the ownership and control of such enterprises.*

Mr Speaker, from the foregoing Section of the Constitution, we can see that if the Committee on Industry has done its work properly, it would be in a position to implement Section 16 (3) of the Constitution.

With these few remarks, I beg to sit. Thank you.

**Mr Sidi H. Ali** (Danbatta): Mr Speaker, I consider this Motion as one of the most important before this House and I support it. *(Applause)*

Before I go on to give my support, I would also like to call the entire operation of the Enterprises Promotion Board the greatest armed robbery on the mentality of Nigerians. Mr Speaker, Sir, although the Chairman of the Committee, Alhaji Ali Al-Hakim, comes from Kano State, he was my classmate, he did not know where to place things because the things which were supposed to go to Nigerians went to very few selected elite.

Mr Speaker, Sir, firstly before the Enterprises Promotion Board started, the then Commissioner for Trade and Industry, Dr Adetoro, who was in charge, bought for himself shares worth one million naira. This is not a secret. He said it publicly at a Press Conference and yet the Government left him.

Mr Speaker, one of the biggest transport companies in Kano owned by a Lebanese, Karo, was sold to the Ibru Organisation despite requests by many Kano transporters to buy it. This was because the Secretary of this Board came from Bendel State at that time. *(Interruptions)* This is a fact that we cannot deny as regards the whole operation of the Enterprises Promotion Board. The then six Northern States, out of the twelve States in the country, then got less than four *per cent* of what was due to them. Most of them went to private individuals as a result of manipulation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, in this case, I will appeal to the Committee not only to look at it, but in fact investigate the entire criteria of how certain few people were able to get these businesses to themselves. Mr Speaker, although I am a fully-grown socialist, I do not believe in money, but at the same time—*(Interruptions)*

**The Deputy Speaker**: We will take your observation for our own consumption.

**Mr Sidi Ali**: All right. Mr Speaker, I know what money can do and how powerful forces, if they control money, can manipulate things.

Mr Speaker, we talked again about distribution. For example, there are some leaders of some un-registered Political Parties, who have been accusing

[MR ALI]

Members of the National Assembly. We know these people made their money as advisers of certain companies for which they are front men, and through which they made millions and millions of Naira. Mr Speaker, Sir, these are the people this Committee should interview. The Committee should call Julius Berger and ask him how he could have paid a lawyer ₦35 million. For what service? (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker:** You have to confine yourself to the subject under discussion.

**Mr Sidi Ali:** We are talking about Enterprises Promotion Board. When the Enterprises Promotion Board stopped foreigners from operating this gambling machine called *Kalo Kalo*, a particular Lebanese, who owned about fifty per cent of these machines in Lagos and Bendel States, brought a lawyer and asked him to be his front man. This lawyer, Mr Speaker, had been able to make about seventeen million Naira and then decided to use the power of this money to deport out of Nigeria this Lebanese who put him in this type of business.

Mr Speaker, we have many types of these things and we think the Committee should be very serious and interview the various people, especially this former Secretary who was removed and sent to the Ministry of Industry as Principal Secretary or whatever he was. We will be able to discover how they manipulated things and got these businesses for few Nigerians. I have to say this because at the moment we all know the party in power. We know there is a President in this country who got elected on the ticket of a political party. So, when we are looking at the President, we say that the President belongs to a particular party and we know that the policy of that party is to give this country food and housing.

Now, Mr Speaker, the situation has become very serious to the extent that food is disappearing from this country because a group of people—(*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker:** If you have nothing more to contribute, will you please sit down?

**Mr Sidi Ali:** Mr Speaker, I will end up here by asking the Committee to look through and interview some specific Nigerians who owned nothing before the operation of the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Board, but all of a sudden they owned millions and millions of naira.

Mr Speaker, I support this Motion. (*Applause*)

**Mr Dauda Adejumo Ibrahim (Irewole West):** I am all out in sympathy with this Motion. The reason is that the Motion in itself is in sympathy with the working masses of this country.

Firstly, this Motion is trying to bring about happiness to the individual worker in the private sector. It is calling upon the Committee to find out how far these companies have been able to comply with certain sections of the Enterprises Promotion Decree of 1977. In doing this, if the Motion is well carried, I think the exploitation of man by man will come to an end. By giving ten per cent to individual workers it means that these workers are well secured in future.

Secondly, it helps in two ways. It helps the enterprises and it helps the workers too. It helps the enterprises or the Companies as the workers will be loyal to the companies in their services to them by thinking that they are part and parcel of the Companies; that as workers they are also the employers.

On the social aspect of this Motion, I will have to refer this honourable House to Section 17 (2) (a) and (d) of this Constitution:

*In furtherance of the social order—*

(a) every citizen shall have equality of rights, obligations and opportunities before the law;

(d) exploitation of human or natural resources in any form whatsoever for reasons other than the good of the community shall be prevented;

On economic objective, I refer to Section 16 (1) (a) and (b) which, with the permission of the Speaker, I quote:

*The state shall, within the context of the ideals and objectives for which provisions are made in this Constitution*

(a) control the national economy in such manner as to secure the maximum welfare, freedom and happiness of every citizen on the basis of social justice and equality of status and opportunity;

I think I will stop there. This will greatly remove the exploitation of man by man and it will also compensate workers in that they would have the sense of belonging to the companies which these workers are serving as if they are serving themselves.

In conclusion, I say that the Motion is Constitutional and it is helpful to the working masses of this country. Thank you.

**Mr Dele Fayemi (Badagry):** Mr Speaker, Sir, this Motion, if adopted and implemented eventually by the Government, will go a long way not only to help the nation but the common man in the street.

Mr Speaker, people have enumerated the reasons why this Motion must be adopted and must be very well debated by the relevant Committee to which it will be referred. There is a common disease in the country which, of course, has necessitated this Motion being brought up on the Floor of this House. It is that those who are rich want to continue to be rich and those who are poor want to be rich but they are being oppressed.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is a common-place event that after the promulgation of the Decree, the Directors of some companies were used by the expatriate shareholders in the companies. The ten per cent shares that were to go to the common workers in these companies had to go to a few Directors in the companies.

I remember a company very vividly. In this case, the ten per cent shares in that company went to only one individual. One of the Speakers pointed out that those who actually bought these shares paid in thousands. How did they get the money? In fact that is a question that could be answered by such individuals concerned. The actual fact is this, that

[MR FAYEMI]

the expatriates who were in these companies used some of these Directors who of course did not have the interests of the nation at heart. They used them as pipe-lines to take their capitals right away from the country. Some of these companies, after they had sold their shares to some of these few Nigerian Directors, became empty. Some of them did not function properly any more.

I would have liked to mention some companies, but there is no point mentioning names now since the Motion will be referred to a Committee. I think at that Committee every Member who has facts and figures at his or her disposal will make them available to the Committee. I know for sure, and many of us here do know, that some of these companies are not as viable or useful to the country as they were before.

Mr Speaker, Sir, this Motion is not a controversial one. It is a Motion that cuts through Party lines. It is a Motion that should be upheld and adopted by this House because it will go a long way to help you and I. I know that some people, I will not say in this honourable House, are in money. These people who are in money would like a Motion like this to die a natural death. I shall strongly appeal to men with conscience, men who actually mean to help the common masses, to see that this Motion passes through.

In fact the Motion should have come in form of a Bill because we are here, Mr Speaker, to defend the interest of the masses; we are here to see that the economy of the Nation is not one-sided; we are here to see that the economy of the Nation booms day-in-day-out, not that in one year it goes up and the other year it comes down. Why the economy is coming down now, Mr Speaker, is that only a few people want to continue to dominate the economy of the Nation. By their methods they have achieved partially what they aimed at. I say partially in the sense that when you and I are here to defend the interest of the masses, they will actually get their entitlements. They will have their entitlements at the right time.

I hope and pray that this honourable House will give this Motion the actual support it needs. I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr Effiong Ononokpono (Oron I) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to address myself to the attitude of the workers themselves. I believe that whatever is the fate of the unfortunate ones like us who had not been privileged to buy these big shares, the fault has been ours. A few of us who occupy positions of Assistant General Managers are made promises of Directorship if we support and abet the transfer of profit to London, from where it goes to South Africa; from South Africa it goes to New York and so on and so forth. So, I believe very strongly that to change the attitude of the workers will be the first step in promoting the work of the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Board. It was formed by a Decree and it has to become an Act of the Parliament now.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, I want us to address ourselves to the conduct of the business itself. I wonder how sound and sane it is for a Nigerian to sit down in John Holt to sell salt, sugar and bournvita and at the end of the whole exercise, a net profit of about ₦0.5 million is declared. About half of this is transferred to London to redevelop what has already been developed and leave us here to perpetually die in poverty. I also believe that Nigerians should be restricted initially to what they are capable of doing while we ask those who want to invest in our economy to engage in those things that we cannot properly handle.

I would like to call the attention of this honourable House to the pharmaceutical business in Nigeria. The General Manager of Glaxo Allenburys is a white man and the Assistant General Manager is a black man. While their drugs are being manufactured in Rotterdam, in Zurich, in Hamburg, the sales of the drugs are being done in Nigeria by Nigerians. At the end of the whole exercise, the profit is transferred to Zurich, to Hamburg, to Bonn and so on and so forth.

I will tell you a little story, Mr Speaker. When I was a worker I had a white boss. I was working in an enterprise then. Some time, he was found to be not very good and I was sent to Ibadan to carry out an audit of the stock in Ibadan. At the end of the exercise, I submitted my report and the General Manager drove down to Ibadan, threw down the window blinds and I asked him to leave for Lagos. A week after, he was sacked but the Director in the London office who was his relation, asked that he be recalled. Good enough, as a white man, he was employed in another enterprise where the white men dominated. Incidentally, I happened to have a bigger job in that same enterprise, and I resigned and joined. A month after, we were sent on a seminar where he was asked to present a paper. I was asked to present a paper at the same seminar. I came first and this white man bungled very seriously. A woman was second. (Interruptions)

Mr Speaker, I need your protection.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Please, hon. Member, let us have the substance of your point.

**Mr Ononokpono :** I am giving the substance. All I am saying, Sir, in giving this short story is that at the end of it, the man was sacked but he was taken back by the same enterprise which earlier sacked him for inefficiency. This gives you an idea of the fact that we do better jobs but the higher pay packet goes to the white man, the profit goes to the white man, because we have not been able to tell the white man that this country belongs to us. Rather, we think of the States we come from and in the last analysis, we kill that spirit of nationalism which should be in a citizen working towards his own national economy.

Mr Speaker, Sir, my hon. Colleagues have talked quite a lot, they have enunciated quite good ideas but the question is: if this Motion is carried, will the Government, the Permanent Secretaries, and the bureaucrats implement it and get somebody who bought ten million shares to distribute them to the Nigerian public so that those who have not got

[MR ONONOKPONO]

one share could have, maybe, two shares? That is the question this honourable House should put to those who are to implement whatever Motion we pass and whatever ideas we send out. I can assure you that at about this time next year, big millionaires parading Lagos, and Kano will still own these enterprises while we continue to talk and end up talking.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I very much support this Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Why then are you talking, to fill up the time? The Leader of the House, please move that the Question be now put.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That in furtherance of the economic objectives outlined in section 16 (2) (c) of our Constitution and in view of the need to promote active indigenous participation in all aspects of the economy, this House directs the Committee on Industries to ascertain the extent to which the affected enterprises have so far complied with the provision of Section II (i) (d) of the Nigerian Enterprises Promotions Decree of 1977 to sell or transfer to their Nigerian employees at least 10 per cent of the shares of these enterprises.

#### Allocation of Seats

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, please, the computer people are still trying to allot seats to hon. Members. It seems that so far, the computer has only succeeded in allocating very few seats to hon. Members who have been actually sitting permanently on their seats.

The system is that when a Member rises to speak, the number of his seat will be pressed and I can see his name on the screen here. Hon. Members have been changing their seats nearly every day with the exception of very few Members. Therefore, from Monday, hon. Members, I will advise that whatever seat you take, should continue to be your seat from where you will be speaking. Those hon. Members that the computer has already allotted seats to will be informed accordingly so as to retain the particular seats from which they have been speaking.

The Leader of the House should please move the Motion for Adjournment.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that this House stands adjourned until Monday at 10 o'clock in the morning.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Is anybody seconding the Motion?

**Mr Joseph C. Okoli (Ezeagu) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** I have two people here to speak on Motion for Adjournment. Yes, Alhaji Saidu Ibrahim.

#### Standing Orders

**Alhaji Saidu Ibrahim (Kiyawa) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to appeal to the Petitions Committee through this honourable House to scrap Order 26 (1) which reads as follows :

*A Member shall not read his speech, but he may read short extracts from books or papers in support of his argument, and may refresh his memory by reference to note.*

Mr Speaker, Sir, most of us here are new and are not so familiar with standing up to speak in front of other people. If this Order is removed it will give us good opportunity to contribute to speeches on the Floor of this House.

**An hon. Member :** Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** What point of order Motion for Adjournment?

**An hon. Member :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I feel there is no quorum in this House.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Not on Motion for Adjournment; we are closing at 12 o'clock. Is Dr Ogunkoya here?

#### Comments by NAP Leader

**Dr O. Ogunkoya (Ijebu Remo) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, in supporting this Motion for Adjournment I have to reply to some of the comments made in newspapers, principally attributed to Mr Tunji Braithwaite of the defunct or unregistered NAP. He accused legislators of trying to be a sort of tin-gods over the issue of the Bill presented in the Senate asking for immunity for legislators.

It is the right and privilege of these two Houses to legislate on anything on earth; and it is our duty to accept this legislation or reject it. Nobody here actually wants to be a tin-god. We have come to this House to serve the people of this country and we cannot stand to be teleguided or to be insulted by a party that has not taken any recognition from any corner of this country. The earlier Mr Tunji Braithwaite is put in his right perspective the better.

It is unfortunate that the Press is not around to record this but I am saying with all the thought and vehemence left in all my veins, that nobody has the right to arrogate to himself the Leadership of this country, Nigeria. Thank you.

#### Amended Nigerian Constitution

**Mr Fola Omidiji (Egba Alake) :** Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir. Since my youth I have been taught how to appreciate good things on earth and indeed I appreciate the work done by the new press Secretary to the Head of State by presenting to us this new book—The hundred days of Mr President. I would like to say that the Constitution which we are now

[MR OMIDIJI]

using was amended in September by the Military Regime before they left. Up till now we have not got a complete clean copy of the Constitution. I want to appeal to the Authority to let us have a clean copy of the Constitution so that it would not be haphazard.

#### **Institute of Strategic Studies**

Secondly, I want to talk about the Nigerian Institute of Strategic Studies in Jos. I think the Institute was established by the Military to provide intelligence activities for the running of the Government. We accept that an Institute of that nature established with the tax-payers' money should make its activities available not only to the Legislature but to the Public at large. One thing that comes to my

mind in saying this is that the Institute should organise seminars for Members of the National Assembly. We have spent quite a number of months here and I think this is sufficient time for the Institute to make its rich knowledge available to all Members in the National Assembly. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon Members, I think we should adjourn now.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That this House stands adjourned till 10 o'clock on Monday morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 11.28 a.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Monday, 18th February, 1980

The House met at 10.30 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

The Deputy Speaker : Hon. Members, I have gone through the Votes and Proceedings of Friday, 15th February, 1980, and they reflect the true position of what took place in the House on that day. I have, therefore, approved them.

Letters

Hon. Members, I am in receipt of a letter from the President of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Professor Dr Nicolae Giosan, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The letter reads :

*The Socialist Republic of Romania,  
The Great National Assembly,  
The President.*

*Bucharest, 17th December, 1979*

*His Excellency*

*Mr E. Ume Ezeoke,  
Speaker of the House of Representatives,  
National Assembly,  
Federal Republic of Nigeria,  
Lagos*

*Your Excellency Mr Speaker,*

*In the spirit of friendship, co-operation and solidarity existing between our two countries and peoples and desirous to initiate a fruitful dialogue between our two parliaments—on behalf of the Bureau of the Great National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Romania and on my own behalf, I have the honour and particular pleasure to extend the invitation to a Nigerian Parliamentary delegation, led by Your Excellency, to pay an official visit of friendship in my country during 1980 year.*

*I should like to express the conviction that the realisation of the visit will constitute the starting of exchanging delegations at the level of our Parliaments and will mean an important contribution to a better mutual knowledge as well as the fruitful co-operation between our two countries, to the benefit of the Romanian and Nigerian people, of the cause of peace and international collaboration.*

*As far as the period of the visit is concerned, I propose it to be mutually agreed upon by diplomatic channels.*

*I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that I conveyed a similar letter to His Excellency Mr Joseph Wayas, President of the Senate.*

*Please accept, Your Excellency Mr Speaker, the assurances of my highest esteem and consideration.*

*Professor Dr NICOLAE GIOSAN*

The letter was sent to us from the Ministry of External Affairs by the Permanent Secretary. The letter from the Permanent Secretary reads :

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

EUROPEAN AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

LAGOS

P.M.B. No. 12600

Ref. No. EN39/S3/Vol. I

Telegrams : EXTERNAL Date 11th February, 1980  
Telephone.

*The Honourable Mr E. Ume Ezeoke,  
Speaker of the House of Representatives,  
Parliament Building,  
Lagos.*

INVITATION FROM THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE ROMANIAN NATIONAL  
ASSEMBLY

*I am directed to forward herewith an invitation from the President of the Romanian National Assembly to a Nigerian Parliamentary delegation, led by the Honourable Speaker of the House of Representatives to visit Romania in the course of this year. The invitation was received through the Romanian Ambassador in Lagos and it should be appreciated if this Ministry would be informed of any decision that may be reached on it. A similar invitation has also been addressed and transmitted to the Honourable President of the Senate.*

*(Sgd.) (Frank Eshiett),  
For Permanent Secretary*

Committee Meetings

Hon. Members, in view of the vast amount of work which the Committees have to do and which is still outstanding against them, it is being suggested that Friday be allowed specifically for Committee Meetings only so that they can start as early as nine o'clock, Friday being half a day.

Communication from Senate

We have received a letter from the Senate on the Police Service Commission (Membership) Bill, 1980. The letter reads :



Ref. S/NA/S.99/5

Clerk of the National Assembly,  
Parliament Buildings,  
Tafawa Balewa Square,  
P.M.B. 12572,  
Lagos, Nigeria  
11th February, 1980

The Clerk of the House of Representatives,  
National Assembly,  
Lagos

*Police Service Commission Membership Bill 1980*

*I forward herewith a copy of Senate Bill No. 2-80 entitled the Police Service Commission Membership Bill 1980 which was passed by the Senate on the 6th of February, 1980. with amendments (printed in italics) in which the Senate desires the concurrence of the House of Representatives pursuant to Senate Standing Order No. 46 (5).*

A. A. COKER  
Clerk of the Senate

Hon. Members, if you look at the Order Paper for today, that Bill is No. 1, and the Bill is marked S. 2 by the Senate. This is just for clarification. There has been confusion in differentiating Bills that have been sent by the Senate to the House of Representatives for concurrence from those emanating from the House.

Any Bill that emanates from the House of Representatives will start with the prefix H.R., that is, House of Representatives. So, you will have H.R. 1, 2, 3, 4 and so on. Any Bill that emanates from the Senate has a prefix S denoting Senate, like the Bill we have just received today which is S. 2. It means that the Senate has already disposed of that Bill and is now our turn to speak on it. Bill No. 5 on the Order Paper will have to be deleted because that Bill was sent directly to the Senate. This means that the National Insurance Corporation of Nigeria (Amendment) Bill 1980 is still with the Senate for deliberations. Until they dispose of it, we cannot take the Bill in the House here.

Just for own records, the Army Council Bill is H.R. 1; the Air Force Bill is H.R. 2; the Financial Year Bill is H.R. 3; the Navy Board Bill is H.R. 4; the Nigerian Council for Management Development Bill is H.R.5; the Federal Mortgage Bank (Amendment) Bill is H.R. 6 and the River Basin Development Bill is H.R. 7. We have only seven Bills that have come directly to the House of Representatives from the Executive.

Yes, let us have your point of explanation.

**President's Visit to Bendel State**

**Dr O. O. Oreh (Arochukwu)**: Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of this House, my point of explanation is on the President's visit to the State of Bendel.

If you read the *New Nigerian* of today, 18th February, 1980, you would have seen a newspaper caption *Governor Ali bans public receptions as Shagari*

*tours Bendel*. In one of the paragraphs of that publication, you would see that Governor Ali of Bendel has warned the people of the State not invited to the functions arranged for the President by the State Government to keep clear in their own interest. If you go down in the same publication, you will see that the Oba of Benin has appealed to the people of the State to come forward and grace the reception. I think that the Oba's injunction is proper and a very good thing. (*Applause*)

In the *Punch* Editorial titled *Give unto Shehu*, you would see the warning that the *Punch* gave.

I think, Mr Speaker, Sir, all of us here including Members of the State Assemblies and the Governors swore to an Oath upholding the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. I know also that all of us are interested in peace and good government it is in this respect that I want to warn. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker**: You know that word. *warning*—

**Dr Oreh**: It is in this respect that I want to advise, Mr Speaker, Sir, that those who try to forment trouble in this country—(*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker**: Round up please.

**Dr Oreh**: I want to advise that those who want to create problems and cause confusion in this country should be better advised that if trouble comes, it would affect everybody. Some of us would not allow the seeds of discord to divide our fatherland. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker**: It is all right Member for Arochukwu (*Dr Oreh*).

**Dr Oreh**: My advice is that this House will continue to sit only if there is peace in Bendel just as if there is peace in any other State of this country. I want to advise, Mr Speaker, Sir, that it is neat and proper that every citizen of this country whether he resides in Bendel, in Imo or in Lagos should go and see the President who is his President and who is the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker**: There is a point of explanation.

**Green Eagles**

**Mr O. Ogunkoya (Ijebu Remo)**: My point of explanation is this. Unfortunately, a lot of people delve into those things that divide us. I want to delve into those things that actually unite this country.

I am much concerned and we should do all that we can to emphasise this point. The point is that the Nigerian National Football Team, the Green Eagles, is today starting a very important role in the life of our country. This is very important because sports has been an instrument of international politics very recently. It is our duty as a country and the largest blackman's country in the world to play a leading role in this particular sphere. I think I would be carrying the whole lot of the House with me in wishing the Green Eagles a very great success in this Cup of Nation's Match taking place this year in Lagos.

[MR OGUNKOYA]

We are happy that we have men who have distinguished themselves in so many professions and I am happy to see just a repeat of the old Dan Anyiam, Tesilimi Balogun again, Chairman Chukwu and Odegbami's episodes back in Nigeria. I sincerely wish they will go there and bring us the honours that this great nation deserves. I sincerely wish you all to bear with me I am carrying your message by wishing them the best of luck in this Cup of Nation's Match. Thank you. (*Applause*).

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, in pursuance of what the last speaker has said, I hope it is the wish of this House that we write a letter of encouragement and support to the National Team, the Green Eagles, on this task that is ahead of them. We leave that to the Committee on Sports to advise us on what to do in this circumstance.

**Mr T. N. Ochiama** (Ikeduru) : There is a point of explanation, please.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member for Ikeduru (*Mr Ochiama*), can we hear the vital issues before you speak on them please?

**Mr Ochiama :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not think you know exactly what is in my mind. So, you cannot predict what I have to say.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Mr Ochiama, I have to know what you are going to say.

**Mr Ochiama :** It is all right, Mr Speaker. The first thing I want to say—(*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member, if you want to make a point of explanation like the two Gentlemen have spoken, you will please put what you want to say on a paper, and then the Speaker will rule whether or not he will allow you to speak. You do not just stand up every morning to say you have a point of explanation. I asked you what was the point of the explanation and you said I could not predict your mind.

**Mr Ochiama :** It is all right, Mr Speaker. I want to explain things which are very vital. The subject I want to speak on—(*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member for Ikeduru (*Mr Ochiama*) can you please put what you want to say in writing and I will give you a chance to speak if it is in order?

**Mr Ochiama :** But what I want to say is on the publication that was made in the papers of yesterday, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker :** What publication?

**Mr T. N. Ochiama** (Ikeduru) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, yesterday I read in the *Sunday Times* of a publication which I presume was embarrassing.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member for Ikeduru can you hold on just for a second please?

**Mr Ochiama :** It is all right, Mr Speaker.

**Mr M. A. Agbamuche** (Oshimili) : I was going to make a point of Order, that is Order 16. This is on personal explanation. Order 16 which is the procedure by which we can make explanation says, Sir,

*By the indulgence of the House, and the leave of Mr Speaker, a Member may make a personal explanation although there be no question before the House; but no controversial matter may be brought forward nor may debate arise upon the explanation. The terms of the proposed statement shall be submitted in extenso to Mr Speaker when his leave to make it is sought.*

It is my observation that the hon. Gentleman did not appear to have sent Mr Speaker the details in writing of what he wanted to say. This is the point I want to make, Sir, because it appears that hon. Members have taken the advantage of getting up anytime and thus waste the time of the House in making explanation.

**The Deputy Speaker :** That is a valid point. I have got what he wants to say on paper. You can go ahead with your personal explanation, Mr Ochiama.

#### Remunerations

**Mr Ochiama :** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the protection which you have given me. The publication is on remunerations. Yesterday, in the *Sunday Times*, it was published that the wages of public servants would be debated today in this honourable House and to my greatest surprise I did not see it on the Order Paper this morning. The news media have got the information on the issue and they have already published salaries which they presume have been agreed upon, whereas hon. Members who are the legislators of this country have not even known how much they are to be paid. In fact, I expected that the first thing to be debated upon this morning should have been the remunerations since they have been given wide publicity.

Mr Speaker, Sir, as the law makers of this country, we are here to protect the interest of the masses, our own interest and the interest of the nation as a whole. I think the party leanings should be sunk. They should be set aside. We should put our heads together and work for the unity of this country. We cannot come here and keep deceiving ourselves because I cannot see how we can work for five good months in this House without knowing our remunerations. Mr Speaker, Sir, a Committee has been set up to work on our remunerations and up till now they have not told us anything. They said that the recommendations made had been withdrawn for some justified or unjustified reason. So, Mr Speaker with the greatest apology to you, I am saying that if it is possible, by tomorrow or next tomorrow, this Committee should make available to us both the previous and whatever the present recommendations are so that we may know.

My Second explanation is this.

**The Deputy Speaker :** That second explanation is not here and, therefore, it is not allowed.

**Mr Ochiama :** It is on NNPC where ₦170,000 has been siphoned away.

**The Deputy Speaker :** That is not for discussion here.

**Mr Ochiama :** It is all right, Mr Speaker, but I think as the mouth-piece of this country, we have the right in this august House to protect the interest of the masses as far as the revenue of this nation is concerned.

**The Deputy Speaker :** We know that.

**Mr Ochiama :** Thank you, very much, Mr Speaker. (Applause)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Thank you. Hon. Members, I do not want to dwell on what the last speaker has said. The news media are entitled to fish out information on things that are of interest to them. How they get their information is not our concern. I believe that they did not just cook up that information. Somebody must have given it to them, but the issue is whether the information published is right or wrong. The important thing is that the news media do not tell us what we are to discuss on the Order Paper. If you look at the Order Paper and you do not see what the news media predicted would come up for discussion, it only means that we are doing our job properly ; that we have not been dictated to, or directed by any person whatsoever.

#### PRESENTATION OF PUBLIC BILLS

##### Police Service Commission Membership Bill, 1980 : (S.2)

A Bill for an Act to make Provision for the Number of persons to constitute Membership of the Police Service Commission as required by the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, presented by Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) ; read the First time, referred to the Committee on Public Service.

##### Navy (Amendment) Bill, 1980 : (H.R. 4)

A Bill for an Act to make Provision for the Number of persons to constitute Membership of the Navy Board, presented by Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) ; read the First time, referred to the Committee on Defence.

##### Nigerian Council for Management Development Bill : (H.R. 5)

A Bill for an Act to make Provision for the Reconstitution of the Nigerian Council for Management Development, presented by Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) ; read the First time, referred to the Committee on Labour.

##### Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria (Amendment) Bill, 1980 : (H.R. 6)

A Bill for an Act to make Provision for the Reconstitution of Membership of the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria, presented by Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) ; read the First time, referred to the Committee on Banking and Currency.

#### River Basins Development Authorities (Amendment) Bill, 1980 : (HR. 7)

A Bill for an Act to make Provision for the Reconstitution of the Membership of the Eleven River Basins Development Authorities in Nigeria, presented by Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) ; read the First time, referred to the Committee on Water Resources.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

##### Committee Meetings

**The Deputy Speaker :** The Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Animal Science is meeting at 1 o'clock in Committee Room 3 ; the Committee on Communications is meeting at 1 o'clock in Committee Room 4 ; the Business Committee will meet at 1 o'clock in the Staff Conference Room ; the Special Committee on N.N.P.C. meets at 1 o'clock in the Deputy Speaker's office ; the Committee on Education is meeting at 1 o'clock at the National Hall Chamber ; the Standing Orders Committee is meeting at 2.30 p.m. in Committee Room 4 and finally the Committee on Internal Affairs is meeting at 3.00 p.m. in Committee Room 3.

#### NOTICES OF MOTIONS

##### Parliamentary Privileges and Immunities

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, the Motion standing in my name is :

That in view of the need for Members of the National and State Assemblies in the performance of their legislative duties to have certain privileges and immunities as is the practice in all democratic countries the world over and in furtherance of the provision of Item 45 of the Second Schedule to the Nigerian Constitution, this House directs the Committee on Judiciary to initiate a Bill to provide for these privileges and immunities and send its Report to this Assembly within four weeks.

I beg to move.

**Kemte Giadom** (Bori II) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to second the Motion.

**Alhaji Kaltungo** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I think this particular Motion does not call for any discussion at this stage. I have merely brought this Motion and I have requested Members to agree that it be referred to this particular Committee because I know the Committee has got to do a lot of work on it. As far as Members of this House and the Members of the State Houses of Assembly are concerned, it is a straightforward Motion ; it is not controversial at all. I would not call for discussion at this stage until the Judicial Committee has submitted a Report to this House. After that, we can deliberate very well on this particular Motion.

With this, Mr Speaker and hon. Members, I move.

**Mr M. O. Ugwu** (Udi) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to oppose the Motion.

[MR UGU]

I have a special objection to this Motion. I am speaking as an ex-Member of the Constituent Assembly who had deliberated on Parliamentary Privileges for all Members in the whole Federation.

I would like hon. Members to remember that if we want to be law-makers or rulers of this country, we must submit ourselves to the rule of law. We have One thousand three hundred and seventeen Members of the State Assemblies ; four hundred and forty-nine Members of the House of Representatives ; ninety-five Senators and nineteen Governors. We also have a President and a Vice-President, the total is one thousand, eight hundred and eighty two. In effect, we are now seeking to give immunities to one thousand, eight hundred and eighty-two Members from prosecution in this country. This is morally wrong (*Interruptions*)

Several hon. Members : Shame ! Shame !

Mr Tubo O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II) : Point of Order.

The Deputy Speaker : What is your point of Order ?

Mr. Bob-Manuel : My point of Order is Constitutional. With your permission, Mr Speaker, I shall read from Section 4(2)(3) of the Constitution :

*The National Assembly shall have power to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Federation or any part thereof with respect of any matter included in the Exclusive Legislative List set out in Part I of the Second Schedule of this Constitution.*

*The power of the National Assembly to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Federation with respect to any matter included in the Exclusive Legislative List shall, save as otherwise provided in this Constitution, be to the exclusion of the House of Assembly of State.*

The issue of immunities for the Members of the Houses of Assembly and the National Assembly is under No. 45 of the Exclusive List. Therefore, we are in order. In effect, the Hon. Member for Udi (*Mr M. O. Ugwu*) is speaking against the Constitution. He should, therefore, be asked to apologise for doing so. (*Applause*)

Mr Ugwu : I am continuing with my speech, but I do not know if the Speaker is permitting me to continue.

The Deputy Speaker : As the hon. Member for Degema II (*Mr Bob-Manuel*) has pointed out, Section 4 (2) (3) of the Constitution talks about Legislative Powers of the National Assembly. In the First Schedule of the Constitution under the Legislative, No. 45 therein, you will find that the National Assembly has powers to make for itself what privileges and immunities it wishes its Members to enjoy. It can also make laws on what the power of the National Assembly will be.

I am sure you, being a Member of the Constituent Assembly, have already allowed that provision in the Constitution. (*Interruptions*)

Mr. Ugwu : The privileges seem to be— (*Interruptions*)

Several hon. Members : Sit down !

The Deputy Speaker : There is a misunderstanding of the Constitution. The immunities and privileges of Members do not, in any way, give you a green ticket to commit murder, arson, or treason. You cannot say, because you are a Member of the National Assembly, therefore, you are immune to prosecution if you commit any criminal offence. What the immunities are talking about is that, as long as you are within the premises of the National Assembly, you will not be subjected to arrest, unnecessary interference or harassment by anybody. But immediately you leave the premises of the National Assembly, you are just like another citizen of this country. (*Interruptions*)

Mr Ugwu : Mr Speaker, Sir,—(*Interruptions*)

Several hon. Members : Sit down ! Sit down !

Mr Ugwu : If that is the case, Mr Speaker I am happy about your point of explanation, and I would not be opposing the Motion.

The Deputy Speaker : You had better sit down. If members of the Judicial Committee look at the *Parliamentary Practice* by Sir Barnett Cocks they will find that the question of privileges is covered from page 64 to page 130 inclusive. It is quite a voluminous book. That Section contains all sorts of privileges and immunities which Members can enjoy. It also contains punishment for contempt of the House, and so on.

I think that it is the responsibility of the Judicial Committee to sit down and work out the immunities and privileges of Members, and make recommendations to this House. I do not think this is going to create room for any debate for or against the issue. If anybody has an observation to make, he should go and submit such observation to the Judicial Committee which is going to propose what immunities and privileges Members should enjoy.

The Leader of the House may now put the Question so that we can make progress.

Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the Question be now put.

Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.

Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.

Resolved : That in view of the need for Members of the National and State Assemblies in the performance of their legislative duties to have certain privileges and immunities as is the practice in all democratic Countries the world over and in furtherance of the provision of Item 45 of the Second Schedule to the Nigerian Constitution, this House directs the Committee on Judiciary to initiate a Bill to provide for these privileges and immunities, and send its Report to this Assembly within four weeks.

#### Pensioners and Retiring Benefits

Alhaji Abubakar Tuggar (Gamawa) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to Move the Motion standing in my name on the Order Paper of today—

[ALHAJI TUGGAR]

That in pursuance of Section 17 (3) (f) of the Constitution and considering the need to protect retired public officers and to ensure prompt payment of their retiring benefits, this House directs the Committee of Public Service Matters to,

(i) investigate the root causes of the delay in paying pension benefits ;

(ii) consider the desirability or otherwise of decentralising the roles of the Ministry in the computation of retiring benefits ; and

(iii) ascertain whether any groups of pensioners in Nigeria are suffering hardship as a result of deprivation of their retiring benefits for whatever cause or causes, and make recommendation as to the ways and means of alleviating these problems.

I beg to Move.

**Mr Babbaji Aliyu** (Shira) : I beg to second.

**Alhaji Tuggar** : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I believe that not a single one of us would find any controversy with this Motion, moreso if we consider the fact that we are here to cater for the happiness and well being of every Nigerian, especially if we consider the Oath of office which we all took to protect and enhance the interest and welfare of the people of this country.

Mr Speaker, a little investigation will reveal quite a number of anomalies that have been happening in the Ministry of Establishments, Pensions Division. Any person, Mr Speaker, Sir, who retires after about 25 or 30 years' service, certainly must have worked creditably and without any negligence of duty. I can understand pension to mean that a person who has served and retiring has served so well—he has given the best part of his life serving this country—and the nation becomes grateful to him by agreeing to pay him what he is going to live on for the rest of his weak life.

The misfortune, Sir, is that at the moment you will find people who have retired since 1976, 1977, 1978, not to talk of 1979, who have still not received a single penny as their retirement benefits. Mr Speaker, Sir, in the past, before Decree No. 103 of 1979, the system of pension calculations was that the remunerations paid to the retiring officer over the years, would be added together and the sum total would then be divided by the number of years served. The figure obtained would be the yardstick for the calculation. This method proved very cumbersome and that was why Decree No. 103 was promulgated in 1979, which stipulates that the last salary received by an officer should be the figure upon which the calculation for his benefits should be based. Under Section 3 (2) the Decree empowers the Commissioner for Establishments now Minister of Establishments to delegate his powers to other bodies for purpose of pensions calculations in the Federation in order to alleviate the sufferings of pensioners. This power which was given by the Decree to the Commissioner was never implemented, and the whole question of pensions in the Federation is handled centrally.

Mr Speaker, Sir, if we consider that in 1965 for example, there were only fifty-five thousand people working for the Government of the Federation, which

would give us a very small figure, which the then Ministry of Establishments could cope with, because those retiring every year then might be, on the aggregate, of say 30, 40 or 50. But today, Mr Speaker, the Servants of the Government of the Federation have increased many, many times, and, therefore, the people retiring are now in thousands. Unfortunately the same system, the same office and the same capacity of workers, that were operating in 1965 are still operating in 1980. Therefore, it is quite clear that they cannot cope with the demands of the pensioners that now abound.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I think everyone of us here would be very sympathetic with these pensioners. I do not know what they are going to live on. Most of them suffer a lot because if you go along the streets you will see some of them, maybe from Immigration, Prisons or some other Departments, sleeping in the market stalls because they have come to Lagos to get their pension rights. Many of them did not know Lagos prior to their retirement. They did not know anybody here, yet, they had to come here. If you are a Policeman for example, and you are engaged in Maiduguri after finishing from the Police College, you will find that by the time you retire, you have to come to Lagos for the first time in your life before you get your retirement benefits.

The same thing happened in the Immigration Department and other places.

The present situation is very much worse in the Armed Forces. In the Army for example, they have what is called the Army Pensions Board. That again, Mr Speaker, is under the control of the Ministry of Establishments. Although the Chairman has the interest of his soldiers at heart, but there are certain regulations controlling the functions of that Board by the Ministry of Establishments.

Now, prior to 1966, the strength of the Army was 8,000. By the time the unfortunate civil war was over, the number stood at 250,000. Right now, we have 32,000 discharged soldiers waiting for their benefits for two and a half years. Mr Speaker, assuming each of them, earned ₦200 a month, 32,000 of them, you would find that for one year, we would not be able to pay them, so that they could go away because they have to continue to take their salaries although they have been discharged. We are paying them ₦7,680,000 every year, simply because some inefficient people are there in the Ministry of Establishments.

On top of that, some of them are occupying barracks and you cannot ask them to go away, even though they are doing nothing. They have been discharged but they cannot get to their villages ; so they continue to stay in those houses and get their salaries continuously. Since this is the case, they are, therefore, depriving the serving soldiers the access to those barracks. What they do is to go and hire accommodation for those serving.

This is the situation in which we find ourselves today. I think, for this wasteful picture, this honourable House would agree that this Committee should be given the chance to investigate and really come out with something concrete. We cannot afford to

[ALHAJI TUGGAR]

continue paying out ₦7,680,000 every year. Why? It would be easier to engage more people to clear this mess and pay up these soldiers so that they can vacate the barracks for the serving soldiers to move in. When this happens, less rent will be paid and the general public who want to hire houses will have the opportunity to do so.

Mr Speaker, this is why I think this honourable House should be able to accept this Motion so that we can ask the Committee to quickly deliberate on this issue and solve the problem.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

**Alhaji M. B. Mustapha (Bida North):** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion. In supporting the Motion, I would expect each and everyone of us to give this Motion a humanitarian support.

It is unfortunate that hundreds of Nigerian workers have died without enjoying their retirement benefits. Their relations cannot lay hands on the retirement benefits of the deceased. This is very unfortunate. The cause of this, Mr Speaker, is not only as a result of breakdown in communication completely, but it is also as a result of gross inefficiency generally in the public service. It is not difficult to work out anybody's retirement benefits by the new Pension Act. Today, any officer can sit down and within five minutes, work out his retirement benefits. Payment is very difficult because of gross inefficiency in the Federal Ministry of Establishments.

How can you expect a messenger employed in Maiduguri or a clerk in Sokoto or Kano to collect his retirement benefits from Lagos? This is very unfair because the majority of the people involved, particularly the low-income group, have never travelled out of their stations, how much more to Lagos. In the interest of justice, Mr Speaker, the Ministry of Establishments should not only be decentralised but the zonal offices should be given full powers regarding the payment of pension to the junior staff who are retiring within their vicinity. Under the present Pensions Act, even the Heads of Department can work out the retirement benefits and raise a voucher, acting on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Establishments and Training, if the Ministry cannot be decentralised. In each State today, there is a Federal Pay Office. Any Department with an accountant can simply work out the junior officers' retirement benefits and pass the voucher to the sub-Treasury. If they like they can reduce a certain percentage by say just five per cent against cross-checking or reconciliation of the payment voucher in case of overpayment or underpayment. Today, if you go to the Federal Ministry of Establishments and Training you will see hundreds of people lying down. Why?

With these few remarks, I would ask the Members to please endorse and give support so that the Committee on Public Service can come out with a decision to decentralise the Federal Ministry of Establishments and Training. The zonal branches must be given the power at least to settle the retirement benefits of all officers from the Executive Officer

grade downwards without necessarily referring the matter first to the Federal Ministry of Establishments and Training.

I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr Ogwe Kalu Ogwe (Bende):** Mr Speaker, in fact this Motion, one can say, is non-controversial in the sense that pensioners are those who have actually wasted their youthful days serving the government and are entitled to certain rights. These rights are either in form of money or money in kind, but this money is never paid immediately. That is why I said that the Motion is non-controversial. Somebody who is entitled to any right in law is required to get the right without any molestation or delay whatsoever.

In the first place, certain Ministries like the Federal Ministry of Establishments have their headquarters in Lagos. Because the headquarters is in Lagos and they have a lot of work, hence there is delay in exercising their duties. Lagos is very far away from the States because some of these people are more than 55 or 60 years old travelling from either Sokoto, Maiduguri or from Bende (my Constituency) or from any part of the country at all. They experience a lot of hardship here in Lagos when trying to board vehicles, and of course, the question of airplane is ruled out because of the inherent hardship due to poverty.

If such Ministries are allowed to operate in the Federal Capital Territory of Lagos and to see that these people get their rights they are bound to have a lot of hardship. What the Motion is talking about is to minimise the hardship and I do not think there is anything wrong in that. If you look at Section 15, Subsection 4 of the Constitution, it talks about having a sense of belonging. When somebody is deprived of his right, he cannot say that he has a sense of belonging to a gigantic nation like our own. I think the proper thing is to see that each and every person in this country has a sense of belonging. What the Motion is talking about is the question of supporting the provisions of the Constitution, and I do not see anything wrong about that. That is why I say that it is non-controversial.

If you go again to Section 22 of the Constitution, it talks of self-reliance, discipline and patriotism. I cannot be patriotic when I have an empty stomach. I must revolt because they say that a hungry man is an angry man. If you do not give me my right which I think I am due for, I cannot be happy. If I have wasted my youth to serve the nation and then to get my right I am denied of it or certain conditions are introduced to make it difficult for me to get my right, I do not see how I can have a feeling of patriotism or nationalism. So, this Motion is saying that we should see that the provisions of the Constitution which we have sworn to on the 9th of October, 1979, are complied with. I do not see why this Motion should be controversial.

As to the question of decentralising the duties of certain Ministries established here in Lagos, there is nothing wrong in that. I think when the Committee goes into actual work, it will find out why there are delays. When you go to certain Ministries after you have served with your youthful vigour in order

[MR OGWE]

to get your rights, you find small boys who have never served for a long period in the Government. These boys look at you as if you have committed a crime and you start fearing everybody. Some people will even tell you *We have not got the time, please see us next time*, not minding whether you have come from Port Harcourt, Sokoto, or Maiduguri. They do not even consider your age, they treat you with reckless abandon. I think this Motion should have every support because Members of this honourable House have sworn to see that the provisions of the Constitution are complied with.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I ask hon. Members to give sufficient support to this Motion which is not controversial.

**Dr E. C. Emekekwe** (Onitsha South): Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to speak in support of this Motion. I will also say a word or two of criticism against the Mover of this Motion for not referring to the more relevant Section of our Constitution in his Motion. To this effect, I draw the attention of Members of this House to Section 159 of our constitution which states, and I quote with your permission, Mr Speaker:

*Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, the right of a person in the public service of the Federation to receive pension or gratuity shall be regulated by law.*

*Any benefit to which a person is entitled in accordance with or under such law as is referred to in subsection (1) of this section shall not be withheld or altered to his disadvantage except to such extent as is permissible under any law, including the Code of Conduct.*

So, Mr Speaker, hon. Members it behoves Members of the Committee responsible for going into this matter to draw the attention of officers in the Ministry of Establishments to this very important section. As this provision stands, it does not matter whether you eventually, in five or ten years' time, pay the entitlements. Having delayed it for so long, the clause of this Constitution has been infringed and such infringement should attract some compensation to the dispossessed. I can say that up to this moment, the affected retired civil servants have been very patient, they have been very forbearing. But as a result of our drawing their various attentions to this particular Section of the Constitution, I will expect, in the near future, that these affected retired members of the communities will assert their full rights under our Constitution.

With these few words, Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I beg to support.

**Mr D. O. Agi** (Oju): Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion with a very short remark.

Section 16, Subsection 2 (d), of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1979 states this specifically and I beg to read:

*that suitable and adequate shelter, suitable and adequate food, reasonable national minimum living*

*wage, old age care and pensions, and unemployment and sick benefits are provided for all citizens.*

That is to say that the State shall direct its policies towards ensuring just that and many others. The point I am trying to make here is that the Constitution does not give any condition in making these provisions. It says directly that these shall be the liabilities or the duty of the State to provide. But there is a possible difference between these provisions and actions to implement them, and this is precisely where I want to make a very short remark. If you watch the way these pensioners and people that fall into this category are given these entitlements, you will really pity this nation. They spend very useful hours waiting for this thing to be paid to them at the pay offices all over the country.

The Constitution does not provide that these entitlements be paid to the pensioners any how. So, it is a sorry affair to see that these people receive their entitlements with bitterness. How can somebody be made to wait indefinitely for only about sixty naira, eighty naira or one hundred naira pension? In order to collect this money some people spend three to four days even when it is ready in the cashier's safe, the only problem being to pay these people in the order they come.

The Committee is urged upon to work on this matter and bring out recommendations which curtail some of the loitering and waste of time that are experienced by pensioners in collecting their money. All available avenues should be explored to ensure decentralisation. There is no point anybody having money to collect from the Federal Ministry of Establishments or the pensions office having to walk down to Lagos before he gets the entitlement. There are other means that State Governments use in getting money from Lagos and these avenues should also be available to pensioners.

Hon. Members, I wish that this Committee be urged to work out detailed ways and means of getting this decentralisation into operation particularly so as to reduce the hardship and sufferings encountered by people who go to the pensions offices to collect their due entitlements. Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to take my seat.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Member for Port Harcourt II (*Chief Godwin Wodi*) to speak.

**Chief Godwin Wodi** (Port Harcourt II): Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I am really sorry, I am going to talk as one who is directly affected. One thing that bothers me very much is that I do not know why Nigerians take delight in punishing their fellow Nigerians. This is just how I see it.

Here is a worker; he has put in all the useful parts of his life into the service, probably unqueried too. He had no recriminations, no adverse report, and the salary he was paid then was insufficient. Now, he has left the job and he does not even get any other income. His only expectation is the little pension he is entitled to but somebody sits down on it right in the office there and does not release it. Mr Speaker, I am aware of many of my colleagues in the Nigerian Railway Corporation who borrowed

money to pay their transport fare from Port Harcourt to Lagos and had to stay a month or so in Lagos running after their pensions. They not only go to the office, but they have to bribe their way and pay for all sorts of things in order to get their entitlements.

Mr Speaker, I am very soon going to take the Nigerian Railway Corporation to court because I have not been paid my pension since 1970. (*Laughter*)

Mr Speaker, Sir, what I would like to suggest to the appropriate Committee that is going to handle this matter, is to prepare a Bill stipulating a time limit between the period one leaves the Service and the time one receives one's entitlement. It must not exceed one month. If we make it more than one month, then we are deliberately punishing our fellow Nigerians. That is my contribution, Mr Speaker. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Well done the hon. Member for Port Harcourt II (*Chief Godwin Wodi*). The hon. Member for Ikwere/Etche II (*Dr Eze O. A. Nwala*) is to speak now.

**Dr Eze O. A. Nkala** (Ikwere/Etche II): Thank you Mr Speaker. I think this problem of stipends or pensions being withheld from those to whom they are due, particularly those who have made useful contributions to the economic development of this country and have retired honourably, is absolutely unfair and unjust.

We have, during the short period of our stay here, been informed that a number of Nigerians who have retired honourably from their jobs have not been paid their due rewards in form of stipends. I know one of our hon. Colleagues here very well Mr Speaker, if you allow me to be personal, the hon. Member for Onitsha North-East (*Mr C. A. Modebe*) brought a Motion on behalf of pensioners who worked for this nation and retired honourably but because of one reason or the other, their former employers had found it difficult to pay them their due rewards. I think this is grossly inequitable and we should not allow this to happen to people who have so much contributed to the economic development of this country. So, I am in support that the Committee on Public Service Matters should investigate all these cases of injustice and ill-treatment meted out to honourably retired workers of this country. I beg to support the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Any old-age pensioner in GNPP? (*Laughter*)

**Alhaji Hamza M. Ngadiwa** (Biu North): Thank you Mr Speaker. I rise to support the Motion.

In the first place, the Motion, as most of the hon. Members have already observed, is non-controversial. In fact, it is humanitarian and because of this, I would like to indulge the support of hon. Members that this Motion be passed.

Secondly, I wish to say that we should admit that the Public Service has been inefficient and that has been one of the causes of the delay and for which the pensioners are suffering. The Ministry of Establishments has been singled out as being, perhaps, one of the greatest victims of the cause of the delay. Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish however to say that

contrary to this, I think the fault lies with all the various Ministries in the Public Service. Unscrupulous officers continue to enjoy the salaries of deceased, retired, and dismissed officers indefinitely until these are communicated to the Ministry of Establishments. There is no doubt about the fact that until this is rectified the matter of the efficiency in the Ministry of Establishments should not be questioned.

The need for decentralisation is very, very necessary. Members have already indicated how unnecessary it is for a pensioner from Maiduguri, Sokoto, or other parts of the Federation that are far away from Lagos, to travel merely and solely for the purpose of locating his file somewhere in the Ministry of Establishments here in Lagos; this is suicidal. You cannot imagine that what you can achieve by merely telephoning, or what would cost you only ten kobo by postal system to get a reply from the Ministry of Establishments, you have got to travel from these different parts of the country in order to locate your file only to be told the usual *come tomorrow*. Mr Speaker, Sir, this is one of the reasons why our pensioners keep on suffering and do not get what they are supposed to get as provided for in the Constitution.

Thirdly, decentralisation is very necessary in order to avoid the suffering that some of these retired poor civil servants come to encounter here in Lagos. Several of them make numerous journeys in order to be paid something that is perhaps only so meagre that the journey should not have been made.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to support the suggestion by the hon. Member for Bida North (*Alhaji M. B. Mustapha*) that in all the States we should have Federal Pay Offices. These should be empowered to pay especially the pension of junior civil servants. In fact, what they are claiming from the Vote are so minimal that they could be taken care of in the various State offices of the Federal Pay Offices. Thank you Mr Speaker, and please, I wish to appeal to this honourable House to support this Motion in order to give these innocent victims of our bureaucratic bottle-neck in our Civil Service the necessary support which they expect from those of us who are supposed to protect their interest.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Mr Tundun Wada, you are too young to be a pensioner.

**Mr M. Tundun Wada** (Waje): Mr Speaker, Sir, I agree that I am too young to be a pensioner but all the same I represent the interest of so many people who are pensioners and who will be pensioners very soon. From all indications this Motion appears to me to be non-controversial and it is my hope that the non-existence of heat in the debate will be a good omen to this Motion. As far as I am concerned, this Motion seems to convey once again to us the shattering impact of the negligence permeating the Civil Service of this country. I do not want to single out the Ministry of Establishments alone as the scape-goat as far as this matter is concerned.

I think the Nigerian Civil Service is suffering from a very, very unfortunate malaise which seems to be a



[MR WADA]

hangover. It is true that most Civil Services have got this identifiable red-tapism attached to their system but that of Nigeria is bad, probably because of the fact that we are still to shake off the colonial and imperialistic mentality which has remained in our system. I am happy this Motion is being committed to the Committee on Public Service which has the responsibility to recommend to this honourable House measures and legislations to regulate the functions of the Civil Service. It is my hope that they will think in the line I am thinking with regard to revamping the Civil Service and making it people oriented.

The question of the problem of pensioners is something which most of us are aware of even if we are not directly involved in the negligence and other unfortunate happenings in the various ministries. It is unfortunate to contemplate that somebody will have to travel to the Federal Capital before his pensions and retirement benefits are paid. Pensions and retirement benefits are things that a person looks forward to with relish and cherish because probably he has put in the best part of his youth and existence into the Service. He therefore looks forward to the fact that he will retire to a cool and quiet life in the private sector or in his own private endeavours. It is unfortunate that in Nigeria it is turned into a complete nightmare because of the fact that even if he retires the benefits that are entitled to him will not be available to him to allow him to enjoy the benefits of his service.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is therefore in the light of that that I strongly support this Motion calling upon the Committee on Public Service to look into the matter of pensions, to also look into the matter of negligence that has come to light as far as this is concerned; and to recommend ways and means by which this negligence or lapses would be bridged in order to make life better for the poor man in this country. Not only for junior staff in the various Ministries and Departments of the Federal Government, but just as some hon. Members have suggested we should elect here to include a clause that will determine the period within which retirement benefits should be paid. It should also be expected that one does not travel to the Federal Capital to pursue one's retirements benefits. All the Federal Pay Offices in the various State Capitals should be empowered to take charge of the payment of retirement benefits within specific grades. So that we do not have the recurrence of such type of problem. With these few remarks, I beg to support.

**Mr F. O. Iyayi (Okpebho)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to say without hesitation that I support the Motion in its entirety. Like my friend, the hon. Member for Port Harcourt II, (*Mr G. Wodi*), I am a retired civil servant. Unlike him I have been drawing my pension very regularly, but not of course, without some delay. Mr Speaker, Sir, my contribution to this debate will be brief. I will just make a few suggestions to remedy the situation. In doing so, I am not unaware that the matter is being referred to the Committee on Public Service Matters.

First, I would like to point out that some of the causes of the delay might be attributed to sadistic tendencies of some functionaries who are responsible

for administering the pensions scheme. They take delight in causing pain or in seeing their ex-colleagues suffer after their retirement.

The other cause is perhaps due to arrogance and love for power. They want to be seen as wielding authority and power, taking decisions on retiring benefits. A further cause, of course, is the concentration of powers and responsibilities in the Federal Ministry of Establishments. In view of this, I support the idea that the pension administration should be decentralised to all State Capitals. In fact, it should go beyond that, it should be decentralised to Local Government Councils so that in areas where the State Capital which they draw pensions is very far from the places of origin of these people, instead of travelling to the State Capitals, they should be able to draw their pensions and retiring benefits from the Local Council Headquarters. Anyway, this is food for thought for the Committee on Public Service Matters.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to make a few suggestions. Some years ago, the Bendel State Ministry of Local Government evolved a scheme whereby it empowered them to pay a proportion of the pension entitlement to officers immediately after retirement. That was done in order to obviate any delay that would ensure and to alleviate the suffering that people might undergo. Sometimes, it takes up to six months or even a year or even longer to finalise the pension claims. So, immediately an officer retires, he is paid a proportion of his retirement benefits, say, about a third of it. This kept him going until the pension claims were finalised. I am sure that if the Committee considers this and makes a recommendation to this House, this is something that would be considered favourably.

Another suggestion, Mr Speaker, is that in matters of this nature, I think one could have recourse to the Public Complaints Commission. Therefore, in considering this matter, I would suggest that officers affected should be encouraged to make use of the Public Complaints Commission because I know from experience that these Commissions are doing a very useful work, in my State, at any rate.

Mr Speaker, Sir, as I said earlier, I do not want to take too much of your time, but I want to make one further suggestion. I think that the terms of reference of the Public Service Matters Committee should be extended by adding a fourth one. If I may refresh the memories of Members, you know that the first term of reference is that the Committee should investigate the root causes of the delay in paying pension benefits. The second one is to consider the desirability or otherwise of decentralising the roles of the Ministry in the computation of retiring benefits. The third one is to ascertain whether any group of pensioners in Nigeria are suffering hardship as a result of deprivation of their retiring benefits for whatever cause or causes, and make recommendation as to the ways and means of alleviating these problems.

I would suggest that we add a fourth one, that is, the Public Service Matters Committee should

examine the desirability of the need for an interim award in order to alleviate the suffering of retiring officers.

With these few remarks, I beg to support the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** You cannot amend it.

Yes, hon. Member for Iwo North, (*Mr Opanami*) go on.

**Mr J. Opanami** (Iwo North) : I am a young pensioner. Mr Speaker, in the first place, the pension paid to Nigerian workers is inadequate. After working for many years one finds it difficult to live happily with what a pensioner is paid at present. So, I call on this government to see that the pay is increased substantially.

Secondly, I recommend that what obtains in the Federal Ministry of Education should obtain in other Ministries and Departments. For example, in Oyo State, the Federal Ministry of Education there and the Ministry of Education in Lagos work hand in hand to work out Teachers' pensions and gratuities. You do not have to go to Lagos before you get your pay. You stay in your State and get all your benefits. Mr Speaker, Sir, I recommend that all the other Ministries should emulate the Federal Ministry of Education throughout Nigeria.

With this few comment I beg to support the Motion.

**Prince Lateef Bakare Kataiyeyanjue** (Iwo East) : I have to thank the Mover of this Motion greatly.

Mr Speaker, Sir, do you know that majority of pensioners in Nigeria today receive thirty-two naira a month? And when you ask these people what is responsible for this they will tell you that their grade level of salary is responsible for it. What would a pensioner do with ₦32 a month? This is too bad. I am urging the Committee to look into it.

On the question of collection of pension, I am suggesting that the Ministry of Establishments must be decentralised and it must be present not only in State Capitals but also in the Local Government Areas so that these people will not suffer so much to collect their gratuities and pensions.

With these few remarks I support the Motion.

**Mr Mohammed Bornoma** (Akko-Pindiga) : I am a pensioner ; so I have to support this Motion and also ask the hon. Members to give it a full support. In fact, today I am just from the Ministry of Establishments. Anytime you do not see me here, I am there. (*Laughter*)

I left the Service two years ago. I was in the Service for 36 years. Imagine somebody who worked honestly for the Government for 36 years and now he finds it very difficult to collect the pension that he will use to feed himself and his family. He is deprived of certain amenities for two years. But for the fact that I got money from other sources I would not have existed at all. So, I am urging this honourable House to convey our suggestion to the Accountant-General that payment of retiring benefits should be decentralised. First of all, the benefits

should be paid by the Ministries concerned. If that works out well, then the payment could be decentralised to the States, otherwise pensioners would continue to suffer. Now, if you go along the corridor of the Ministry of Establishments, you would find my colleagues all over the place. In fact, thousands of them are there. I beg this honourable House to give this Motion the support it requires.

With this, I beg to take my seat.

**Mr Yunusa Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, I move that the Question now be put.

*Question ; That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That in pursuance of Section 17 (3) (f) of the Constitution and considering the need to protect retired public officers and to ensure prompt payment of their retiring benefits, this House directs the Committee on Public Service Matters to :

(i) investigate the root causes of the delay in paying pension benefits ;

(ii) consider the desirability or otherwise of decentralising the roles of the Ministry in the computation of retiring benefits ; and

(iii) ascertain whether any groups of pensioners in Nigeria are suffering hardship as a result of deprivation of their retiring benefits for whatever cause or causes, and make recommendation as to the ways and means of alleviating these problems.

## ADJOURNMENT

**Mr Yunusa Kaltungo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that this House stands adjourned till tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock.

**Mr J. S. Sangha** (Bori I) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, hon. Member for Oke-Ona/Owu/Gbagura (*Mr Akinboro*)

## Reports from Committees

**Mr O. Akinboro :** Mr Speaker, Sir, thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to speak.

I want to make some suggestions which I want this honourable House to consider. The suggestion is in respect of issues we usually refer to Committees. I would like to say that, our able Leader the Member for Tangale-Waja South, (*Mr Yunusa Kaltungo*) has set the ball rolling this morning because, in moving his Motion which he committed to the Judiciary, he gave a time limit of four weeks within which the Committee is to submit its report.

I would like to think that this is a thing which this House should follow. Since we resumed in October, we had committed many matters to Committees but we never gave them a time limit to complete their job. So, Mr Speaker, if you consider it proper you might in your discretion issue a time limit on any of these Motions and tell them they are expected to give

[MR AKINBORO]

us a report in two weeks' time. You may do this after you have had consultations with the Chairmen of these Committees.

The Second thing I would like to suggest is that these Committees should let us know when they are meeting to deliberate on these issues. You see, Sir, many of us do not always have the opportunity to speak when these Motions are on the Floor. This is obvious because we are many here and it is not the fault of the Speaker. So, if we know when the Judiciary Committee or Committee on Education or Committee on anything is meeting to deliberate over a particular topic in pursuance of the Resolution of this House, then, we can go there and contribute our quota.

I do not think it is proper for hon. Members just to come in and ask Committee Members; *Are you meeting today? Can I come in?* He would then be told: *No, you cannot come in.* I think, Sir, perhaps if it is placed on the Order Paper for the day that the Committee on Science will be meeting to deliberate on this or that Resolution, or perhaps if the Chairman of a particular Committee informs the Speaker and the Speaker in turn informs us of their going to deliberate on anything on a particular day, those of us who have tangible ideas to contribute would go there quietly and do so.

#### House Delegation

The third point Sir, which I would talk about is that when we have anything to do with a Committee say, we want to send a delegation and the purpose of sending the delegation is connected with a particular Committee, that Committee should be represented.

Take, for example, those going to America or Rumania as the hon. Speaker mentioned to us this morning. It seems to me that it would be proper if, at least, a Member of the External Affairs Committee is in the delegation. It can happen, as you know, that this House might select members of a delegation or some Leaders of the Political Parties might fill themselves up in such a way that even Members of the External Affairs Committee will not be there. I think it is proper that, at least, the Chairman of the External Affairs Committee should be a Member of the delegation going overseas.

With regard to the delegation we sent to Maiduguri to watch the Shugaba affair, it should have been more appropriate if we sent Members of the Internal Affairs Committee. After all, the Committees have representatives of all Parties. It would be a bit awkward if we sent Members there to the exclusion of Members of the Internal Affairs Committee. So, I would say, Sir, that whenever we want to do anything connected with a particular Committee, let us try as much as possible to include Members of that Committee in the delegation. Thank you, very much.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Members, in pursuance of what the last Speaker has said, last Monday I went through all the Votes and Proceedings passed by this House since our resumption. I have placed in Members' pigeon holes all the

Motions that had been passed by this House and the Committees they were referred to, including the dates on which these Motions were referred to the different Committees. This is to enlighten Members of the different Committees to hasten and bring to this House Motions or Bills that had been referred to them.

In connection with the observation of the hon. Member, the External Affairs Committee is taking into consideration the fact that they are Members of this House and invitations are sent to the House as a whole. If you say that every delegation that is going outside Nigeria must incorporate a Member of External Affairs Committee, it then means everybody will be scrambling to go to External Affairs Committee. If the Party that is allotted a Member on a delegation abroad, by courtesy includes a Member of the External Affairs Committee, that is a different matter altogether.

#### Inter-State Trade

**Mr. S.U. Wanganga (Aba):** Mr Speaker Sir, I wish to speak on Inter-State trade. It has become necessary for some comments to be made regarding the need for each State in the country to realise that the Federal Government is in a position to protect and guide Inter-State trade. The reason is that recently, there were moves by some State Governments to impose special restrictions on vehicles passing through their States and whatever is the intention, it will lead to a misunderstanding among States and retaliation. Since the movement of traffic, especially heavy duty road haulage business requires a truck owner to pay his annual vehicle licence fee or road tax, his vehicle should ply all the roads of the Federation. It will be against the interest of Inter-State trade for any particular State to impose any special restriction on vehicles.

I will give an example. If a vehicle takes off from Sokoto to Lagos, it passes through about six States depending on which route it is taking. If it takes off from Port Harcourt to Lagos, again it passes through at least six State boundaries. This means that if one State imposes a special tax on heavy duty vehicles, other States would be entitled to do the same. Should that happen, there would be utter confusion and this will lead to unnecessary friction among the State Governments. So, while the State Governments have powers to regulate traffic and make traffic laws, I am seizing this opportunity to appeal to them that if some of these powers are exercised in isolation or unilaterally, they could defeat the very purpose for which they are being exercised and lead to friction in the country.

The next point is that the cost of road haulage is borne by private businessmen and Nigeria is not endowed with sufficient road haulage trucks. If we raise transportation taxes apart from the normal ones, that is vehicles are taxed according to their axle weights, it means that the cost of haulage will increase. It also means that the overhead costs on the goods and items in the shops will increase. In other words, such a policy will be inflationary especially if other States imitate what one State has done and impose their own individual special taxes.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not even know whether a State Government has the right to impose tax on vehicles plying the Federal roads because when the Federal Government build roads which link one State with the other, those roads properly belong to the Federal Government. As far as I know, the Federal Government is now responsible for Inter-State trade, what they call the Trunk Roads and often these heavy vehicles ply the trunk roads.

Let us take a particular case. The vehicles plying through Oyo State say from Benin are passing through the Federal Trunk 'A' Road. It is, therefore, a legal point whether the Oyo State Government as announced by the State Governor, His Excellency, Bola Ige, could impose special taxes on vehicles with heavy axle weights passing through Oyo State. To that extent, I think that he may well be infringing on the right and authority of the Federal Government. I am sure he did not intend to do that but if he goes ahead to impose this tax, it will lead to a confrontation with the Federal Government.

I appreciate the fact that many State Governments lack funds, especially since the beginning of the Civilian Government and with all the promises made by each Party, each State Governor is anxious to fulfil his promises and these cost money. This is, therefore, the reason why one can understand His Excellency, Bola Ige, wishing to impose this special tax. We know that he is operating a lot of free services including free education which is a very laudable policy. But when it is taken on without sufficient financial resources, it can lead to a kind of desperate measures being taken in order to bring more money into the coffers of the State Government. I would like to seize this opportunity to appeal to him that taxing vehicles passing through Oyo State is a wrong way to bring money into the coffers of the Oyo State Government.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Round up, please.

**Mr Wanganga :** I know that when the Military were in power they built the Ibadan/Lagos Express Road and they imposed tolls on it. The fact that vehicles coming from the East and the North have been passing through this Express Road and paying tolls is not a reason for more imposition of taxes to be placed by motorists passing through that particular part of the country. We know that if special efforts had been made by the Military Government, the Benin/Shagamu Expressway would have been ready. But what happened was that they went slow on that project and carried out the Ibadan Express Road, thereby diverting some of us by about 250 kilometres, away from our destination to Lagos. We have to go through Oyo State into Ibadan before coming to Lagos, not out of choice, but because the Government that was in power decided that that road should be built before the Benin/Shagamu Express Road.

Mr Speaker, with these comments I wish finally to appeal to the Oyo State Government to be careful in trying to impose taxes that can lead to friction within the Federation. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The hon. Member for Okpebho. (*Mr Iyayi*)

**Mr F. O. Iyayi (Okpebho) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on a matter or two which I consider very important.

**The Deputy Speaker :** It is one matter.

#### President's visit to Bendel State

**Mr Iyayi :** Well, I know that I gave you notice in respect of one matter, the other one is by the way.

This morning, an hon. Colleague stood up to raise a point of explanation. In the course of his explanation, he dealt with an issue which in my view is controversial. It is unfortunate that he was allowed to do this under the Standing Order 16. It is in connection with an article which appeared in the *New Nigerian* of this morning. It dealt specifically with the visit to the Bendel State of Mr President, the Head of State. I just wish to explain the issue.

I am not defending the action of one Government functionary or the other. As you know, the President is a symbol of the unity of this country. He represents the whole country in his capacity as the President. Therefore, it would be unwise for us to encourage any individual or group of individuals to show or perform certain actions which might indicate that Mr President was sectional or partisan. He himself had told us that from the day he was sworn in as the President of this country, he represented all the sections of the community and that he would treat all the sections of the community alike. I, therefore, feel in my humble view that the action of the Bendel State Governor, that is, Professor Ali, in proscribing the receptions and public functions and so on other than the official ones in respect of the visits of the President is in order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Can you tell the House the details of that and not what you read in the newspapers? I am allowing you to speak because you are from Bendel State and you said that you knew what was going on.

**Mr Iyayi :** I have not, strictly speaking, read the Governor's statement but the matter has been published in the *New Nigerian* and also in the *Observer*.

**The Deputy Speaker :** What the *New Nigerian* and other newspapers have published is really vague and not detailed. Besides, the country is aware of the reception which was given to Chief Obafemi Awolowo when he went to Bendel State.

**Mr Iyayi (Okpebho) :** That, in my humble view, does not fall in line with the President's visit. It is a matter of principle that I want to explain about.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The principle is that, for your information, the Governor himself has come down to Lagos on the matter. I thought you, being a Member of the same Party, were in the picture of what was going on and, therefore, you wanted to speak to us on it.

**Mr Iyayi :** No, I am speaking on the reports that I have read in the newspapers and in the light of the observations made this morning by a Member on the other side.—(*Interruptions*) If I may land, in the past, during the colonial era when the Governor was to visit a province or a city, from my recollection, if the Governor was a Scot, members of the Scottish

[MR IYAYI]

community in that area would not have to organise any special reception or dances for the Governor. During the First Republic, whenever the Prime Minister was to visit a State or a city, the Premier of that Region or City or State would have to organise official receptions for the Prime Minister. It was not usual, if the Prime Minister was, say, a Benin man, for Edo-speaking people to organise any separate reception and dances quite apart from the official arrangements made for the Prime Minister.

Considering the present situation in the country, I would suggest that it would be improper for any government functionary, a Governor for that matter, to allow any section of the community to arrange a separate reception for the President of this country. That is why I have decided to speak on this issue in order to explain the position. I feel that the Governor's action, as recorded in the newspaper, that is to say, that the Governor has banned separate and private receptions for the President of this country, is, in my view, in order.

Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Thank you. I thought you would have endeavoured to read the full text of the speech of the Governor when he announced his ban ; but you did not do that. You are just relying on the precis of the Governor's speech in the newspapers.

Yes, Mr Dele Fayemi.

**Mr Dele Fayemi (Badagry) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to speak on the Badagry Express Road.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Are you taking it over ?  
(Laughter)

#### Badagry Express Road

**Mr Dele Fayemi :** No, I am not taking over the Badagry Express Road. I only want to ask the President to see to the safety and the peaceful living of the people residing along this Badagry Express Road. This Express Road is the gateway to many neighbouring countries, like the Republic of Benin, and other countries. This Express Road is a smooth road, and it is the gateway either to heaven or to hell by death.

We are all aware of the fear that reigns supreme in the mind of every peace-loving citizen that has the opportunity to use this Express Road. There are many villages and towns along this Express Road, and the inhabitants of these villages and towns come from different tribes of both this country and other neighbouring countries. In fact, I always call that place an ECOWAS area. The problem with the people residing around this area is that of insecurity. We are all aware of this. In fact, insecurity is one of the factors for Members here itching to leave that area. It is also one of the factors for our requesting for police security in that area ; but there are many other people who live permanently in that area. These people cannot leave the area for another place as you and I are trying to do. What, therefore, is these people's fate? It is a common place incident to see dead bodies lying along this road day-in-day-out. Naturally, people do not want to die along the road. These people are either killed by reckless

drivers, or armed robbers, or smugglers. There is no security whatsoever for the people living along this area.

Police Posts in towns and villages along this road are very few indeed. There are only two Police Posts existing in that area at present. There is one in Ajegunle and there is another in Badagry, which is just a distance of about 40 kilometres from each other. This is too poor and it is a very bad situation. There are smugglers who use this Express Road as inlet and outlet for thier deeds. There are highway robbers who use this road also. This is why you and I find it difficult to move out immediately it is ten o'clock in the evening. Nobody wants to go out after this time. If you happen to go out in company of a friend, you do not want to come back to your residence again. But there are thousands of people living in this area who have no option other than to come back to their residence in this area at any time. They have to come back to their residence there because they have no other place to go to as you and I do have.

In respect of this Express Road, I shall strongly pray that the President and the appropriate authority should provide the people living along this road with more Police Posts. You can ask me this question: What are the Customs officials who mount road-blocks doing? What are their functions along this road? Your guess is as good as mine. To us, peace-loving people, the Customs officials collude a lot with the smugglers. That is why we see all sorts of lace materials being sold at Oyingbo Market and other Local Markets. These lace materials come in through this Badagry Express Road. If the Customs officials have been performing their duties very well on this Express Road, I know for sure, as you too do know, that all these smugglers would not have it easy to bring in smuggled goods.

For your information, Mr Speaker, these smugglers can go to any length to get in their smuggled goods. They can even go to the extent of slaughtering people like rams in order to bring in their smuggled goods. I have mentioned that armed robbers do use this Express Road. If they happen to snatch your car or my car, the only road they make use of is the Express Road. It is the best road any smuggler or any armed robber can use. It is a speed road. It is a road where your speed is not limited ; though it is limited on paper, to bad motorists, to smugglers and to armed robbers, it is unlimited.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I shall strongly appeal for eight more Police Posts for this area. At present, as I have mentioned, we have only one in Ajegunle and one in Badagry township itself.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these few remarks, I hope the President of Nigeria and the law enforcement agents will come to the aid of the poor citizens who are residing along this Badagry Express Road. These people have no other option as you and I do have, to move out of the place. They should be given the adequate protection they deserve. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That this House stands adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 12.52 a.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Tuesday, 19th February, 1980

The House met at 10.30 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Votes and Proceedings

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, we are yet to receive the Votes and Proceedings for yesterday. Therefore, I will make an announcement when we receive them later in the day.

Committee Meetings

The Committee on Commerce will meet at 10 o'clock in Committee Room 4, the Committee on Banking and Currency will meet at 1 o'clock in Committee Room 3; the Business Committee sits at 1 o'clock in the Staff Conference Room and the Committee on Federal Capital Development shall meet at 1 o'clock in Committee Room 4. The meeting of the Committee on Labour today is postponed till tomorrow at 1 o'clock. Also for tomorrow, the Committee on Health will meet at 11 o'clock; the Business Committee will meet at 1 o'clock; the House Committee will sit at 1 o'clock; the meeting of the Committee on Petroleum and Energy Conservation will be holding at 1 o'clock; the Public Petitions Committee meets at 1 o'clock; the Standing Orders Committee sits at 1 o'clock and the Special Committee on NNPC is also meeting at 1 o'clock in Committee Room 4.

As you will understand, we have had additional Standing Committees of the House and so far only three Political Parties have submitted the names of Members to fill these Committees. The Committees are the Committee on Aviation, the Committee on Industries, the Committee on National Planning and the Committee on Transport. The two Political Parties that have not yet submitted the list of their Members to be included in these Committees should please do so as soon as possible because the Chairmen of the Committees have already been appointed and they are waiting for their nominations.

Personal Explanation

**Mr Umaru Sadiq (Kumbotso) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, my observation is on yesterday's announcement of the invitation from the Rumanian Parliament. They invited our Members to come and watch the Proceedings in their Parliament. I feel that this question of visiting or representing this House in another country is very serious and is such that needs the recommendation of this honourable House. I am saying this because there are some Members already now in the United States who I do not consider to be representing this House simply because we have not recognised them to represent

us. So, I feel when they come back, they should report their experience to the Executive because it was the Executive that approved their going. Mr Speaker, any time this House is going to be represented I think it should be subject to debate and approval by this honourable House otherwise anybody who travels abroad, does so either on the approval of the Executive or on his own. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker :** If you look at the Order Paper of today we have three items there but unfortunately, we have to finish the Debate at 12.30 p.m. because there is going to be a meeting of the Remunerations Committee and all the Political Party Leaders including myself are requested to attend this Meeting. At 12.30 p.m. we have to adjourn.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Nigerian National Supply Company Limited

**Mr Ogwe Kalu Ogwe (Bende) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to Move the Motion standing in my name and in the names of four other hon. Members of this House :

That in pursuance of the social and economic objectives of the Constitution whose ultimate goal is to protect the welfare of the common man, this House views with great concern, the persistent complaints by the public against the Nigeria National Supply Company limited for the Company's inefficiency in the performance of its duties and its engagement in grave malpractices and hereby directs the Committee on Commerce to investigate the system of procurement and distribution of Commodities by the Company with a view to recommending as to whether or not the company should be wound up or prohibited from participating in certain economic activities on behalf of Members of the public.

I beg to move.

**Mr Eddy Nkem Nweke (Nkanu) :** I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Ogwe :** Mr Speaker, Hon. Members, this is a Motion which I would not say is non-controversial. It should be non-controversial in the sense that it is in respect of protecting the welfare of the common man. By the words common man, almost all of us are included because since we all have the objective of helping our various individual families in the normal process of family relationship, we are somehow connected with the so-called common man.

I would have to explain that the Movers of this Motion are not traders. Personally, I have never been a trader. I have been a Lawyer for years and my intention is to protect the welfare of the so-called common man who actually forms the bulk of the population. Since the Motion is based on the provision of the Constitution, of which all of us have vowed to protect and to see that it is not violated, I will refer hon. Members to certain sections of the Constitution. With your permission, Sir, I will read Section 16 :1 (a) of the Constitution :

*The State shall, within the context of the ideals and objectives for which provisions are made in this Constitution—*

[MR OGWE]

(a) *control the national economy in such manner as to secure the maximum welfare, freedom and happiness of every citizen on the basis of social justice and equality of status and opportunity;*

There is another section which talks about the security and welfare of the people and with your permission I will read Section 14 (2) (b) of the Constitution :

*the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government ;*

When the President made his first speech in this House, in a portion of the speech, he talked about the ultimate objective of the government which is the welfare of the common people it serves. In other words, he was talking about protecting the Constitution. I happen to know a little bit about the Nigeria National Supply Company Limited (NNSC). In fact, when I was a Senior Lawyer in the Ministry of Justice, Imo State, I happened to be the Chairman of the Essential Commodities Committee in that Ministry. The intention of the Committee was to look after the welfare of the common people in that Ministry, that is, the junior staff and the senior staff too.

Our business was to see that we procured some of these essential commodities for the welfare of the so-called common people. The experience I had there prompted me to conclude that certain anomalies in NNSC showed that that Company is nothing but a disease which has corroded the basic system of the economy of this country and which is not to our own welfare. Therefore, Members should come out to see that that Company is either scrapped or caused to readjust itself for the benefit of all of us. I have already illustrated this in my write-up which I distributed to the Members of the National Assembly.

As I said, that Company is a breeder of millionaires. If you check, from the inception of that Company up to the present moment, people who have ever worked there and left have remained millionaires. In fact, they have accounts all over the world. We know them ; I do not want to be personal I have mentioned that I have never been a trader and I have no connections. What I am saying here is that we should see that the welfare of the common man is guaranteed. The Nigerian National Supply Company was established in 1972 and it became operational in 1973. Before it began functioning, there had been other established Government Agencies and I will refer you to Government Coastal Agency which was established on 1st October, 1954. The business of the Government Coastal Agency (GCA) has been act as the clearing house of the Government. Its charges are moderate, compared with what is happening at the NNSC.

In spite of the fact that the Government Coastal Agency was established for clearing, the NNSC has in its Department a section which does clearing. In other words, the NNSC imports goods which are seemingly scarce as they say, and at the same time imposes on itself the duty to clear those goods and that is why we have some anomalies. I will illustrate later in the course of my address.

The NNSC had two objectives. The first was to take over from the Crown Agents because the Crown Agents were formerly buying certain government-stock items and receiving commissions. Then the Government established the NNSC with the aim of doing what the Crown Agents were doing, with the intention of saving the money which was being paid to foreign firms. But from the look of things, the gain which the Federal Military Government anticipated has not been forthcoming because of the various losses which I will illustrate.

The second objective of the NNSC was to purchase various items and scarce goods like rice, salt, milk and in the main stockfish. In fact, the General Manager has already admitted that they have virtually become monopolist in the area of stockfish. In other words, it appears that the purpose of establishing the NNSC was simply to buy stockfish. At page six of the hand-out which was distributed to this honourable House, you will see where the NNSC is trying to deny that it is monopolistic. With your permission it reads *the only item for which the NNSC has been made de facto so important is stockfish*. When it was placed under licence, only the NNSC was given the licence. That was after they had made some denial that they did not monopolise the purchasing of other items like rice, salt, milk and sugar. They claimed that they had the sole monopoly of stockfish. In other words, this was the purpose of establishing the Company.

We can ask ourselves whether the objectives which the NNSC was intended have been achieved because the essence was to reduce costs, gain what the Crown Agents was gaining and at the same time buy scarce goods. By so doing it would avoid galloping inflation and reduce prices to the barest minimum so that the common man which forms the bulk of the population would be happier. But the common man which you and I know very well, has been crying against the existence of the NNSC. The NNSC is dangerous to the smooth existence of the common man, and we all know this. But the NNSC top echelon had been fighting hard distributing papers upon papers in order to maintain its existence. An intelligent man may ask himself, why is it that the Management is so persistent in maintaining its stand ? At times during one's investigation one would be told certain things which if one had not got strong nerves, one might be frightened. Some people would tell you that even the people you would talk to are hands in glove with the NNSC. I do not believe in rumours and I do not believe that an intelligent lawyer believes in rumours. Hon. Members swore to see that the provisions of the Constitution are, in no way, violated. Since I know that Members of this honourable House are really honourable, I do not believe in the aspersions they were casting on this honourable House simply to deter people from seeing that the NNSC either realises its own functions or it is totally eliminated from our economic system.

I would then go to the areas which actually have worried the so-called common man and which would make it very dangerous for the NNSC to continue to exist. I would have to illustrate these areas.

The NNSC by its own management, by its own manipulations and so on and so forth, makes prices of goods rise higher than they should normally have been. I would give you an example. Recently, as I said earlier on, they have what I would call the Shipping Division and yet Nigeria has the Nigerian National Shipping Line which is government-owned. The Nigeria National Shipping Line has twenty-seven ships but the NNSC does not use any of these. What the NNSC does is to hire foreign ships and import goods. At times when these ships are coming they are half loaded and they are paid in respect of full load. At the same time, the same NNSC top echelon who manage affairs there, take it upon themselves to act as clearing houses. They go and clear these things in such a way that if they say that a half ship-load is a full ship-load, nobody queries it. That is what they do. They avoid using the GCA, the Government Coastal Agency. By the word *government*, it connotes that Government has that agency, but they refuse to make use of the GCA. The main function of the GCA is to see that it claims goods which are imported from abroad but the NNSC does not use the services of the Government Coastal Agency which charges less for clearing. Rather, the NNSC has a Division which they call the clearing Division, and what does this Division do? Recently, a young man who was on level 08 at the Nigerian Ports Authority was lured to manage the Shipping Division and clearing house. He is managing it. From level 08, they attracted him to that Shipping Line, and gave him level 09 and within a short time again he was sky-rocketed to level 14. This is a waste of our money. Because of the method adopted by the NNSC, prices of goods have been rising to the disadvantage of the masses whose interests we have vowed to protect.

Now, let us come nearer home and ask ourselves why is it that most of these goods which the NNSC import and which are supposed to be bought by consumers to feed themselves and their extended families, are found in the market everywhere? The main reason is this. The top echelon have connections everywhere. They spread everywhere, their wives, relations and friends, whom they tag the best dealers, buy these items. They buy these items cheaper at the NNSC and they put them into the market and sky-rocket their prices, knowing fully well that you cannot do anything about it. You have no choice. You buy at prices they want you to buy. In other words, the NNSC chooses who would buy its goods. Even though you are an hon. Member, if you want to buy any of their goods, you will not find it easy. It is not even easy to get a tin of milk. They allow their favoured dealers to buy these goods. You go to the market where they will command you to buy at their own price. By so doing, they are increasing the woes and hardship of the common man. That is why you see that seventy-five per cent of our population look a little haggard.

They always claim that they serve the common people. The words *common people* have been so much abused. What happens even among the workers in the Ministries is this. If you want to buy certain things for workers in the Ministries, then you would know what I am talking about. I mean, if you want

milk which you know is very cheap, NNSC would compel you to buy another item at a price higher than the open market price, for instance, sugar. They like to import things which are not in demand so that they use these things which are not in demand to sell the things in demand. By so doing, they increase the hardship of everyone of us. I do not see why such a company should continue to flourish at the expense of the masses.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Will you round up please?

**Mr Ogwe :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am entitled under Rule 32 (2), of the Standing Orders to forty-five minutes. If I reach forty-five minutes, by application, Sir, you can, as the able Speaker, extend the time. I have not taken twenty minutes yet.

There is another area of inefficiency by the NNSC. They claim that they do not sell to individuals. This is a blatant lie capable of deceiving the gullible public, but cannot deceive hon. Members.

There are certain individuals who promote fake Co-operative societies and use these Co-operative Societies to present themselves as if to say that they are representing Co-operative Societies in the real sense of the words. The NNSC knows very well that these people are cheats but because they are hands and glove with them they sell a great quantity of essential commodities to these people who go to the market and sell at higher prices. These people make windfall gains which they would share with the top echelon and maintain the *status quo* there. That is why the NNSC is a breeder of multi-millionaires.

Another irregularity is that, some time ago, a ship carrying thousands of tonnes of cement was said to be missing. Up till now, nobody has raised an eye-brow to find out what has happened, whether it has been retraced or the loss has been repaid by the officials who were responsible for the loss. That is why whoever had worked there or whoever had passed through NNSC would come out of it as a fine and elegant millionaire.

In the Port Harcourt Section of the NNSC, it was alleged that so many thousands of naira were missing. It was a hush-hush business. Up till now, no investigation has been carried out and the people concerned have very clean faces and very fat cheeks, moving among us while we are, in spite of our intellectualism, looking haggard. This is an atrocity, this is an anomaly and it must be remedied.

Another area of irregularity by the NNSC which my hon. Friend the Member for Akure (*Mr Ola Fagbamigbe*) mentioned last time is this. I had it in my record, but good a thing his mind was working with mine. What the top echelon of the NNSC do, for example, these goods are sent to Kano and other places they will tell their relations and friends, I mean, those who are hands and glove with them, that these things have been sent down. Then these people move in, buy the things up and sell them to the public at an inflated rate. On the 25th of January, 1980, rice that came in was selling at ₦24.50. Hon Members this is February. The mighty millionaires who are hands and glove with the top echelon went at once



[MR OGWE]

and bought up these things in the normal course of arrangement. They then started selling rice at ₦50 per bag. It now costs more in other States. This is what is happening in the NNSC. The NNSC has already claimed in one of its write-ups which they are very fond of doing that they lack manpower. They will always go to the newspapers to defend themselves and tell you how angelic they are when they are nothing but monsters in our economy. If you go there, they will tell you they lack manpower and people of integrity. They have been, incapable during the last eight years, to get people of integrity. As a result, they do whatever they like. *(Interruptions)*

Please hon. Members give me your ears. What they do is that when these goods land in certain States, people move in and buy them. They will tell you that they lack men of honesty.

**An hon. Member :** Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes.

**Mr J. C. Ojukwu (Idimili) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I refer to Order 26 (6). The Speaker is imputing improper motives. He has not told us where and when—*(Interruptions)*

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No ! Sit down.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Order 26 (6) reads as follows :

*No Member shall impute improper motives to any other Members.*

Mr Ogwe, can you round up please because there are five other Movers of this Motion ?

**Mr Ogwe :** Thank you very much, my able Speaker, for protecting me against interference. There is only one point I would like to mention and it may be the last.

There is another thing which they do. If they have, say, stockfish or any other essential commodity in their stock and they know that their favoured dealers still have something in their stores which they have not sold out, they would retain such items in their stores, waiting until these favoured dealers have sold out what they have. During that process, the goods might get spoiled. The next step is to sell them as spoiled goods to the same favoured dealers who go to the market to make windfall gains, and by so doing, they raise prices.

The foregoing points which I have already mentioned, relating to the NNSC, are the main anomalies but I am sure some more things will be found out. If there is anything like a judicial inquiry or investigation, you will find out what is really wrong with this Company which is lacking in expertise. They have already claimed this in their write-up. They do not know much about trade and they are competing with people who are more experienced. If for eight years in which one would have made double degree in a University they have not set their foot aright, I think, the best thing is to disband them for our own economic happiness.

With these remarks, and in order to give chance to my co-Movers, I beg to sit.

**The Deputy Speaker :** I understand that Mr Danjuma Zubairu is not here and I know that Mr Jimo Damisa is away, then Mr Asuk can speak.

**Mr S. E. Asuk (Bonny I) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to speak in favour of the Motion standing in my name and in the names of other Movers. My hon. Friend has stated the law and the section of the Constitution that deal with the fate of the common man. You all will realise that when the NNSC was established there was no such provision in the old Constitution. Now, in the new Constitution these provisions are clearly stated. In establishing the NNSC, the government in power then had a good intention for the welfare of the common man but its own good intention had given some unscrupulous individuals in this country the weapon to undo the common man for whose benefit this company was formed. It is said that one of the objectives as was clearly stated by this company in their write-up, was to fight inflation in this country. One would ask whether in fact this company has succeeded in fighting inflation. The answer is no.

As I have said, the intention is for the good of the common man of this country and to achieve this, the Company was supposed to make bulk purchases of goods and sell or distribute them in such a way that they would reach the ordinary man. This the Company has failed to do. Instead of making bulk purchases in markets where they could get very good prices, they go in for markets where they could get the prices at such a rate that could be of no benefit to the common man. For example, there was a man who came in from the United States of America who offered to sell a bag of rice of fifty kilograms at nineteen Naira to the Government. The Company refused to buy because this man could not agree with them on their own terms. Rather, they went in to buy rice at twenty-two Naira and they sold it to their own friends as the first speaker has said. The result is that the price of rice has gone up so high above the reach of the common man the Company was established to serve. Because of their own propensity to get rich quick, the Company and its staff do not go in for the best quality goods. They only go in for poor quality goods.

One could see that the milk they supply to us in this country is not of good quality at all. When you open it, the milk is either congealed or it has no taste at all. Many of us have experienced that and I have seen too that some of the cartons of milk had been stored for such a long time or perhaps got bad from the source. In Port Harcourt so many tonnes of it were emptied into the river, which was a waste to the country and to the common man. They did not serve the purpose for which they were bought.

Before the establishment of this NNSC, this country did not know of any scarcity especially of those essential goods like milk, salt, stockfish, rice and many other things. No sooner this Company was incorporated than these goods became very rare and not within the reach of the common man for which the Company was supposed to serve. Up to 1972, a bag of cement was costing 7/6d which is seventy-five kobo and 11/6d which is one naira

fifteen kobo. Since the NNSC was formed, the price of a bag of cement has rocketed to five Naira and sometimes six Naira. You will agree with me that that is not in the interest of the common man. The Company is not even worth its existence. Apart from the high prices that this Company sells these essential goods to the common man, there is real propensity on the part of the Staff of this Company to show favour and discrimination in their distribution of these goods.

Recently, we have had complaints from the Port Harcourt Traders and also from Kano. The only fifteen *per cent* allocation given to the Rivers State out of the total supply for the country, could not reach the ordinary trader, but the friends of the NNSC. You will see that it is not for the good of the country that this Company is functioning; it is only for their own interests. Then an example given of Kano State was the case of the General Manager handing all the goods supplied to Kano State to a particular individual who made thousands or millions of Naira for himself and the friends of the NNSC. You will see that this Company is not worth its salt. In their bold bid to defend themselves of their shortcomings when there was nobody chasing them, they distributed hand-outs to the hon. Members of this House. On page four of their write-up, they claimed to sell the goods at uniform prices throughout the country. This, as all of you would see, is not true.

Now, if you go in to buy cement from the Company, you have to give an inducement to have your allocation in the first place. Secondly, when that is through, you will also give an inducement to get authority to collect the supply and all these will be added to the price of the goods. If even they sold them at reasonable prices, the traders who bought them would have to add these inducements to their selling price. The ultimate thing is that the common man pays for all these things and the prices are so high that the ordinary man cannot afford to buy even cement to put up a small hut for himself. In fact the present administration puts housing as one of its priorities. If the company has been doing its work effectively and to the best interests of the country, I do not think the gigantic plans which all the State Governments of the country are making will be as elaborate as they are. In fact the common man would be able to afford a small shelter for himself. This has cost the Government quite a lot of money, money that could be used for other things is being diverted to provide shelter for the common man.

Also at page two of their write-up, they also gave quantities of certain items which they have ordered for 1980. I would urge the Committee that would investigate these allegations to see that these goods are evenly distributed throughout the country so that the ordinary man can benefit from them. They should not give them any room to manipulate prices and get inducements to the detriment of the common man. It is an irony of fate that the country that did not experience so much scarcity in the days when UAC, GBO and John Holt were handling these things, is now that we formed this Company, we have to suffer for all these things. The Committee

should look very closely into the activities of this Company and ensure that the ordinary man that we all represent benefits from it. With this, I support the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Thank you.

**Mr A. B. Yahaya (Ilorin East) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, the two speakers before me have spoken extensively on the problems and have exposed the corruption in the National Supply Company. I would like to say a few things about the National Supply Company. One of them is that the National Supply Company enjoys a special trading right which I consider negates the idea of a free trading practice. I think that if you want to grant a special privilege to a Government organisation, in commercial practice, one begins to wonder whether that is a duty or that is what the tax-payers' money should really be spent on. I would therefore suggest that when the Committee on Commerce begins to consider this issue it should look into the idea that the National Supply Company is not competing with anybody. Therefore, the special privilege being given to it is not fair and businessmen have every right to complain that they are not being fairly treated.

Now, coming to the corruption in the National Supply Company, well I know for certain that in every trading practice, there are certain commissions but no one has told us about the commissions that the National Supply Company receives. All we are told is that the National Supply Company is not expected to make profits and does not naturally make profits. But then the prices at which we buy some of these products are the same prices that we would normally buy them whether they are sold by the National Supply Company, by the GBO, by the XYZ Company, by the UAC or any other company. We have also heard about stories of missing ship-load of goods. Whether these allegations are true or not the fact is that they have been mentioned and at no time have they been denied by the National Supply Company.

There is, also of course, the story of the famous commodity that we all know—stockfish. Stockfish has become the exclusive sales right of the National Supply Company. We all know that the price of stockfish has not changed from what it was before the National Supply Company took it over. When the National Supply Company decided to take over stockfish, their argument was that stockfish was being sold to the public at a rather high price. But no one has come to tell us why we are paying the same price for stockfish today. The practice is that the National Supply Company tags a price on a bale of stockfish. Now, this is the official price. They then call on a prospective buyer and of course they are not supposed to have prospective buyers; they are supposed to distribute these things to Co-operative Societies. We all know how these buyers eventually come to be. This commodity is sold to a prospective buyer at the official price and then there is the under-table price which the buyer pays. If he pays so much more on a bale of stockfish, he naturally sells it at a higher price. So, in the end, who suffers? It is you and I and the common man who eat stockfish.

[MR YAHAYA]

Hon. Members, the two speakers before me spoke at length. I have another Motion to defend in due course and for that reason I do not intend to speak much longer. I only enjoin the hon. Members of this House to support this Motion, not to scrap the NNSC, but to look into the operations of the NNSC. If you decide to scrap it you may go ahead. Hon. Members, I hope you will support my Motion, and on that, I will rest my case.

Thank you Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Thank you.

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II) :** I rise to support this Motion. In supporting this Motion, I would like to tell this honourable House the implications of shipping and clearing procedures as regards sales that the NNSC engages in.

The Constitution provides that the NNSC alone should not control the sale and import of goods into the country. Why the NNSC was established was to reduce inflation. Now, I want to tell you why this inflation is now increasing instead of reducing. This is because the workers in the NNSC engage in transport business. When the ship arrives they give out transportation of these cargoes to their Companies. In due course, a ship-load of stockfish or that of milk is loaded into 445 lorries and on the way about 40 lorries will get missing. They will not get to the warehouse. They will add the overhead charges on these lorries, to the overhead charges on 405 lorries that reach the warehouse. There will be less goods to buy and the total cost of both the missing goods and the ones delivered will be borne by the consumers. Moreover, if they want to sell these goods, instead of selling them to individuals, they sell them through five middlemen. Mr B will go and buy at the ATC price and then sell to the other person at 10 per cent gain ; the other person will sell to another person at 10 per cent gain. Before it gets to the market the price will be very high. The so-called inflation they want to reduce is even exaggerated because we buy these goods at inflated prices.

Now, my mode of supporting this Motion is that we have to scrap the Nigerian National Supply Company and give the citizens of this nation the right to import and sell at a competitive basis. When people compete in trade, there is tendency of people trying to sell their goods at low prices in order to get new consignment. But when you restrict it to only one company, then there is scarcity, and when there is scarcity, there is inflation. In support of the argument that the National Supply Company should be scrapped, there is a provision in the Constitution under section 16 subsection 4.

If you permit me to read Sir, Mr Speaker, it says :

*The reference to the "major sectors of the economy" shall be construed as a reference to such economic activities as may from time to time be declared by a resolution of each house of the National Assembly to be managed and operated exclusively by the Government of the Federation ; and until a resolution to the contrary is made by the National Assembly economic activities being operated exclusively by the Government of the Federation on the date immediately*

*preceding the day when this section comes into force, whether directly or through the agencies of a statutory or other corporation or company, shall be deemed to be major sectors of the economy ; "Economic activities" includes activities directly concerned with the production, distribution and exchange of wealth or of goods and services ; and*

*"Participate" includes the rendering of services and supplying of goods.*

Now, the National Assembly is being asked to decide whether the National Supply Company should remain as a special supplier or as a major distributor of goods. I submit that this company is not a major distributor because individual persons can import and sell goods so that these goods are sold at reduced prices. Now the other point is that all the workers in the National Supply Company are traders. They all trade in it. When goods come in they allocate these goods to themselves. After using their own transport to carry the goods from the wharf to the warehouse, they get their own people to buy them ; they have special clients.

References have been made about a full load of cement or stockfish being sold to just one person and people are issued with LPOs from the National Supply Company to buy from that sole buyer. The result is that when people go to the company they cannot get anything to buy. In fact ₦20.00 is not even enough to buy a head of stockfish ; yet it is supposed to be sold at ₦5.00 or ₦2.50k. How can we check inflation in this type of situation ? Therefore, to fight inflation, I think the National Supply Company should be wound up immediately.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr E. Ejiga (Oturkpo) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to oppose the Motion. (Applause) Mr Speaker, Sir, this Motion contains the following words—

*With a view to recommending as to whether or not the company should be wound up.*

I think if we agree to this Motion we shall be throwing away the baby with the bath water. I have heard the defence for the poor man in this House, but to abolish a public company and transfer all its functions to capitalists in the name of defending the poor man is to limit—(Applause)

What the proposers of this Motion have told us is that the management of the company is bad. If we have to disband a company just because the management of the company is bad, then using the same criterion, we may have to disband many of the institutions in Nigeria. (Applause) Mr Speaker, Sir, many references have been made to Sections of the Constitution and all those references are very irrelevant. I think what the Government did in establishing this company was an attempt to socialise Nigeria a bit. For us now to reverse this, I think, would mean encouraging extreme capitalism.

With these few words, I beg to oppose the Motion (Applause)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, hon. Member for Idemili (Mr J. C. Ojukwu)

**Mr J. C. Ojukwu** (Idemili) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I stand to oppose the Motion. (*Applause*)

The Motion as contained on the Order Paper has some very serious words or phrases such as the company *engaging in grave malpractices*. I consider this very serious allegation and the Movers of the Motion have not taken pains to substantiate these very serious allegations except adding wilder allegations. It is not enough to stand up to theorise and engage in oratory all in the name of substantiating allegations. (*Interruptions*)

Mr Speaker, Sir, we have been told the purposes for which the Nigerian Supply Company was set up. We agree there are flaws in the establishment, but the question is : Do these flaws warrant the organisation being scrapped? Are these flaws enough to create further unemployment problems for us? Even if we scrap the organisation, who is to benefit? Is it the common man whose cause we claim to champion or the cause of capitalist who really want to monopolise the importation of stockfish? (*Applause*)

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is a fact and I stand to be challenged, that sometime in 1977 one of the wealthiest importers of stockfish went to Norway, made arrangement and entered into agreement with that country to be allowed the sole right to import stockfish into this country so that he alone could dictate the prices. He alone wanted to have stranglehold on that commodity in this country. The Federal Military Government at the time got wind of this and intervened and told Norway that if they were not prepared to sell to this country they would not allow any other person to import stockfish. (*Applause*)

Mr Speaker, Sir, this Motion is ill-motivated and it is hiding under the smokescreen.

**The Deputy Speaker** : There is a point of Order.

**Mr Tubo O. Bob-Manuel** (Degema II) : Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker** : What is your point of Order?

**Mr Bob-Manuel** : My Point of order is Order No. 26 (6). With your permission, I read :

*No Member shall impute improper motives to any other Members.*

The hon. Member on the Floor said that this Motion was ill-motivated. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker** : Yes, continue, Mr Ojukwu.

**Mr Ojukwu** : Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for your protection.

It has been said that the company does not make profit. This is not true. A lot of untrue statements have been made here. I do not indulge in selective evidence. One of the Movers of the Motion told us that a paper had been circulated; this is true. On page 5 of the paper which was circulated by the Organisation in question, there is a table of audited accounts of this Organisation from 1975-76, up-to-date. This Company has progressively been making profit. There has been no loss, and the Company has not been known to have incurred any loss for the Government of this country. Therefore, that statement is not correct.

I wish to remind hon. Members of an incident in 1977, when there was an acute shortage of table salt in this country. The price of this salt was very exorbitant, and then the NNSC was mandated to import it. The Company did import the salt and the distribution was handed over to the State Governors. I am aware of this. The State Governors distributed the supply as equitably as they could, depending on the quantity that came in. Before this time, our brothers had been hoarding this salt, thereby creating artificial scarcity. But as soon as they found that the Company had started importing the salt and, in fact, flooded the markets with it, our brothers brought out their hoarded salt. There are other such cases.

I was once in a manufacturing company as a Marketing Manager. Our Company, the Niger Steel Company at Emene, Enugu—(*Interruptions*) I knew there was a time when the price of mile steel rods, otherwise known as iron rods, was very exorbitant. It was not until the NNSC started importing this item and flooded the markets with steel rods that the price came down drastically. My Company, the Niger Steel Company, used to sell these steel rods, so I know what I am talking about. Of course, the NNSC was not then selling the steel rods at a loss. The margin of profit of the NNSC was between two and three *per cent*; whereas other traders were selling at a profit margin of between twenty and sixty *per cent*. This is very true.

So, Mr Speaker, there are other things that condemn this Motion. I shall refrain from using the language such as some hon. Members, have engaged in. We have been told that somebody who was on Grade Level 08 was sky-rocketed to Grade Level 09. How that becomes something unusual really amazes me. (*Interruptions*)

**Some hon. Members** : No ! No ! He said Grade Level 14.

**Mr Ojukwu** : He first said Grade Level 09, then, later he said Grade Level 14; but he has hidden the fact from us. We have not been told for how many years this man was on Grade Level 08 before he was promoted to Grade Level 14. In any case, it is not true that the person who was in the Nigerian Ports Authority is now in charge of the Shipping Division of the NNSC. We happen to know who is in charge of the Shipping Division of the NNSC. It would be invidious to start mentioning names here; but when incorrect statements are made here, and we happen to know that such statements are incorrect, it is our duty to enlighten Members here.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Wind up.

**Mr Ojukwu** : Finally, I wish to say that the NNSC has centres in all the nineteen States of the Federation, and it happens to have what we call an open-door policy, whereby anybody can buy any item that is available in the Stores of the Company. I say, anybody, because our Deputy Speaker, Mr Idris Ibrahim, and I have bought some items from this Company. I am not ashamed to say it. We have bought items from this Company through the Company's open-door policy and anybody can buy

[MR OJUKWU]

anything from this Company. The only difference is that the Company would not sell to you the same quantity of items as it would sell to big buyers. I have got some items from Enugu. (*Interruptions*)

**Some hon. Members :** Who else did so ?

**Mr Ojukwu :** I do not know of anybody else. Truth is bitter. I must say here that in our trying to protect those we call common men, (I know there are common men) we should not do that by protecting the real capitalists who are engineering this thing. (*Interruptions*) We know the real capitalists.

Before I take my seat, I humbly appeal to the hon. Members of this House not to accept this Motion as it stands. We can look into the matter but not as the Motion stands. I oppose the Motion. Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Speaker :** There seem to be a lot of Members wishing to speak on this Motion ; but as I said, Party Leaders would have to leave here at 12.30 p.m. for the meeting of the Remunerations Committee. We have three Motions on the Order Paper for today.

**Several hon. Members :** Let the debate continue.

**Mr S. M. C. Ihekweazu (Nkwerre/Amaigbo) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to contribute to the debate on this Motion from a fairly different angle.

First of all, I would most humbly appeal to hon. Members to try to calm down a little bit and try to understand and also appreciate what the Motion in effect seeks from this House. The Motion is merely asking that the Committee on Commerce should look into the activities of the NNSC with a view to finding out, firstly, whether there is a good cause to wind up the Company, which nobody would like to see ; and, secondly, if not, whether we can prohibit the Company from engaging in certain economic activities. On that score, hon. Members, I would like to make a very special appeal to all hon. Members.

First of all, let us refresh our minds and remember that the NNSC was created for specific purposes. Shortly after our Independence, when we had little or nothing more to do with the Crown Agents, it became absolutely necessary to have a company that would help Government to procure certain items. To that extent and in that respect, I think it is a very good thing that we have a company like the Nigerian National Supply Company.

The next assignment to the company also is to be an agent to fight price control. It was granted franchise to import so many items not strictly to make profit, but to use that medium as a means of fighting price control. We are no foreigners in this House ; we are Nigerians and I do not think we are too far or too detached from the traders or from the operations of the Nigerian National Supply Company. I think we are fully aware of how that company is getting on. There is no point coming to the House to be sentimental about it. We should be able to ask ourselves whether or not that company, to the extent that it has a duty to fight price control, has really achieved that objective. If it has not achieved the

objective, the Committee has a right to recommend that that responsibility given to that company should be taken away from it and that the company should be allowed to operate and live solely as an agent of Government to procure for Government itself what the Crown Agents used to do for the Government.

We do not want to set up a company as we now find apparent in the operations of the Nigerian National Supply Company which seeks to enrich a number of individuals. You know what the officials of that company do. You know how they prepare invoices, take delivery of goods supposed to be transmitted to one State and in-between the lorry gets missing through a very clever device. We do not have to pretend not to be aware of these things. Do you think we should stay here and continue to perpetuate that sort of policy ? I think if we do that we would be failing tremendously in our duty.

In any case the Motion does not seek an outright judgment on the Nigerian National Supply Company. Precisely, no. We still give them a chance. Let them go to Committee on Commerce and defend this or that way why they should continue to exist.

**Some hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Ihekweazu :** Hon. Members, when we start hearing No ; No ; I get worried. I get worried because the tentacles of the Nigerian National Supply Company are so wide. I know they have no friends in this House, God forbid, but we have a duty to the nation hon. Members and that duty is to give the Committee on Commerce a chance to find what they are doing.

**Some hon. Members :** No !

**Mr Ihekweazu :** Do not deny them that chance. With that, hon. Members I support the Motion and urge that the Motion be passed.

**The Deputy Speaker :** We seem to be turning round. If we have to go round, we have to adjourn this Motion for another day.

**Several hon. Members :** No !

**The Deputy Speaker :** We would either take the Motion now or—(*Interruptions*). Can I have one Member from the GNPP to contribute ? I will take another from the PRP, a third from the UPN and then we would put the Question.

The Movers of this Motion Messrs Ogwe Kalu Ogwe, S. E. Asuk and A. B. Yahaya can advise on what we should do with their Motion. We should either take it now or dispose of it later.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, is it the wish of this House that the Question be now put ?

**Several hon. Members :** Yes.

**Some hon. Members :** No. (*Interruptions*) (*The Deputy Speaker confers with Mr Olusola Afolabi*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member for Oyo East (Mr O. Afolabi) you may go ahead please.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members I respectfully move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and negatived.*

#### Recall of University Staff involved in the 1978 Students Crisis

**Dr Opeyemi Ola (Ekiti West) :** Mr Speaker, in connection with the Motion standing in my name and in the name of Mrs Babatope, I would like, under Section 30 of our Standing Orders, Sir, to ask for an adjourned debate, if the Speaker permits. The reason being that Mr Speaker, Sir, we have only about twenty minutes left and that is not sufficient for myself and Mrs Babatope. Under our Standing Orders, each Mover of a Motion has at least, forty to forty-five minutes, Sir.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Well, you have to move for the adjournment of this Motion.

**Dr Ola :** I therefore, Mr Speaker, Sir, with your permission, move that there be an adjourned debate on this Motion.

**Dr Obatayo Ogunkoya (Ijebu Remo) :** I beg to second the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, the House is to decide on the adjournment of this Motion. (Interruptions)

**Prof. Ola :** Mr Speaker, under Order 30 (3), I think it is your prerogative in that distinguished Chair to decide whether my Motion is supported or not.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Order 30 (3) says :

*If Mr Speaker or the chairman of a committee of the whole House shall be of the opinion that any such dilatory motion is an abuse of the rules of the House he may forthwith put the question thereon or he may decline to propose it.*

There is no Motion on the Floor of the House. (Interruptions) Standing Order 30 (3) will not apply until you move the Motion, and it is seconded before we can adjourn debate on it.

**Prof. Ola :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name and my hon. Colleague, Mrs Abiola Babatope :

That this House urges the President of the Federation to use his good offices to revoke the Order relieving certain Members of staff of the various institutions of higher learning of their posts as a result of the April 1978 students' riot, so as to enable these staff to return to their posts, or to take up new appointments in any institution of higher learning or in the Public Service.

I beg to move.

**Mr Yakubu B. Aliyu (Bauchi) :** I have a Constitutional point of Order. I would like to draw the attention of the House to the Fifth Schedule, Part I of the Constitution and with your permission, I would read :

1. *A public officer shall not put himself in a position where his personal interest conflicts with his duties and responsibilities.*

Mr Speaker, I can see that there is a personal interest involved concerning one of the two Movers of this Motion. (Interruptions)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, I think we have still not got a Motion on the Floor of the House until the Motion has been seconded. Thereafter, I would give a ruling on your Constitutional point of order.

**Dr Obatayo Ogunkoya :** I rise to second the Motion.

**Prince A. U. Awa-Ekpo (Eket II) :** I want to make a point of explanation on whether or not a public officer, as in the provision of the Constitution, applies to any of the Movers of the Motion. I think it does not, because a public officer under that paragraph of the Constitution must be one employed on full-time basis and Members of this House are not employed on full-time. (Interruptions)

**The Deputy Speaker :** That is a wrong interpretation. If you look at Part II of the Fifth Schedule, you will find the definition of a public officer as : *The President and Deputy President of the Senate, Speakers and Deputy Speakers of the House of Representatives and Houses of Assembly of States, and all members and staff of legislative houses.* (Applause) (Interruptions)

**Prince Awa-Ekpo :** Part I, 2 (b) of the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution says : *A public officer shall not put himself in a position where his personal interest conflicts with his duties and responsibilities.*

2. *Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing paragraph, a public officer shall not—*

*(b) engage or participate in the management or running of any private business, profession or trade but nothing in this sub-paragraph shall apply to any public officer who is not employed on full-time basis.*

My contention is that Members of this House are not on full-time basis and therefore Section I cannot apply here. (Interruptions)

**Mr A. B. Yahaya (Ilorin East) :** Mr Speaker, the point at stake here is that the co-Mover of this Motion, who is Mrs Babatope, her husband was involved in the case which we are about to discuss. On that ground, I do not think that this particular Section is applicable. So, Mr Speaker, with this, I would want you to reconsider this issue.

**The Deputy Speaker :** But has she declared her interest before moving the Motion ? This is the important thing. The interest is supposed to have been declared before moving the Motion and not after moving the Motion. She has every opportunity to explain before we come to the Motion. (Interruptions)

**Mr S. A. Shiyanbola (Ede South) :** The explanation I have is that the Code of Conduct for Public Officers that we are quoting is referring to Mrs Babatope and not Mr Babatope. (Interruptions) Therefore, if Mr Babatope is the one moving this Motion, then he would be affected. Thank you, Mr Speaker. (Interruptions)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Mrs Babatope, you should help us in this regard.

**Mr O. Kalu Ogwe (Bende) :** Mrs Babatope is not on impeachment Sir, and the question of her coming to explain looks like a trial and it will be unconstitutional to ask her any question on why she is bringing up this Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Pardon ?

**Mr Ogwe :** I am trying to help the House, I am not deciding any issue, but I think it is my legitimate right to direct the House where it is possible for me to do so in law. What I am saying, Sir, is that whether Mrs Babatope has any interest or not, she should not answer any question here because she is not on trial. She is not on impeachment and nobody should ask her any question as if to say that she is on trial. This would be unconstitutional. *(Interruptions)*

**Dr Ola (Ekiti West) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Ladies and Gentlemen, I think there is an important point of explanation which would interest the Speaker and the honourable House. As far as the interest is concerned, let me say it clearly in respect of the two of us. Personally I was not involved. That is true. Secondly, it is true that Mrs Babatope is the wife of Mr Babatope, but the thing is that neither Mr Babatope nor Mrs Babatope has any material or emotional interest in the outcome of—

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Dr Ola :** Let me land. Mr Speaker, Sir, for this simple reason, the Motion is asking the President to use his good offices so that the affected people may return to the Universities. What I want to say, Sir, is that Mr Babatope—*(Prolonged Interruptions)*

Mr Speaker, Sir, can you protect me ? I have to be protected please.

**The Deputy Speaker :** You have made your point, have you not ?

**Dr . Ola :** No, I have not made it. I have not given the explanation. *(Interruptions)*

**Mr F. A. Akinbisehin (Ifesowapo) :** Point of Order, Sir, Order 30.

**Dr Ola :** The explanation I want to give is this, Sir, and it may interest you, Mr Speaker. Mr Babatope is not returning to the University ; he is already employed by the UPN as the Director of Organisation. He therefore, has no material interest whatsoever in the outcome of this Motion. Secondly, I would like, if this would cause controversy, to ask that the name of Mrs Babatope be taken off and I will be left as the only Mover.

**Mr Funsho Akinyosoye (Ondo) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of Order is only in relation to the semantic interpretation of the point raised under Schedule 5. Mr Speaker, Sir, it is clear that one of the parties that moved this Motion is an interested party and it is open to the Movers to withdraw this Motion, otherwise we call on the Chair to give a ruling forthwith.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, I believe that at the beginning of the sitting of this House, the members affected by this Motion circulated the petition to every Member of this House. I received one in my pigeon-hole, and the petition was accordingly referred to the Public Petitions Committee. Will the Chairman of the Public Petitions Committee tell me what has been the progress on this matter because it should not have been on the Order Paper ?

**Mr G. N. Uwechue (Aniocha) :** Mr Speaker Sir, hon. Members, on the 14th of January, a petition bearing the substance of today's Motion was referred to my Committee. The Committee met on the 15th (I have the report of the Committee here), we deliberated on the petition and we found that it did not come in accordance with the provisions of Order 11. We then directed the Clerk of the Committee to write to the petitioners to inform them of what to do to bring the petition properly before us. What they should have done, of course, was merely to endorse the names of the sponsors, that is, Members of the House sponsoring the petition at the top of the petition and then my Committee would deal with it.

If the hon. Members who are moving this Motion merely put their names at the top of this petition, there would be no need to ask this House to debate a matter, the report of which they have not got. The matter would have gone back to my Committee. So, the matter is still pending before my Committee because it was referred to us and we wrote back to the petitioners asking them to come through Members. We have not heard from them up till now.

What I would suggest Sir, is that the House should suspend the provisions of Order 11 and refer this matter to the Public Petitions Committee.

**Several hon. Members :** No! No! *(Prolonged Interruptions)*

**Mr Uwechue :** In any event my conclusion is that as at now the matter is not properly before my Committee ; that is the position.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, I have to give my ruling on this matter.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**The Deputy Speaker :** Do you want to drag yourselves into this ?

**Mrs Biola Babatope (Mushin Central) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I think all the hue and cry about this Motion is because some Members believe that I have no right in this House to move a Motion. I believe, Mr Speaker, that I have a right just like any other Member of this House. I also believe that those people now clamouring for this Motion, want to have their way. I am not going to be intimidated by anybody. You can rule that you do not want the Motion ; it is all right. But the whole of Nigeria will know that you are all a pack of hypocrites. *(Interruptions)*

**The Deputy Speaker :** Mrs Babatope, will you sit down please ? *(Interruptions)*

**Mrs Babatope :** You can rule whatever way you like, but you have not been fair to me. *(Interruptions)*

**The Deputy Speaker :** Order ! Order ! I want to make a very important observation in the interest of Members. Even though the Constitution requires that we sit for a minimum of 181 days, the work of Members of the National Assembly is considered by the Code of Conduct to be on full-time basis. Well, you can see the way the ruling I have to give will go, particularly after the outburst of the co-mover of this Motion.

Hon. Members, you can see that she has made this matter personal. This is what we are trying to avoid in this matter of bringing Motions that affect our own person on the Floor of the House. I will therefore rule on Standing Order 30. I would advise the Mover of this Motion, the hon. Member for Ekiti West (*Prof. Opeyemi Ola*), to either adjourn or withdraw this Motion. For the interest of the lady who has now been provoked, it is advisable to withdraw this Motion.

**Prof. Ola :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I thank you very much Sir, or your—

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No ! (*Interruptions*)

**Prof. Ola :** In replying to your ruling Sir, I will ask for an adjourned debate and when the Motion comes again it will be in my name or some other Member's name.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, Motion No. 2 is hereby deferred.

*Motion by leave deferred.*

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the House do now adjourn till tomorrow at 10 o'clock.

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That this House do now adjourn till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 12.32 p.m.*



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Wednesday, 20th February, 1980

The House met at 10.20 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Votes and Proceedings

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, I have gone through the Votes and Proceedings for Tuesday, 19th February, 1980, and there is only one correction to be made in relation to the Motion moved by the hon. Member for Ekiti West (*Prof. Opeyemi Ola*) and the hon. Member for Mushin Central II (*Mrs Abiola Babatope*). They were advised to withdraw their Motion.

If you look at the Votes and Proceedings, we have the names of Members constituting the Committees on Aviation, Industries, National Planning and on Transport. We have received, as I said, the names of Members from three Political Parties, and it remains those from the PRP and GNPP.

Committee Membership

This morning I received the list of names of the GNPP Members in four Committees. For the Committee on Aviation, we have Mr Kolo Lawan Yusuf and Alhaji Idrissa M. Tikau; for Committee on Industries, we have Mr Mohammed Zanna Waziri Juggal and Mr David Gboando; for Committee on National Planning, we have Mr Bukar Mele and Alhaji Musa Inuwa; and for Committee on Transport, we have Mr Umar Lawan and Alhaji Hamman Dikko. We are still waiting for the PRP nominations. I expect that the Chairmen of these four Committees will go ahead and summon their first meetings.

Lagos-Ibadan Expressway

In today's Order Paper, the Committee on Public Works are going on an inspection of the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway. I expect that they should have left here by now because they are supposed to meet on the Ground Floor Foyer of the National Hall at 10.00 a.m.

Committee Meetings

The following Committees are meeting today :—

- |   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. Committee on Health                            | 11.00 a.m. in Committee Room 4 |
| 2. Committee on Labour                            | 11.00 a.m. in Committee Room 3 |
| 3. Special Committee on N.N.P.C.                  | 1.00 p.m. in Committee Room 3  |
| 4. Committee on Petroleum and Energy Conservation | 1.00 p.m. in Committee Room 4  |

- |                               |                                     |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 5. Public Petitions Committee | 1.00 p.m. in National Hall Chamber  |
| 6. Standing Orders Committee  | 1.00 p.m. in Senate Committee Room. |

Please, Members on the Committee on Health should know that the Minister of Health has been invited to attend and he is coming at 11 o'clock. So, Members should please endeavour to be at the meeting.

Just before Mr Laven takes up the Floor, I would like to call on the three-piece suited gentleman, Mr Ochiama, for his point of explanation.

Members' Welfare

**Mr T. N. Ochiama (Ikeduru) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Colleagues, my explanation this morning is centred on the suffering of the Members of this honourable House.

Yesterday, in a television interview with the Senate Leader, Dr Sola Saraki, he said that we receive a thousand naira each as advances monthly and that, in addition, those of us who have not got cars have got car loans.

Mr Speaker, Sir, to the best of my knowledge, no Member of this Assembly, to be specific, no Member of the House of Representatives has ever got a car loan. (*Applause*) And if anybody has got it, I have no knowledge of that. Members of the State Assemblies are supposed to emulate us, that is, the Members of the National Assembly, but in fact, we are now learning from them. Most of them have got their car loans. For instance, in my own State, the Members of the State Assembly have got their car loans and bought cars. Mr Speaker, I understand that—

**The Deputy Speaker :** There is a point of Order.

**Mr O. Ijaola (Lagos North-East) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members we did decide on the Floor of this House that there should be no discussion on all these things until the Remuneration Committee submits its Report. So, it would be against the decision of this House to discuss this point.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The hon. Member for Ikeduru (*Mr Ochiama*) cleared this with me before he started to speak and I gave him the go-ahead.

**Mr Ochiama :** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the protection.

What I am saying is that Members of the State Assemblies, after they had got their basic salaries and allowances, were given car loans. In fact, in my own State, Imo State, I want to be more specific, the Governor has instructed that during the time the House is in session, Members could come from their respective homes and they would earn ₦40 for everyday that the House sits as accommodation, food and laundry allowances.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I regard the place we are staying now as a hotel in as much as Members cannot bring their families there. We are not enjoying the benefits which the people in the States are getting. We do our laundry and feed ourselves, expensively too.

Mr Speaker, I also want you to understand that Members have suffered sufficiently. For instance, after each Committee meeting, most of us miss our buses and we have to hire taxis to take us to our quarters. In the mornings, we are compelled to wake up as early as 5.30 a.m. or 6.00 a.m. If you do not wake early, you would miss the buses and the alternative for somebody who has not got a car is to hire a taxi. I think it is extremely unfortunate for Members to find themselves in this situation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I crave your indulgence to tell the House Committee which is possibly responsible for this, that they should fasten their belts and make sure that we are not deprived of our legitimate rights so that we can function effectively. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. (*Applause*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Thank you. This is for the information of the Members. The Members of the Joint Committee on Remuneration finished their deliberations yesterday and it is not possible to fix our car loans without knowing our basic salary.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**The Deputy Speaker :** The House Committee is not responsible for fixing car loans. It is the Remuneration Committee that is responsible for that. I believe that matter was also included in the discussion yesterday in the Joint Remuneration Committee Meeting.

I quite appreciate that Committee Members who stay behind to attend Committee Meetings come out to find that the buses have gone. So, they would have to take taxis and the taxi drivers would charge them nothing less than ₦5 to their Badagry residence. This is most unfortunate ; but Members have gone ahead to attend Committee Meetings irrespective of the amount of money they spend on taxi fares. I believe the Remuneration Committee, the House Committee or whoever is responsible, is aware of this and effort would be made to alleviate the suffering of Members by granting car loans.

**Several hon. Members :** When ?

**The Deputy Speaker :** You are to decide.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Army Council Bill

**Mr John L. Laven (Langtang) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am the Chairman, Defence Committee. Well, I beg to lay before this House the Report on the Army Council Bill referred to my Committee on 29th January, 1980. Mr Speaker, Sir, the Report, as Members must have seen, is straightforward. We did a lot of research before we produced what you will find in the Report.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to lay the Report on the Table.

**Mr Abdullahi Umoru (Kogi) :** I beg to second.  
*Question put and agreed to.*

### Air Force Council Bill

**Mr Laven :** I beg to lay on the Table the Report of my Committee in respect of the Air Force Council Bill.

*Question put and agreed to.*

## NOTICES OF MOTIONS

### Border Disputes and Clashes

**Dr M. B. Ukpong (Abak) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name and in the names of my Colleagues—

That this House views with great concern, the rampant incidents resulting clashes between border towns/villages in Imo, Cross River and the Rivers States, such as Ikot Inyang Udoh/ Umuogheze ; Ikot Udo Ika/Akirika Obu ; Iwukem Monta, Obigbo, Konkom, Obeama, etc., and hereby directs the Committee on Internal Affairs to investigate without delay these incidents and make recommendations for a lasting solution to ensure peace and stability in the affected areas before the next farming season.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

**An hon. Member :** Point of correction.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Correction on what ? There is an Amendment already by hon. Member for Makurdi (*Mr Iortim*). Is he here ? The Motion has not been seconded yet.

**Chief D. J. Eshiet (Ukanafun 1) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Colleagues, I beg to second the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Is the hon. Member for Makurdi (*Mr Iortim*), here ?

**Mr V. U. Iortim (Makurdi) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to move the Amendment standing in my name under a Motion moved by Mr Ukpong and others.

The Amendment is as follows—

In line 2, leave out from the word *in to, etc.* in line 3, and insert the words *various parts of the country* instead thereof.

I beg to move.

**Mr Hamman Dikio (Maiha) :** I rise to second the Amendment.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The Amendment should actually be—

That this House views with great concern, the rampant incidents resulting in clashes between border towns/villages in various parts of the country—

Will you speak on your Amendment ?

**Mr Iortim :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, [on going through the Motion before the honourable House, I felt like moving the Amendment because this House is charged with the responsibility of solving most of the problems in Nigeria. There is no need our fragmenting the problems in Nigeria. If we mean to solve the problems in Nigeria, we should solve them as a whole. This Motion is calling on the Committee on Internal Affairs to investigate the border clashes.

My dear hon. Members, there are so many border clashes all over Nigeria. For example in the place where I come from, that is Makurdi, which is the Capital of the State, part of it belongs to another State. If the Committee is to look into such matters

[MR IORTIM]

it should consider that case too. There is a village in that part of the country known as Akpanaja just about six kilometres away from Makurdi and it belongs to another State, that is Plateau State. One itching issue about it is that the villagers there sometimes pay their taxes to Benue State and sometimes they pay to Plateau State and as a result there are clashes. Right now, about ten people are standing for trial in one of the courts there and I am sure there are various such clashes all over the country. There is one between Anambra State and Benue State involving the Eto people. Of recent we have seen petitions from those people. By saying that the Committee should be charged with only the areas of the country involved is not realistic. The Committee should be charged with the responsibility of solving these problems once and for all.

With these points, I hope I have been able to convince the honourable House that the Motion should be carried. Thank you.

**Mr Kemte Giadom (Bori II)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support the Amendment to this Motion. I am appealing to this honourable House not to treat this Amendment with levity, it is really very important.

We all agree that there are border clashes in this country. These clashes are not limited to only the places mentioned in the substantive Motion. Therefore, since it is the responsibility of this Legislature to handle and solve problems affecting the country in general, I think the Committee to which this Motion will be referred should make it a point of duty to look into the clashes throughout the whole country. It will not augur well that today we come here to discuss the clashes in certain areas in A or B, tomorrow we come back again to discuss clashes in another area and so forth. I think this Committee should be given sufficient time to handle all areas of clashes in this Federation and make good recommendations that will solve these border clashes.

I do not think the Amendment is unreasonable and controversial; it is very reasonable, non-controversial and we should not treat it as if we do not recognise the problems existing in the country and the clashes in our borders. So, Mr Speaker, I strongly support this Amendment and I want all the Members of this honourable House to see reason in attempting to solve our problems once and for all. This honourable House should uphold this Amendment. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker** : The hon. Member for Bori I (*Prince J. S. Sangha*), you said there are no border clashes in the Rivers State?

**Prince J. A. Sangha (Bori I)** : I think the Amendment has done justice to what I was contending.

It is true that in this country today there are sporadic clashes here and there but to mention particular areas, especially areas where these crises have been settled, is probably not a better approach to it. I do recognise the fact that there used to be crises in the past but following the present arrangement in which these areas as mentioned here were fused into the Rivers State, we have been living

very harmoniously. I do not want to create any impression in this honourable House that there is any type of border clashes. We are living in peace in the Rivers State as we used to. Thank you.

**Mr Joseph C. Okoli (Ezeagu)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to oppose the Amendment, not really in the concept of it but in the form it is presented. I think replacing the enumerated areas with various parts of the country would make it very unspecific. I think the Motion as it stands has identified certain areas as troubled areas or areas requiring attention. So, I think that rather than say various parts of the country, the substantive Motion should remain as it is but at the end, where we have, *etc.*, we should insert *and other parts of the country*. As the Amendment is not specific and might delay action on a Motion that sounds quite important and requires immediate action, I will oppose it.

I beg to oppose. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Anybody opposing the Amendment?

**Dr Ukpong** : Mr Speaker, Sir, the Amendment is very redundant and in fact it has no specific connection with what I am talking about. I said *et cetera* and when making the Motion, I said in other areas where such clashes occur.

We should not be hunting for border clashes in the interest of the Federal character. We should specify these areas where there are clashes and disputes to include in the Motion. *Et cetera* means such other areas where there are disputes and clashes.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I respectfully move that the Question on the Amendment to the proposed Motion be now put.

*Amendment put and agreed to.*

**The Deputy Speaker** : So, Dr Ukpong, you can now go on with the main Motion as amended.

**Dr Ukpong** : Mr Speaker, I rise to speak on the Motion standing in my name and those of my other Colleagues.

Before I move the Motion, I would like to make it very clear that I am talking about border clashes and border disputes. It would, therefore, be an illusion and grossly misleading for anybody to claim to know that there are no border clashes in the areas I am talking about. I want to assure you that I put in these areas because I know about them. This does not mean that border clashes in other areas which I do not know about should not be brought to this House for solution. I am talking about border clashes and I would like hon. Members to address themselves to border clashes as being specifically distinct from boundary adjustments. I want this to be very clear.

Mr Speaker, Sir, this Motion is predicated on our own solemn and firm resolve to live in peace and harmony. With your permission, I would like to

[DR UKPONG]

read these words as being the watchwords of this country as contained in the first page of the Constitution. It reads :

*HAVING firmly and solemnly resolved :*

*TO LIVE in unity and harmony as one indivisible and indissoluble Sovereign Nation under God dedicated to the promotion of inter-African solidarity, world peace, international co-operation and understanding.*

This Motion is an honest search for peace in Nigeria. I am sure that Nigeria has always been spear-heading the cause of peace in Zimbabwe, Namibia, the Western Sahara, and in any other countries in Africa. Nigeria is also devoted to peace in the world, and I am sure that it would just be like a painted sepulchre for us to look for peace in other countries when our own country is in clashes and constant disputes.

Mr Speaker, Sir, peace is a pre-requisite for political stability and economic development. Without peace, we cannot get anywhere in this country. This Motion is non-controversial. It is only somebody who does not want peace that is bound to oppose this Motion. All lovers of peace would support this Motion.

With your permission, I want to get into the philosophy of a system. As a sovereign nation, Nigeria is a social system, and the concept of a social system is very much concerned with the inter-relationship and the inter-dependence of all the sub-systems within the system. So, when there is any disfunctional aspect in any part of the system, there is a general disfunction in the total system. Nigeria is a system that has the right to feel the super-syndrome and the sub-syndrome effects of its own part.

These areas are in Nigeria. I am sure that the causes of peace are not far-fetched. What we are going to do here is not to talk about who is wrong or who is right, but what method is right to bring about peace and stability into the country. As political scientists, some of us know that in any social organisation, divergent and convergent constancies must exist but they can be merged to strike some sort of equilibrium for the purpose of stability. We cannot live in perfect peace but we must search for peace. We can talk of perfect peace only if we live in Utopia. The kind of perfect peace we are talking about here is that anybody, irrespective of his own State, should be able to live anywhere in peace.

Mr Speaker, the areas now called the Cross River State, the Rivers State, and the Imo State, were all part of the former Eastern Nigeria. In the former Eastern Nigeria the people living in these areas lived in harmony. As a matter of fact, nobody should be surprised to see even right now that because of the mutual understanding between the Annangs, the Efiks and the Ibos, in the then Eastern Region or because of their interaction and a sort of cross-accluturisation and biological assimilation—

**Mr Mohammed Shu'aibu Kaugama (Aliyo/Kaugama) :** Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, what is your point of Order ?

**Mr Kaugama :** Mr Speaker, I am calling the speaker on the Floor to Order. I refer to No. 26 (2) of the Standing Orders. The Motion is to be carried as amended.

**The Deputy Speaker :** I think the speaker on the Floor can cite examples in support of his Motion as amended. He is now making specific citations on the examples he has given.

Yes, continue, Dr Ukpong.

**Dr Ukpong :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am saying that what constitute the Rivers State and the Imo State were all part of the former Eastern Nigeria. Because of some sort of mutual co-existence, the political control, the dominant influence, there was some interaction in a way, including some sort of biological and cultural assimilation. Many of us speak the Igbo language and some of the Igbo people speak our own language. We inter-live. In fact, there was no specific line of cultural demarcation especially at Monta. We live together in quite a number of places. Even at my own home a number of people from what is now Imo State or Anambra State came to live in the heart of this area and just as you can talk about the Western Civilisation which makes us call Jamestown, Duketown, our own people picked the Igbo names. For instance, my own father who has fifty-seven children really named four of the children after the Igbo like Nchireuwaodo, Nwakama and so on. These are not names from Annang. It was because of the cultural assimilation and the mutual understanding that generated inter-farming, inter-trade and inter-marriage.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the problem started during the war and I do not want to blame it on anybody. I want to blame it on the war itself (though the War was very inevitable) and maybe on the process of rehabilitation because the reconciliation exercise was not very adequate to reconcile the minds of the people. I am sure this was because of the different roles people played during the Nigerian civil war and like any other person, I think the war generated some sort of antagonistic spirit which I am sure does not exist now. You can now see that the Ibos, the Annangs, the Efiks and the people from the Rivers have gone back to trade together, to live together but unfortunately, some un-informed people in the border areas are still fighting. They are killing themselves while we are protecting people in Namibia, they are killing themselves while we are protecting people in other parts of the country. This is not because of any political party philosophy or anything but because of the system. I blame it on the system. During the Federal Military Administration, Commissions were set up. Why they failed I do not know but Mr Speaker, Sir, none of these Commissions, that is the Nasir Commission and the Irikefe Commission, was able to bring peace to the areas where people had already been living together. And I want to tell you that unless you involve the people in the areas, you cannot physically point out where Imo and River States end and these people begin. I am not talking about boundary adjustment because people can live outside their borders in peace. I am talking about people living in peace irrespective of the areas where they are living.

[DR UKPONG]

Mr Speaker, Sir, this is to confirm the fact that the division of Nigeria into nineteen States does not mean the creation of nineteen countries. Somebody in Nigeria is free to live across the border of his own State.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to make particular mention of the names of places that really caused me to bring out this Motion and I have a number of letters here. Between January and December 1979, well over fifty people died at Ikot Nya and many other places. In fact during the general elections most of us did not go to the border areas because the people were fighting. We could not campaign there. It was very unfortunate that Senator Etiebet tried not to talk about border adjustment but talked about peaceful co-existence during the elections. It was practically impossible to maintain peace.

Mr Speaker, Sir, about a week or two ago, the *Statesman* carried the news of three Nigerians killed in border clashes between Imo and the Cross River States. When I went home I saw, and in fact right now the people are still fighting. I would very much like this House to move to the following areas to see how the people are fighting. It is just like in Vietnam even though you do not see it.

Ndoki Clan spreads across the three States. This is a matter of fact. I am not sure whether everybody knows what I am talking about but if somebody or a group of people are staying there during this farming season, they would observe that the people are still fighting. In Ikot Ekpenye you have Ikot Ibanga, Ikot Utin, Ikot Uko, Ikot Ebok, Ikot Ekpeyong, Ikot Umo Essien still fighting right now. Mr Speaker, Sir, you would see that at Ika and Iwukem after their Excellencies Dr Clement Isong, Governor of the Cross River State and Mr Sam Mbakwe Governor of Imo State had met to settle the dispute (in a way they settled it) the people started fighting again. If you read the *Chronicle* and the *Statesman* you will know that they are still fighting.

I am now appealing to you, fellow Nigerians—you are first Nigerians before you belong to any party and I am sure your own commitment should not be, as I am sure it is not, to the party but to the country, to your State and to your people—to support the Motion and ask the Committee to work very hard in order to ensure lasting peace.

Mr Speaker, this is a very difficult time in the Cross River and Imo States because this is the time the people are farming and these people have been fighting for about two to three years. Some of them have no homes, they have nothing to eat and unfortunately, the State Governments have not come to their aid. Some of them have stayed with friends for very many years. Neither the State nor the Federal Government has done anything for these people. Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not like a sort of partial, dishonest, unjust settlement of dispute. It would be appropriate for us to involve the people themselves with a third person. I am not sure whether it would be possible for the Imo State, the Cross River State and those States concerned to do this thing because what the two Governors did did not succeed.

Mr Speaker, Sir, about two weeks ago there was some sort of fighting reported from Ikot Inyang Udo in Ukanafun. Some people can blame the remote and immediate causes of this fight to living together and the Civil War. It is just like people who agree to live together in harmony and who disperse in antagonism. These people had lived together in Eastern Nigeria but during the War, all of them were not together. The trouble was that these people did not support the same cause when they were expected to support it. But finally by the help of God and you people have now come together. This is the appropriate time that an impartial committee should be set up to arbitrate in this matter.

Finally, Mr Speaker, I would like this Committee to make sure that it does not follow the footsteps of the Military Governors—the partial implementation of the Nasir/Irikefe Commissions because they do not make for peace. Somebody who wants to have peace but exploits and cheats others, will not have peace. Anybody who wants to have peace but is unjust to others, will not know peace. I am sure that if the Governors of the States involved were very honest and sincere to the cause of unity in this country, they would have impartially looked for a way to bring about peace.

I am not going to suggest here now what the people should do, but if the Committee would like to invite me, I would be prepared to tell them what my opinion is in the interest of peace. Mr Speaker, I am sure that Nigeria is a social system. Therefore, anything that goes wrong in the Cross River State affects the whole of Nigeria. So, anything that is bad for the Rivers State, Imo State or Gongola State, is equally bad for the country. If we are really searching for peace, Mr Speaker, we should look for means whereby all the integral parts of Nigeria should be protected.

I am sure that this Motion will be supported and nobody will oppose it. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Mr Wachuku, for the benefit of Members, we have three Motions on the Order Paper and once you propose the Motion that is to be referred to the Committee, I think it is only fair that you leave the details of whatever you have for the Committee to discuss.

**Mr H. M. J. Wachuku (Ukwa):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, I am going to be brief.

Mr Speaker, Hon. Members, in supporting the Motion standing in my name and the names of my two colleagues, I wish to state that the issues involved in this matter are serious and complex. They are serious in the sense that, as a result of persistent border clashes, there have been losses of lives in these areas. In fact, we have come up with a passionate appeal to this honourable House so that it could bring about peace and nothing but peace.

I am very happy that my colleague from the Cross River State, Dr Ukpong, has made this very clear. In a bid to bring about peace and harmony, I hope this House would give this Motion its fullest support. As a matter of fact, in the areas we are talking about are people who, before the last Civil War, were

[MR WACHUKU]

living in peace. They married each other, ate and did everything together. But just after the war, they started to fight here and there. As we are entering the new farming season, I am sure that, if care is not taken, you will read from the papers that three, four or five persons here and there have been killed, all for nothing.

With the permission of the Speaker, I would like to read a publication from the *Chronicle* of 14th February, 1980. It reads :

*Border Villagers petition Governors*

*Since the announcement of the communique by the two Governors, the Ndoki settlers have intensified their molestation, clearing of their bushes and preventing them from drawing water from their only stream. The 'SOS' plea ended on a passionate note : Your excellencies, please help us to live like law abiding citizens.*

Mr Speaker, this is what we are saying. I think this is a sympathetic case indeed and that is why we are calling on this honourable House to do everything humanly possible to rescue these people from this sort of treatment.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is not my intention as I have said, to waste the time of this House. I know that this Motion is going to get the blessing of this honourable House. We should refer this matter to the appropriate Committee to look into it and settle it once and for all.

Mr Speaker, I beg to sit down.

**Mr Okon Eddy (Ikot Ekpene I) :** Mr Speaker, I rise to defend the Motion which has already been supported by my two Colleagues. The Motion as it is is sympathetic and does not call for any boundary adjustment which would be a violation of Section 8 (1) of the Constitution of this country. It is only calling on this House to find ways and means of returning peace to those areas mentioned in the Motion which lack peace and stability.

As already said by my co-Movers, the people of Cross River State and those of Imo State have been living as brothers and sisters since time immemorial. We marry one another, we sell and buy in the same market ; in fact we do everything in common. Up to the time I am speaking, we still have so many friends from Imo and Anambra States working in the Service of the Cross River State. We hardly blame the people for the frequent clashes along the borders.

I would say that the former administration should be held responsible for the frequent border clashes in most of these areas. While I say so, I would like to read, with the permission of Mr Speaker, the recommendation made during the boundary adjustment identification by Irikefe Commission. This area referred to is known as Itu Mbonuzo in Cross River State.

*Irikefe Commission : Itu Mbonuzo Clan in the Cross River State "Submission to the Commission reveal that the Itu Mbonuzo Clan consisted of thirteen villages. Nine were in the Itu Division of the Cross River State while the remaining four were in the Mbonuzo*

*Community Council in Bende Division of Imo State.*

*The four villages are :—*

(1) Ntalaku (2) Mbuyat (3) Okopedi (4) Ubuabia.

*The Commission was convinced that overwhelming opinion in the villages favoured merger with CROSS RIVER State. It therefore recommends that the boundary in this area should be as shown on the 1966 Official map of the Eastern Region (Paragraph 71).*

*The Government rejects this recommendation. The four villages should be merged with Imo State and that the boundary between the Imo State and the Cross River State in this area should commence from River Inyang in the South passing northwards west of Ogwu and Ebo, the North-eastwards west of Ikporem and finally eastwards to join the River Igwu below the town of Oge-Ubi."*

The result of this is that the people from the four villages do not love to stay and be administered by Imo State up to this time. The result is constant fighting, dispossession and loss of property. We, at the same time, can hold most of these Commissions responsible for constant fighting along the border towns. The reason being that most of the areas which have been merged with areas not of their own origin find it difficult to stay in these places. They do not understand the language. We know that language is one of the major cultures which help us in communication and if you cannot communicate with people you do not understand such people ; you are not trusted ; you are feared ; you cannot work happily.

Another reason, as it is now, is the principle that a geographical feature such as a river or a mountain should divide or separate one State from the other. This is very unfair. We should not forget that even though a river may separate one State from the other, there may be certain properties which belong to each of the factions in the different areas. For example, a friend or brother may live in Imo State—and a river has been used to divide the areas concerned— but he might have some farmlands in the Cross River State. None of the two Commissions said anything about the farmlands on the opposite sides of the river banks. So, as soon as people from either the Cross River or Imo State cross to the other bank of the river to cultivate their land, there will be only one answer and the answer is *fight*.

When this Motion goes to the appropriate Committee, I would pray that its Members should take most of these comments into account in finding ways and means of having a final solution, a lasting one, to bring about peace, unity and stability to those areas of our country where border clashes are still going on now. I enjoin this House to support this Motion.

Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Ladies and Gentlemen, I beg to support.

**Mr E. Atanu (Idah South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I see the issue of clashes in the areas referred to and in other areas of the country merely as an issue of land scarcity. People are hungry for land. Invariably, these areas are areas of high density population. So, the share of land that goes to each particular individual is very little and he is always as it is the human tendency, struggling to acquire more land for himself.

[MR ATANU]

The issue that I see here is for us to suggest to the Committee various areas of solution they have to look into, not merely to recount cases of clashes that had taken place in the past.

My first suggestion is in the sociological area, the area of population control. We have to take these issues more seriously now. Population control is necessary because if you allow your population to grow unchecked, you are allowing friction and overcrowding to occur. The issue of the share of land that goes to the individual therefore, is accentuated as a result of unbridled population growth. Maybe we can now begin to appeal to our people to imbibe the issue of population control. Now, it is a counter-cultural issue as I see it because many people have not come to understand that it is necessary to control population.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, I also want us to refer to the issue of land utilisation policy. Our governments should now evolve land policies that allow for each individual an equitable share of the land that is available in the neighbourhood. They should not allow so much land to accrue to a few people while the majority of the masses are deprived of the land they need to farm or live upon. So, governments in the areas where these things occur and, in fact, in other parts of the country where these clashes do not occur, have to begin looking into the issue of a land utilisation policy. I was happy to learn that in Lagos State, a land policy is being evolved at the moment and it will help to solve a lot of sociological problems in the future. I think other governments should borrow a leaf from the Lagos State Government.

Further, the issue of shifting cultivation in agriculture must be discouraged. Rather, we should embark on an intensive agriculture, through a system of mechanisation by which you can raise the total amount of crops that you need to feed the population on a small piece of land. This has to happen. I am happy that the President in his Green Revolution policy is embarking on what will tantamount to intensive agriculture. This Legislature needs to give him support in every way possible. I am therefore calling on the governments, especially in the areas where these problems arise or occur, to give him utmost support.

Also, there is the issue of boundary demarcation quite apart from boundary adjustment. Boundaries between the States should be clearly demarcated so that people would know their limit. If they cross the boundary into other people's land, it has to be on the understanding of people on the other side of the boundary; otherwise, people are going to claim a territory and they are going to defend their territory. If you step into their territory without permission, they are going to try to defend it. That is what leads to these clashes.

Mr Speaker, Sir, lastly I come to the issue of the control of law and order. It is necessary to reinforce the agents of law and order in areas where these clashes have become rampant. Otherwise, we will only continue to suffer the loss of human souls everyday because of disputes that can be resolved easily if we have sufficient and competent law and

order system. So, I am calling for the reinforcement of law and order throughout the country and in particular areas where any inter-regional disputes occur along boundaries. I think by way of suggestion, I would ask the Committee on Internal Affairs to look at the areas of population control, areas of land use policy, areas of intensive agriculture, boundary demarcation and of law and order. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, Mr Erondu.

**Mr Clement Erondu (Obioma Ngwa):** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, there is no doubt that it is necessary for this House to look into this question of border disputes. I happen to come from that area where the thing has really taken a very serious turn. I have to thank the Movers of this Motion but the question is : hon. Members, why is it that there are border disputes after the civil war? I mean border disputes in the sense that now, it has really taken a very serious turn. In my area alone where you have Obioma Ngwa, Onicha Ngwa, Ndi-Akata, Owelu, including our neighbours there, I think it is very hard for them to live in peace for two weeks.

Wars never bring peace; they only prevent it. We cannot fold our arms when our people are dying unnecessarily and properties are being looted everyday. In fact, in some cases schools are even forced to be closed; so children do not go to schools especially in those areas where I come from. I do not think my people have any intention whatsoever to expand their boundaries. We have no intention to do that. What we are asking is that the old boundaries that brought about peace and harmony between these two communities who have done everything in common, should be looked into and maintained.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is not enough to establish a sort of Police State in these areas. I think I would say that the presence of the Police there has not and would never solve this problem. There must be a permanent solution. We are not talking of expansionism, we are not talking of getting people's land; but we are talking of peace. Well, hon. Members have mentioned boundary disputes or what they have called boundary adjustments. I am happy that one of the Movers of this Motion has really touched that issue. These things could not have been happening without the mistake done by that report.

The report on boundary adjustment is the cause of all these troubles. It is not possible for any human being to change the name of his father because his father happens to be a poor man. I think that the Nasir Report on Boundary Adjustment is the sole cause of these troubles and must be looked into carefully. I am very sorry that the Movers of this Motion made mention only of boundary adjustments but I think I am not really going too far. Since after the war and the boundary adjustments, I have a complete report to show that more than one hundred people have lost their lives in my area.

I crave the indulgence of this honourable House to look into these things. Before we cure a disease it must be diagnosed; we have to know what actually is the nature of that disease. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Can we have people who are not affected by these disputes, I mean those from other areas? Yes, anybody from GNPP can please speak.

**Mr Hamza Nganjiwa (Biu North) :** Thank you Mr Speaker, Sir. It was pleasing to note that the Movers of this Motion made a clear distinction between border disputes, border clashes and boundary adjustments.

What they want is to have a clearly spelt out method of controlling border clashes and border disputes. Mr Speaker, Sir, I think that they have gone in the right direction because boundary adjustment, as an hon. Member has said here, is a more serious case than boundary disputes and boundary clashes.

Boundary clashes and boundary disputes could be the outcome of boundary adjustments and I am happy that they have made a clear distinction between them. Mr Speaker, Sir, boundary disputes and boundary clashes occur all over the country due to extreme sentimental attachment to property. The main cause of this is either a perceived encroachment on one's property and the resulting reaction normally is emotional. That is why it ends up in clashes and the resulting effect being death as some hon. Members have already indicated. The nature of such disputes, Mr Speaker, as we have heard from the Mover of this Motion and also as we have known from our own experiences, is rather sporadic and seasonal. Mr Speaker, Sir, it is difficult to recommend a control on border disputes and border clashes.

Take for instance, in the Northern part of the country, the nomadic Fulani move from one area to the other. In that case, they have no territory of their own, but they regard everywhere they can graze their cattle as within the limit of a place where they can carry out their economic activities. In so doing, they encroach upon the settled farmers who claim certain portions of land also in the pursuit of their economic activities. When such movements take place, you normally find clashes occurring especially in the rainy season when the farmers are at the peak of utilising their parcels of land for carrying out their economic activities. In their encounter, Mr Speaker, Sir, you normally hear of clashes here and there. Here, you cannot clearly demarcate whether it is a boundary dispute or whatever it is, but it is a clash of one kind or the other which is basically an attachment and encroachment on one's territory. The farmers feel that the nomadic Fulani have encroached on their area of economic activities.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is difficult in this case to recommend a meaningful solution to such a movement though there were specific cases where recommendations were made, as hon. Members have said, by the Boundary Adjustment Commission headed by Justice Nasir and the Panel on the Creation of States headed by Justice Irikefe during the Military Regime. One could point to other areas that could have been associated with cultural affiliations in some specific areas, but the basic question before us, Mr Speaker, is the question of boundary disputes and boundary clashes and to recommend a solution to

such very incessant occurrences though this is very difficult. This is not to deter this honourable House from making useful recommendations on ways and means of bringing peace and stability to the affected areas.

Some Members have already made mention of land as perhaps one of the basic issues involved so that a more meaningful land use system where a clear demarcation is made between the nomadic life or land cultivation or fishing could go a long way to solve such encroachments. Another way perhaps is whether we may have to enforce peace and stability in that area. This calls for an increased strength of our police system so that we may have enough Policemen to actually bring law and order to the affected areas.

I have already pointed out earlier that in some extreme cases such as the clashes between the farmers and the nomadic Fulani in some parts of the North, it is not easy to recommend a clear demarcation.

My next point, Mr Speaker, Sir, which is also my last point is that we should commend a kind of control on movement from one rural area to another because it is in the course of such movements that you create a vacuum in different parts of the country.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these few remarks, I beg to support the Motion. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker :** PRP.

**Mr Mohammed Lawal Na-Rogo (Karaye) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise today to oppose this Motion, simply because of one Nigeria and nationalism. Mr Speaker, Sir, before I go on further, it would be quite difficult for me to comprehend that Mr X and Mr Y would not like to live together while Mr X would be claiming one side and Mr Y would be claiming the other side.

The question of border disputes arose in this country as a result of tribal, ethnic or clan hatred. That is the more reason why I tend to oppose this Motion. The problem is more inherent in the then Eastern Nigeria where the head of the clan, the Chief, instigated one clan to fight the other clan so that in the clash, there would be victors and the vanquished and the land got from the vanquished would simply be converted by the clan head to his own use so that he could amass wealth.

**An hon. Member :** That language is unparliamentary.

**Mr Na-Rogo :** Well, I am sorry.

**An hon. Member :** We cannot hear you.

**Mr Na-Rogo :** Thank you, my friend. I hope you have not acquired any ill-gotten land.

Mr Speaker, Sir, before I go further, I would like to make mention of the fact that where there was a fertile land, these people took the farm to produce more food for themselves and where there was a river, they took it in order to get more fish for themselves and their families. I believe that this sort of matter is neither in the interest of the



[MR NA-ROGO]

Federal Government nor is it in the interest of the State Governments. This sort of issue should only be delegated to the officials of the Local Governments who could ascertain who and who own the land. The Federal Government should not take it upon itself to say that this is the boundary demarcation for Mr X or Mr Y.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Have you read Section 8 of your Constitution?

**Mr Na-Rogo :** I have read it. What I am saying as regards this section of the Constitution is that it should go to the Local Governments. The Local Governments know what is happening better and I cannot support what I do not know. This is what I am saying.

With this short remark, Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to sit down.

**Mr Isaac Ayodeji Olaleru (Oyun) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am opposing the Motion not because I want problems in the Cross River State or any other part of Nigeria, but rather I would advise that we do not even discuss this Motion but pass it to the Committee. When you talk of boundary disputes that result in people clashing and killing one another, it looks to me in this House that people of this part of our country would never tolerate one another.

In the first place, this is reminiscent of the barbaric people.

**An hon. Member :** There is a point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Please moderate your language. That language is not suitable for this House. It is unparliamentary.

**Mr Olaleru :** Thank you, Mr Speaker, I withdraw that language but what I am saying, Sir, is that our people should please learn how to tolerate each other and settle their disputes amicably.

In the second place, the law courts in this part of the country are open to them and people should seek redress in law courts especially when they think that their rights are being trampled upon instead of just taking the law into their hands—carrying cudgels, arrows, spears and guns and chasing each other like rats. Mr Speaker, this is unbecoming of us as good citizens of this country.

Another point Mr Speaker is that, the State Governors are there in these various States and I am very strongly saying that they should not shirk their responsibilities by just sitting by and watching their own people butchering each other. They should liaise between themselves, and seek ways and means of finding a permanent solution to their border clashes or State boundaries.

Finally, Mr Speaker, I think the Federal Government has got a lot on its hands, taking care of this Nation than dabbling into local tribal disputes. The States should please take it upon themselves to make sure that there is peace and stability in their areas. If these various border clashes and inter-tribal clashes are let loose, they could lead into a state of emergency in these various States. We do not want this to happen. So, the Governors should

please come to the aid of the various States to make sure that law and order prevails.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I beg to oppose the Motion.

**Mr Fola Omidiji (Egba Alake) :** I am in sympathy with the Movers of this Motion. Sincerely, I think these are issues which the Federal Government cannot close its eyes to. Border disputes arose as a result of the sad effect of the war. Border disputes and clashes were more pronounced immediately after the civil war, and we have to look into this issue.

I think the root cause of the classes in plain language is because some people are too greedy, selfish and have inordinate ambition to encroach on other people's land. If we learn to live together as God has provided when He created human beings, there is no reason why we should not live in peace. I would also like to say that when God created man on earth, He said, *let us create man in our own image* to live together. I see no reason why people in this other part of the country should not learn to live together. In this area of border clashes a particular State Governor incited his people, maybe he was disgruntled because of the way the sharing of the political posts went. I think these are things that do not really help the unity of this country. Truly, if we are to live together we need to accommodate each others views. I believe differences are in fact bound to arise but if we accommodate other people's views and learn to tolerate one another, there would be no problem. This is the basic thing that people should learn to cultivate.

Mr Speaker, it is unfair to attack the last Administration on border disputes in this country. They did what was humanly possible. I am not defending the Military but they did what was humanly possible. They set up the Nasir Commission, headed by an independent man from the North to look into the border clashes in the country. The Government would not ask anybody to live in peace. It is the people themselves who have to learn to cultivate the idea of living as brothers and sisters and not the Government.

Finally, Mr Speaker, what we need to do on this issue is that the National Assembly should tell the Governors of these areas to sort of engage in economic activities so as to bring the people to interact together. This may solve their problems. Probably, we need to send an observer team to the areas affected to look into the border clashes. Thank you.

**Mr O. Afolabi (Oyo East) :** I think this Motion has been exhaustively discussed. I move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

**Resolved :** That this House views with great concern, the rampant incidents resulting in clashes between border towns—villages in various parts of the country and hereby directs the Committee on Internal Affairs to investigate without delay

these incidents and make recommendations for a lasting solution to ensure peace and stability in the affected areas before the next farming season.

### Export (Cash) Crops

**Mr P. O. Eleke** (Obowo) : I rise to move the Motion standing in my name on the Order Paper—

That in pursuance of Section 16 (2) (a) and (b) of the Constitution, and as it is in the best interest of the nation that proper utilization of the country's natural resources be made, this House directs the Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Animal Science to seek ways and means of expanding and improving the cultivation and processing of the primary export (Cash) Crops of this nation such as groundnuts, palm produce, and cocoa, and after determining, in consultation with the Committee on National Planning, what percentage of the proceeds of the present oil boom in Nigeria should be reserved in aid of these primary export (cash) crops in the next development plan period, to recommend accordingly. I beg to move.

**Mr S. A. Adeagbo** (Ero North) : I beg to second the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Yes hon. Member for Obowo. (*Mr Eleke*)

**Mr Eleke** : Mr Speaker, Sir, this Motion is simple, straightforward and self-explanatory. All that this Motion asks of all of us the hon. Members of this honourable House is to call on the Federal Government for a greater commitment—

**The Deputy Speaker** : There is a point of order.

**Mr Effiong Ononokpono** (Oron I) : The Order number is 26 (1). The hon. Member is reading his speech.

**Mr Eleke** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I am not reading my speech, I am refreshing my memory. The Government is being asked to restore the importance of the role of these cash crops to their former position. These crops are groundnut, cocoa and palm produce. Today, Mr Speaker, because of oil boom we have consciously or unconsciously allowed our cash crops to suffer a decline.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not think there is anybody in this honourable House who needs to be told the importance of these crops. They were the main sources of our revenue ; they were the bed-rock of the national economy and they were the live-wire of our foreign exchange. What is more, Mr Speaker, they offered employment to many Nigerians.

It is important to note, Mr Speaker, Sir, that nature does not cheat, hence, it endows the Northern States with fertile soil which promotes the production of groundnut. In the Western States we have cocoa production and in the Eastern States palm produce. Hon. Members, you will realise that during the harvest season, we used to see in the Northern States pyramids of groundnut. We saw them in Sokoto, Kano, Kaduna and so on waiting to be exported. We used to see groundnut mills in the Northern States being fully employed. But today, Mr Speaker, Sir, you can only see very few pyramids of groundnut in the Northern States. All the oil mills are now idle except for processing cotton seeds.

Before the advent of mineral oil in Nigeria, we used to see, in the Eastern States, people very busy clearing bush, harvesting, planting and cutting palm fruits. We used to see drums of oil and heaps of bags of kernel, here and there in the Eastern States. But today, Mr Speaker, these are no more. The palm trees have been overgrown by thick bush, the palm fruits are hardly harvested, and the oil mills are idle and rusty.

Mr Speaker, Sir, Nigeria which was the chief exporter of palm produce is now importing palm oil for her domestic use to the tune of about 25 per cent annually. What I have said about groundnut and palm produce, applies equally to cocoa in the Western States. All of them have suffered a serious decline because of oil boom and we know the reasons. The reasons, Mr Speaker, are about four in number. First is the discovery of oil in this country which diverted the attention of our people to urban areas where they make quick money. The second reason, Mr Speaker, is the outbreak of war which brought about unprecedented change of life to many Nigerians who now prefer to do contract work and trading instead of farming.

On the effect of these two, Mr Speaker, I want to quote what a Leader of this country said. Mr Speaker, with your permission allow me to quote an eminent Nigerian Leader on the effects of oil discovery and the outbreak of civil war on our cash crops :

*With the outbreak of the civil war and the emergence of petroleum as a major activity in our national economy, drastic changes occurred in the pattern of production, of our cash crops. Production fell steadily from about 66 per cent in 1960 to 23.4 per cent in 1974, and now stands at 18.4 per cent.*

The third cause is dislike for farm work especially on the part of our young men and women who do not like to work on the farm but prefer to do white-collar jobs.

On this, Mr Speaker, I have with me what an eminent agriculturist said, and I want to quote it—

*In order to make these conventional measures work well we need to know more about ourselves, our thoughts, feelings and dispositions toward agriculture. Do we, for instance, realise that an average Nigerian farmer does not feel proud of being a farmer ? Rather, he feels he has not been fortunate enough to be an official and looks on the office worker with envy.*

*Are we aware of the fact that the Nigerian child looks on school education as a passport to be out of farming occupation later in life ?*

*If a survey is conducted among the primary and secondary school students on the type of work they would like to do after their school education it is certain that less than five in every hundred would indicate farming.*

*Many parents send their children to school so that they, the children, should not, like their fathers, be condemned to farming.*

*They believe that farming is an undignified occupation, which should not be associated with those who are able to receive some measure of Western education.*

[Mr ELEKE]

*These evidences show that we need to change our thinking and disposition towards agriculture to be able to attract young educated people into it and so effect a painless green revolution.*

The fourth cause, Mr Speaker, is the inadequate payment of producer price. This, Mr Speaker, discourages our farmers because after a long and protracted labour, what they receive does not satisfy them. They feel that what they have is not enough even to pay for the cost of the labour involved. If you permit me, Mr Speaker,—

**The Deputy Speaker :** Again ?

**Mr Eleke :** Yes.

**The Deputy Speaker :** On what ?

**Mr Eleke :** On the effect, I will quote. After saying one thing, Mr Speaker, I show what people say about it and that supports my argument.

**The Deputy Speaker :** What is the name of the person you are quoting ? You just say an eminent Nigerian, what is the name of the eminent Nigerian ?

**Mr Eleke :** In this respect, I think I am going to do that.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Are you seeking the indulgence of the honourable House for you to read your paper ?

**Mr Eleke :** Mr Speaker, I am quoting what a Commissioner in one of our States said about the slack in work. It is the Commissioner for Agriculture and Co-operatives in Ogun State. This is what he said :

*The current prices of some cash crops especially cocoa is lower than those offered by neighbouring countries. While calling for a greater commitment on the part of the Federal Government, the only solution is for the government to offer prices which are as attractive as those being offered by the neighbouring countries.*

On palm oil, a State Governor said :

*It is sad to note that Nigeria which had had palm produce as one of its main foreign exchange earners is now importing Palm oil among other agricultural products.*

Mr Speaker, I now appeal to the committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Animal Science to seek ways and means of expanding, improving and processing of cash crops. Before I take my seat, I have to give some suggestions which will help the Government in order to succeed. The Government is to be encouraged to do the following :

1. Form public enlightenment bodies with the central body here in Lagos and Committees of it in the States. Again, the main duty of this body, Mr Speaker, is to educate people on the importance of agriculture and to disabuse their minds because many people who are educated do not believe that farming is a dignified occupation.
2. The government should make modern implements available to farmers so that clearing, planting and harvesting may be easy for them.

3. The government should provide farm inputs such as fertilizers at a reduced rate and in time.

4. Loans should be given to small farmers as well as bigger ones and co-operatives.

5. The government should extend the activities of the Agricultural Credit Bank to all the States.

6. The number of extension officers should be increased as to have one at least in each village so as to give farmers advice on the spot.

7. The government should have at least one demonstration farm in every State.

8. The producer price should be increased at home and abroad.

9. The government should subsidise farmers engaged in cocoa, groundnut and palm produce.

10. Foreign investors should be encouraged to invest in agriculture in Nigeria.

11. Practical agriculture should receive more emphasis in our school system at all levels. It is not enough to theorise on agriculture.

Mr Speaker, if the above suggestion are actually carried out, our export crops will enjoy a new life. Mr Speaker, I beg to take my seat.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The hon. Member for Jibiya (*Alhaji Garba Musa Mato*) is to speak.

**Alhaji Garba Musa (Jibiya) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to contribute to the Debate as the co-Mover of the Motion.

Mr Speaker, although the Mover of this Motion has already said all I want to say, I would like to advise the Committee to find out a way to improve farming facilities in this country. Mr Speaker, hon. Members, first, the Committee should note that in the rural areas we do not have Tractor Hire Units. So, the Committee should find out how the government will help the rural areas on this issue of Tractor Hire Units. The Committee must ensure that enough fertilizers are provided cheaply so that every farmer can get them to buy.

Again, Co-operative Banks in the rural areas will help farming. Insecticide should be made available in the rural areas and they should be provided in time. Mr Speaker, we have both the small scale farmers, farmers that have two, four or five acres of land. We would like the Government to enlighten those small scale farmers so that they can form co-operative societies.

Mr Speaker, although the government can help the people with some of the things that have been mentioned, if it does not make the price better for farmers, the government will not know where the products are. As from 1971-72, this country has been enjoying good farming weather, still the government is always losing crops. For example, we have heard that Katsina and Ma Oil Mills have been closed.

Kano Oil Mill has been closed down because there are not enough products and this is because the country has neglected the Oil Mills. The negligence I am talking about is that the country does

not provide sufficient prices for the farmers to sell their own crops. For example, we have got certain companies outside Nigeria. These companies are in Niger and Togo ; they all belong to the Western World. These companies would stay there and wait for Nigeria to fix prices after which they would double their own prices on the same products. As such, our farmers are kept waiting. After all, the companies concerned would never give them enough for their crops. It is when these companies must have fixed their own prices that our own farmers would take their crops to them. Therefore, it is better for the Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Animal Science to find out what is happening. The Committee should see to it that when these companies fix their prices, they should be the same with the Nigerian prices.

With this, Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

**Alhaji Lawan N. Daura** (Daura West) : In supporting this Motion, I must say that it is very heartening for me to see that this Motion is not, at all, controversial. This Motion directly affects my own Constituency.

Hon. Members, during the last five years, I do not think we produced one thousand tons of groundnut in the Northern States. This is because there was drought in some parts of the Northern States. Even before then, crops were badly affected by insects. I was once a victim of this kind of thing. I have got 50 acres of land on which crops were planted. In the year in question, I did not collect three bags of groundnut whereas previously, I was collecting about 4 to 5 tons of groundnut on the same land ; but because of drought I did not collect anything. This is my personal experience.

Another case is that farmers are not encouraged to produce cash crops, one way or the other. For example, the Government was formerly guaranteeing Local Buying Agents to purchase groundnut. Later this was stopped. How could you expect somebody to spend his money and produce a crop which nobody would buy from him? It would be a waste of time and money for the farmers. That is why some farmers have not been producing cash crops like groundnut.

My advice, Mr Speaker, is that the Government should help our farmers by giving them loans to establish mechanised farming, mixed farming, *et cetera*. Government should also find out areas that are suitable for all these systems of farming.

People in the Northern States do not have good land for producing crops. Our land there is heavily affected by desert encroachment. I hope you will sympathise with us, hon. Members, in this regard. Our land cannot produce good crops. The only means of producing just a little bit of good crops, not as much as we would have wanted, is that our people engage in mixed farming. The Government should give them ploughs, cows, bulls, *et cetera*. This will help the land to form manure which they would use in their farms. Otherwise, if our farmers should continue mixed farming, using tractors all the time on the soil, the land would be barren.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I think our people in that part of the country would be very happy if this House would take an urgent action on this Motion. The Committee should look into the matter and make a comprehensive recommendation in order to find interesting and acceptable solutions to this problem. Thank you, very much, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Is there anybody opposing the Motion ? This Motion is going to the Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Animal Science, and the time is now coming to one o'clock.

I would allow three more people to contribute to the debate on this Motion. Anybody may speak for or against the Motion. Yes, Dr Eburuche ?

**Dr John E. Eburuche** (Agbaja/Uvuru) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion.

There is one thought that has been running in the minds of all Nigerians. That thought is that oil is here to stay for ever. This impression is very wrong ; it can be depleted. We have heard stories of oil fields that had dried up. So, the oil boom cannot be here for ever. Therefore, the sooner we can find alternative ways of attracting revenue into the economy of this country, the better off we shall be.

Mr Speaker, Sir, as we have heard from the Movers of this Motion, this Motion has one feature which is very attractive ; that is, that it is not sectional. It is seeking to make a provision for revenue for the future when it is anticipated that our oil fields would dry up.

It is said that to be forewarned is to be forearmed. Everybody in this country knows the importance of these cash crops that have been enumerated in the Motion and we need them not only for the purposes of earning foreign cash, we need them for local consumption. We need palm oil ; we do not even need to process it before we use it. We need groundnut. We can eat it directly ; then we can also process it. We can process cocoa ; we can process groundnut ; we can process palm oil and palm kernel and today there is a Federal Ministry called the Ministry of Science and Technology. You can find a diversity of things that you can produce out of these locally-produced items. We know, even without any research, that out of the groundnut you can make what is called cake and the cake is used for producing poultry feeds. Out of groundnut you can produce oil and I will tell you today that Nigeria imports vegetable oil from overseas. You have heard that we import about 24 per cent of the palm oil consumed in this country. A few years ago, that is, before the war this was not so. We boasted we had a lot of oil and our oil earned a lot of revenue from the foreign market and today we have allowed palm produce to die. We are allowing cocoa to die ; we are allowing groundnut to die. So, where are we heading to when the oil boom stops.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I think the Motion is in line with the Federal Government priority of making agriculture the mainstay of the people. Therefore we should produce sufficient food for the people that live in Nigeria and also make agriculture capable of earning foreign revenue. Now, we have been talking

[DR EBURUCHDE]  
about our foreign reserves running short. When we import things we could manufacture locally, do not come to me crying about your foreign reserves. Here is your opportunity. If you do not support this Motion, you are actually encouraging reduction in our foreign reserves because some of these things can be produced locally and used locally. Therefore, they are import-substituted and being-import substituted, we are trying to save our foreign reserves.

Mr Speaker, with these few comments, I support the Motion entirely.

**Mr. Martin Okon Effiong (Oron III)**: Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion and in supporting it, I would like to say that the Committees on Agriculture Fisheries, Forestry and Animal Science as well as National Planning, should lay a greater emphasis on cultivation of crops for export. In doing so we shall be able to encourage farmers to embark strongly on the cultivation of improved oil palm seedlings, improved cocoa seedlings, improved rubber seedlings and as well as groundnut by mechanisation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, our country is very poor in food production and if care is not taken, we may not avoid the imminent famine. So the only thing which this Committee should do is to encourage farmers and give them enough funds to embark on production of annual crops. Under the irrigation system, rice can be cultivated three times in a year; vegetable can be cultivated four times in a year and under good management we can raise enough poultry and livestock.

So, to me and to this honourable House, this Motion is a very good one. We should not disagree at all. The man who moved this Motion has foresight and therefore I am appealing that everybody should support this Motion. Thank you.

**Mr M. I. Mustapha (Gaya South)**: Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I share the same view with the distinguished representatives who have supported this Motion. Mr Speaker, Sir, if we go back to history we can remember the role played by agriculture with regard to our economic development.

In the sixties, our foreign exchange was based solely on agriculture. In fact, agricultural export contributed about 90 per cent of our foreign exchange. So, I consider the decline in our agricultural products to be solely due to lower pricing and marketing policy of our various Agricultural Promotion Boards and not due only to oil boom. In fact, in my own Constituency, the impact of oil boom has not reached us. We solely depend on the export of groundnut. I consider the decline of our agricultural export

to be due to the effect of insects rather than poor climatic conditions. Mr Speaker, Sir, apart from isolated cases of 1973 and 1974, there were no poor climatic conditions in this country. Our climatic conditions and weather are most conducive for any form of agriculture in this country.

Mr Speaker, I am urging the Federal Government to encourage our peasant farmers by providing them with pesticides and insecticides rather than creating Co-operative Banks from which the farmers are not benefiting. These Co-operative Banks are merely for bourgeoisie and not for peasant farmers. In this regard, I should like the Federal Government to introduce National Farmers' Association whereby ordinary farmers can co-operate and farm well. The Federal Government should provide money for this Farmers' Association. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East)**: Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved*: That in pursuance of Section 16 (2) (a) and (b) of the Constitution, and as it is in the best interest of the nation that proper utilization of the country's natural resources be made, this House directs the Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Animal Science to seek ways and means of expanding and improving the cultivation and processing of the primary export (Cash) Crops of this nation such as groundnuts, palm produce, and cocoa, and after determining, in consultation with the Committee on National Planning, what percentage of the proceeds of the present oil boom in Nigeria should be reserved in aid of these primary export (cash) crops in the next development plan period, to recommend accordingly.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr Olusola Afolabi**: Mr Speaker, I move that this House stands adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

**Mr Effiong Ononokpono (Oron II)**: Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved*: That this House stands adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 12.52 p.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Thursday, 21st February, 1980

The House met at 10.35 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, I have gone through the Votes and Proceedings of Wednesday, 20th February, 1980 and found that they reflect the true position of what took place in the House and I have therefore approved them.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

We have the following meetings today. The Business Committee meeting is scheduled for 12 o'clock today instead of 10 o'clock at the Staff Conference Room. The Committee on Judiciary is meeting at 10 o'clock at Committee Room 3, and the Standing Orders Committee is meeting at 11.30 at Committee Room 3. The Joint House Committee is meeting at 10 a.m. at Committee Room 4, and the Committee on Defence meets at 1 p.m. at the National Hall Chamber. The Committee on Mines and Power meets at 1 p.m. at Room 4, and the Committee on Public Service Matters meets at 2 p.m. at Committee Room 3. The Public Works Committee will meet today at 12 o'clock.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lucky Escape for Members

I would like to inform hon. Members that we are very fortunate that some of our Members have recently escaped an accident. When I heard that the Members of the Public Works Committee were going on the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway, I made a sarcastic remark to somebody that *I pray that they come back in one piece*. It turned out that if it was not for the sheer luck of somebody who said *driver, please stop, I want to buy soft drink*, it could have been a disaster. Immediately the bus stopped, it caught fire. So they had to come back to Lagos using other means of transport. Therefore, on behalf of the hon. Members of this House, please accept our sympathy for the inconveniences and the sufferings you went through in the discharge of your duties as Members of this Assembly.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The following Members of the PRP have been nominated to serve in the following Committees :

Committee on Aviation

- (1) Mr Isiyaku Gumawa
- (2) Alhaji Sale Abba
- (3) Alhaji Aliyu Yahaya Bichi.

Committee on Industries

- (1) Mr I. M. Mustapha
- (2) Alhaji Sa'Idu Ibrahim
- (3) Mr Sulaiman Abubakar.

Committee on National Planning

- (1) Mallam Aliyu Adamu
- (2) Mallam Lawal Na-Rogo
- (3) Alhaji Ibrahim Nagodiya.

Committee on Transport

- (1) Mallam Abubakar Sadiq Harith
- (2) Alhaji Rabi'u Tabako
- (3) Mallam Garba Isiyaku Minjibir.

Message from British High Commission

We have received an SOS message from the British High Commission to the essence that because of the situation that has developed in Zimbabwe, they have decided to dispatch, with immediate effect, 500 London or English Policemen unarmed, to go and supervise the Elections in Zimbabwe to make sure that there is no rigging.

**Some Members :** No ! No ! (*Interruptions*)

Inter-Parliamentary Union

Hon. Members, we have also received a telegram from the Inter-Parliamentary Union that, even though our application is still under consideration, the meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Union is taking place in Oslo and they would very much like the Nigerian Delegation to be present at this meeting. It is taking place in April, 1980.

I am allowing three Members to speak for about three minutes on Point of Explanation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Misconduct of Gani Fawehinmi

**Mr Fola Omidiji (Akure) :** The point I would like to raise this morning is fully reported in the *Daily Times* issue of today at the back page. There was an incident yesterday at the Senate.

Chief Gani Fawehinmi turned himself into a court bailiff and he was properly dressed down. The point I would like to raise is that I regard this as an insult, not only to the National Assembly, but to the whole nation. We expect that, in the Presidential System that we are operating, the Court, and for that matter the Bar, to be partners in progress in interpreting our Constitution. We do not know where we are going if people like Gani Fawehinmi could turn himself to a court bailiff. He was asked to leave the President of the Senate's Office by a Colleague. This was not the first time Chief Gani Fawehinmi would be making noise all about. One would rather say perhaps that he is a gallery lawyer. (*Interruptions*)

One would like to praise people like G. O. K. Ajayi who is a silent but brilliant lawyer. They never make noise and you see their performance worthy of encouragement to others. I think the Nigerian Bar Association should take this up and properly dress down Gani Fawehinmi for misbehaving. This is an insult to the National Assembly.

[MR OMIJI]

(*Applause*). You can now see the reason why our able Leader of the House, Alhaji Kaltungo, a few days ago, intimated this House of his intention to pass a Bill under Section 45 of the Second Schedule. I think we would now see the need for a Bill of this nature to be passed, otherwise people like Gani Fawehinmi would come here to harass anybody.

What I would suggest right now is that the Commissioner of Police, Lagos State, under Section 6 of the Police Act should get Gani Fawehinmi arrested and be sentenced to a suspended term of two months. (*Applause*)

#### Orderliness in the House

**Mr A. N. Gapsuk** (Shendam East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish to make a little remark or explanation on the current happenings around us. First, I would like to comment on the mode of proceedings in this honourable House. We have witnessed near chaotic incidences, sometimes deliberate, sometimes emotional, and sometimes sentimental. These incidences sometimes actually obstruct the continuation of our deliberations and I consider that they are unfortunate. We should therefore re-address ourselves to real serious work. I was present in one State House of Assembly, and my dear Colleagues, without any intention to slight this highly honourable House, it looked much more orderly than our own here. Therefore, I have to urge that we must always consider respecting the feelings of our Colleagues who have some very important matters on which they would like to contribute.

The Standing Orders are available and I feel we should use them moderately. This is my appeal. Serious hecklings that will irritate and [spoil good relationship either between party to party or between individuals are condemnable.

I would again like to direct my appeal to Mr Speaker. It is about two weeks now, if my hon. Colleagues would observe, that some very enthusiastic contributors on the Floor of this House have been silenced. This could be a slight overlook by Mr Speaker, or this maybe deliberate. He is free as a Chairman and highly placed controller of this House to control this House in keeping with his conscience and the Standing Orders, but I would like to warn.

**Several hon. Members** : No! No!

**Mr Gapsuk** : I would like to warn whoever is concerned that any attempt to silence anybody on the Floor of this House deliberately we shall stand stiff and face it. Therefore, Mr Speaker, we uphold you as a father to all but we shall also stick to our Standing Orders.

#### Conflict of Power

The other aspect I would like to comment upon is the power of the Governors that is now conflicting with that of the President. It is a matter for regret to find that a Governor gives his legitimate constitutional directive within the confines of the Constitution which we have all sworn to uphold, but such directive was unconstitutionally eroded by a Police Commissioner.

**Several hon. Members** : No ! Yes ! (*Interruptions*).

**Mr Gapsuk** : I would like to say that two wrongs do not make a right. Therefore, I consider that this honourable House must see the order of stopping people from coming to see the President as having been given in bad faith. No Governor has got a right to give any order that will stop people from coming to welcome the President. I want to repeat, no Governor has a right to give an order that would stop enthusiastic welcomers from welcoming the President. Therefore, any order which is in bad faith will be equally contradictory to the Powers of the President. People must therefore behave within the confines of their powers. Thank you.

#### Joint Committee on Remuneration

**Prince A. U. Awa-Ekpo** (Eket II) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, my point of explanation is in connection with Standing Order 25 which would seek both the consent of the Speaker and this honourable House to dispense with notice in order to allow me move a Motion on Joint Committee on Remuneration.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to explain further that I believe it is the wish of this House that something should be done about this Committee. Before I put my case and seek your indulgence to put the question to the House, I would say that it is also my intention to ask you to invoke Standing Order 71 to clear the Gallery before that Motion is debated upon.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am sure that no hon. Member in this House is happy with the way the Joint Committee on Remuneration has been working through the months, and it will be dishonest of us, as hon. Members, not to say so, and more so will be unfair to this country to allow a Committee that has shown no will to work to continue in office. So, Mr Speaker, I am seeking your indulgence to put the question to the House as to whether or not the notice of my Motion should be dispensed with under Standing Order 25.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am waiting for your ruling on Standing Order 25.

**The Deputy Speaker** : You spoke on this Point of Order 25. You want to move the Motion that the Joint Committee on Remunerations should be dissolved with immediate effect. I tried as much as possible to explain to you the fact that they had only one term of reference, and that term of reference was to fix the salary of Members. They are not going to do anything outside this term of reference. So, immediately they complete their job that is the end of the Remuneration Committee.

**Several hon. Members** : No ! No !

**Prince Awa-Ekpo** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I would have accepted your explanation if this House would still be allowed to say something on the Remuneration Committee. Whether they would be disbanded at the end of this job or not, they have already failed us and we would like other Committees to learn a lesson from the way we are going to treat that Committee this morning.

**Several hon. Members** : Fire ! Fire !

**Prince Awa-Ekpo :** That Committee merits a vote of no confidence on the Floor of the House. *(Interruptions)*

The question should be put, Mr Speaker, Sir, or I would consider it unfair to me.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Put what Question to whom ? Yes, Mr Afolabi.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I stand here to inform you—

**Several hon. Members :** Your name please ?

**Mr Afolabi :** You are familiar with my name now.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Afolabi :** Hon. Members, for your information, my name is Olusola Afolabi, NPN Oyo State. Ladies and Gentlemen, I know that you have been exercising quite a lot of patience in respect of the Report of the Committee on Remuneration. I want to tell you, and I am sure that the Speaker did mention about two days ago that the Committee had finished its work. *(Interruptions)* It is only a question of administrative arrangements which is preventing the report from being submitted to you.

**Several Hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Afolabi :** Hon. Members, you should know that it is a voluminous Report and it will take some time to be typed, printed and circulated. Do you want to read the report from your heads ?

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Afolabi :** I am sure that the need is there that this thing should get to you within the next one or two days.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Afolabi :** So, let the typists, the stenographers and the staff finish the report. I am sure you will get it next week. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, the Committee meeting on Friday is as follows : The Committee on Water Resources will meet at 9.30 a.m. ; the Committee on Science and Technology will meet at 11.00 a.m. ; and the Committee on Science and Technology again will continue till 2.00 p.m.

#### Letter

I have just received a letter from the Speaker of the Bauchi State of Assembly and it is as follows.

*Ref. No. BHA/ADM/S/TRA/5/105*

*House of Assembly, Administrative Division*

*Bauchi State,*

*P.M.B. 0232.*

*Bauchi State, Nigeria*

*18th February, 1980.*

*The Speaker,  
House of Representatives,  
National Assembly,  
Lagos.*

#### ATTACHMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE BAUCHI STATE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

*I am writing to explore the possibility of the National Assembly accepting my members for attachment. This is despited to give them an opportunity to benefit from the experience some of your members have in Parliamentary Procedures. We intend to send them in groups of ten members at a time. We want each group to spend two weeks observing the Senate and the House of Representatives.*

*I hope you will consider this request and let us know by the end of this month. If it will be possible I want to have it started in the first week of March 1980.*

*A similar letter on the above subject has been sent to you by post dated 14th February, 1980, please.*

*Sgd. (M. Y. Papa),  
Speaker*

**The Deputy Speaker :** Mr Olusola Afolabi.

#### Adjournment Till Monday

**Mr Olusola Afolabi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to move that at its rising today, this House do adjourn till Monday, the 25th of February in pursuance of the agreement reached by the House on Monday the 18th of February. That means, in effect that there would be no sitting tomorrow but the Committees will continue to meet as scheduled and as programmed. Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Olusola Afolabi :** There is already an agreement reached on the 18th of February that the Committees would meet on Friday to continue their work. Perhaps, many of us were not here, when that agreement was reached.

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II) :** I rise to second the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, the Motion before you is that, at its rising today, the House do adjourn until Monday, 25th of February pursuant to the agreement reached by the House last Monday, 18th of February, that the Committee meetings be held on Friday because Friday is half a day for purposes of our proceedings.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That, at its rising today, the House do adjourn until Monday, 25th of February pursuant to the agreement reached by the House last Monday, 18th of February, so that the Committee meetings could be held on Friday because Friday is half a day.

#### Petition

**The Deputy Speaker :** Mr Effiong Ononokpono. I understand that you have a petition to present to the House. Will you, please, lay the petition on the Table ?

**Mr Effiong Ononokpono (Oron I) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I have in hand a petition to place on the Table of this honourable House. It is a petition submitted through me to this House by one Dr Fabian E. Akpan.



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE  
COMMITTEE  
ON PUBLIC PETITIONS HELD ON 4TH  
FEBRUARY, 1980**

The Committee met this afternoon at 2.50 p.m.  
present were :—

Mr G. N. Uwecheu	..	..	Chairman
Mr L. C. Okoi	..	..	Member
Mr S. O. Olowu	..	..	Member
Mr J. O. Fatola	..	..	Member
Alhaji A. N. Zurmi	..	..	Member
Mr Abdu Paki	..	..	Member
Alhaji Bashir Wudil	..	..	Member
Alhaji A. Hassan Enagi	..	..	Member
Mr Debo Akande	..	..	Member

The Chairman briefly explained why the meeting was starting later than scheduled. The minutes of the previous meeting was approved without amendment.

The Chairman informed the Committee that he had received three Petitions through the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The petitions were from the following :—

(i) Mr Lekan Olosunde, P.O. Box 7626, Secretariat B. C., Ibadan on Dupeness against Mr Yusuf Ogidi Lawal popularly known as "OBELAWO".

(ii) "HIYOS DE BISILA" MPORLIF, 43 Marian Road, Calabar, Cross River State, on an Appeal to the Nigerian Government.

(iii) Dr Fabian E. Akpan, 17 Awolowo Road, Ikoyi, Lagos on gross misuse of power and public fund by some highly placed Nigerians in the name of Dr (Mrs) A. I. Akpan, Soviet National.

He mentioned that at the last meeting held on 15th January, 1980, the Committee focussed attention on the Standing Order II, which set out the procedure for presenting petitions. He further explained that petitions should come only through members of the House in accordance with Order II

(I) of the standing Order.

The Committee then resolved that :—

(a) Petitions (i)-(iii) did not comply with the standing Order II (i) and should be returned to the senders who should be advised as to the proper procedure for presenting petitions.

(b) The Chairman of this Committee should acquaint the House and the public with the proper procedure for presenting petitions to the House.

The meeting adjourned at 3.20 p.m.

Chairman and Members of Committee on Public Petitions.

S. O. OGUNJIMI,  
Secretary

Mr Speaker, Sir, this is the Report of the Committee on the meeting held on the 4th day of February. As you can see this morning, one Member, in the person of Mr Effiong Ononokpono, did present one of the petitions rejected, because the petition by Mr Akpan against his wife and some other people came

to us and we rejected it. It has now come through the proper procedure to Mr Ononokpono and it has been referred to us.

Hon. Members, in pursuance of the resolution passed at this meeting, I prepared a resume of the procedure for presenting petitions ; that is to say, a summary of the procedure for presenting petitions to this House. This is not a resume prepared for Members of this House because it is actually a summary of the rules in our Standing Orders and the few of the things I dug out archives. It is for you to approve so as to enable me pass this resume on to the members of the public who, in fact, are the petitioners.

Attention of the House has already earlier this morning been drawn to Order II which sets out the procedure for presenting petitions, and under Order II only a Member of this House can present a petition to the House. The reasons are obvious.

Firstly, for the Member himself, to ensure, that the petition conforms with the rules and regulations to which we alone, have access. Secondly, we enjoy some privileges as Members of the House which members of the public do not enjoy and if they are not guided they may expose themselves unnecessarily to possible libel actions. Again, when my Committee reports on any petition, I know it is possible for us to invite the petitioner from outside to come here and be examined. But it is not exactly the same in the case of a Member who can defend the petition because he is taking part in the deliberations in the House.

So, hon. Members, I need not reiterate what is in the Standing Orders. It is enough to refer Members to Order II which sets out all details about presenting petitions.

I am urging this House to please accept the Report of this Committee and also approve the resume as a proper statement to be issued to members of the public to enable them know how to present petitions. I would like to say this that even though Order II says that only a Member will present a petition, the members of the public are not necessarily bound to come through the Member representing their Constituency. You can understand the situation in which they are in different political parties and there could be problems there.

So, I am urging this honourable House to please accept the Report of this Committee and approve the resume which we have prepared to be issued to the public. So, we can go on to deliberate. Thank you very much.

**Alhaji Yinusa Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) :  
Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I do not think we have to discuss this Report and if the hon. Members would not mind, I would like to move that the Question be now put.

*Question, that the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved : That the Report of the public petitions Committee be adopted.*

### Lokoja Hydro-Electric Dam

**The Deputy Speaker :** Motion number 2, Lokoja Hydro-Electric Dam. The Movers of the Motion, I am told, have decided to suspend the Debate on this Motion indefinitely. So, Motion number 2 is suspended until further notice.

*Motion by leave deferred.*

### Tour to Abuja

In pursuance of House Resolution number 61, the Members of the Committee on Federal Capital will be leaving for Abuja on Monday 25th February, 1980. They are required to assemble at the Badagry Flats at 9 a.m. to take off for the Airport. You can now move your Motion, Mr Ihekweazu.

### The Nigeria Police Force

**Mr S. M. C. Ihekweazu (Nkwerre/Amaigbo) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name and in the names of the following hon. Colleagues : the hon. Member for Epe (*Mr G. B. Sadiku*) the hon. Member for Dawakin-Kudu (*Alhaji Sarki Adamu*) and the hon. Member for Garki (*Mr Uba Iliya Garki*). The Motion reads as follows :

That in view of the need for an efficient Police Force and considering the withdrawal of military policemen to the barracks, this House directs the Committee on Internal Affairs to seek ways and means of expanding and improving the Nigeria Police Force in order to ensure the efficient performance of its duties and the maintenance of law and order throughout the country.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Ihekweazu :** Mr Speaker, Sir, in moving this Motion, I would, first like to invite the attention of the hon. Members to the poor conditions that now attend the Nigeria Police Force throughout the country. In doing so, I would like again to take your minds back to the history of the Nigeria Police Force. You will recall that in February, 1861 (I am so pleased that I am moving this Motion today in the month of February) the Nigeria Police Force had its inception in Lagos. In fact, then, it started as a Consular Guard of thirty persons which later improved and became known as the Hausa Police. In 1879, the Hausa Police Constabulary was established with a force of 1,200 men under an Inspector-General of Police.

Further, in 1896, we had, established in Lagos, the Lagos Police Force and that again was also fashioned in the manner of the Hausa Police. It was armed and performed para-military police duties in addition to civil police duties. Further down the south, as part of the expansion of the police service, in the Mid-West, Rivers, and part of Cross River we also had what was then called the Niger Coast Constabulary with headquarters in Calabar and this was around 1897.

Also in the North we had the Royal Niger Company which, you all remember. It had its Charter in 1886 and by 1888, the Company was able to establish the Royal Niger Constabulary, with the headquarters in Lokoja. With the proclamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates of Nigeria, we still had the two police formations in the North and in the South operating independently and separately as the Southern Police Force and the Northern Police Force.

With the amalgamation of 1914, they still continued to operate independently. It was not until the 1st of April, 1930 that we had a unified Police Command in the whole country and that has existed up till today.

Hon. Members, I am taking a little indulgence and privilege to recapitulate on this background because I think it is unfortunate that most of the problems, most of the equipments which were used to initiate the police as far back as over one hundred years ago still appear to be within the police service as at today.

The next issue is the question of the inadequacies of the present police formations. Let us consider the establishment of the Police Force. As at June 1979, the Nigeria Police was supposed to be about 80,000, but in actual fact, it was unable to attain that number. It had between 70,000 to 75,000 personnel, including the super-numerary police constables, special constables and the women police. All that, put together, for a country of our population of nearly 80 million, hon. Members, is grossly inadequate. In fact, we then have a Police Constable attending to a population of about one thousand, or a little above. This is indeed grossly inadequate for a growing society such as ours. When you consider it and weigh it against the background of what obtains in other civilised countries, like the United States of America or Great Britain, you will find that we are far behind. In fact, the ideal ratio should be one policeman to about 100 people ; which, in effect, means that our Police Force should be expanded to the strength of about 800,000 to meet up a population of eighty million. But then, it is not easy to get that done. It requires a lot of money.

Also, the conditions of service within the Police Force are so deplorable that even if we provide the money, we may not be able to attract the personnel or to get the manpower that will accept to serve under the Police Force. This situation is really unfortunate and we should not allow it to remain so.

The next unfortunate thing that happened to the Police Force is the impact of Military Rule. A period of ten years or more of military rule in Nigeria, to my mind, has not helped the Nigeria Police Force at all. This is because, at that time, that is, under the Military Regime, rather than the then Government doing everything to enhance the Police image, and enhance the police public relationship, the Government was more interested in striving to establish the Police Force as an institution. People regard the Nigeria Police Force, in fact the police anywhere in the world, as the Government that the people see. It is not enough for us to stay here, pass laws and make regulations ; these regulations have to be enforced. The men who go out to enforce these

[MR IHEKWEAZU]

regulations are generally regarded as the government that the people see. That is how that language has grown up for the Nigeria Police. So, the Army did quite a lot of havoc and forced the Police to a point that they lost the little image they had. However, that is now by the way. Under a Civilian Regime as ours, we have a duty to build up and restore this lost glory.

I shall now talk in terms of communications itself. The communication facilities for the Police services are terrible. The Police lack vehicles; they lack transport; in short, they lack adequate communication system amongst themselves. If you go to the streets, you will sometimes find young Police Constables begging for a lift to go to a scene of crime. You will see them trying to negotiate with a complainant just to get to a place where they are required to go to as a matter of duty. Such things are not good and in fact, they encourage corruption which, again, is a terrible thing if it should be allowed within the Police system.

In fact, you will find that the Police terribly lack such a thing like the common walkie-talkie which is normally used as a means of communication. Right now, we only have about four Police Training Colleges, and are Senior Staff College—there is one at Ikeja, one at Maiduguri, one at Enugu, and the last one is at Kaduna. Then, there is a Senior Staff College in Jos. If you get into any of these colleges, you will find that the facilities for training are very inadequate. Right now criminals are now becoming much more sophisticated in the way they operate. Therefore, we need the Police to be equally equipped to deal with the situation. There is no point thinking of a Police College as just a block of flats, with a mess for drinks without the attendant facilities. I think that would not do; we need to go a little bit more to improve that situation.

The next unfortunate thing is the question of the salary structure of the Nigeria Police. I do not know whether anybody has taken pains to really have a second look at it. You will find that, now, the Police try to attract graduates into the Police Force and there are many graduates serving in the Force. A graduate who joins the Civil Service has so many chances of becoming a Permanent Secretary on Grade Level 16 or 17; but if he joins the Nigeria Police Service, he has only one chance of becoming the Inspector-General of Police or Deputy Inspector-General of Police on Grade Level 17. As at now there are 19 States in the Federation, with about 15 to 17 Permanent Secretaries serving in each State. This means, in effect, that there are about 323 Permanent Secretaries in the Federation. So, it means that there are about 323 chances of a graduate in the Civil Service becoming a Permanent Secretary on Grade Level 17; whereas his counter-part in the Police Service has only one chance of becoming an Inspector-General of Police or a Deputy Inspector-General of Police on Grade Level 17. I think, hon. Members, that is not satisfactory; we must try and find a way of improving the situation.

It is even more unfortunate with the lower cadre where a recruit earns as little as ₦960, the Constable earns about ₦1,206, maybe an ASP earns about ₦3,564, a DSP earns about ₦4,668, all within Grade Level 08 and Grade Level 17. All these are not sufficiently attractive when viewed against the background of the duties we expect the Police to perform. After all, the duties we look upon the Police to discharged, as contained in the Police Act, Section 4, are very well spelt out and are very important indeed. We want them to maintain law and order, to prevent crime, to protect lives and properties, to control traffic, and to perform such military duties within and outside Nigeria as may be assigned to them from time to time. These are very special and unique duties. We should, therefore, make sufficient provisions for them. I can assure you that, right now, almost ten to twenty Policemen are resigning from the Police Force everyday and going into other Services, just because the conditions of service are not good at all.

I may also like to take this opportunity to draw the attention of the Inspector-General of Police to what I consider an unfair deal to the Women Police within the Police Service. We have about 1,500 Women Police, or a little more, in the Police Service and I think it is a good thing for the Police Formation. But, I have heard about a circular recently initiated by the Police hierarchy which makes it impossible for a Woman Police to be promoted beyond the rank of Chief Superintendent of Police. That circular might be good under the military regime but as at now, I consider it as being clearly in contradiction of Section 17 (e) of the Nigerian Constitution, which prohibits any discrimination for advancement against anybody arising at of religion, or sex, or place of origin. I do hope this message will kindly, get to the Inspector-General of Police, and that he will take an early step to remedy this denial of rights to a section of his personnel within the Police Service.

Hon. Members, I think we can keep talking about the Police Force for so long, but the important thing really is that we should think of drawing a distinction. Since we are now contemplating having a Police Service Commission, we should drive it home to the Commission and ensure that they take care of the Police Department. We should treat the Police Department as a separate entity by itself, with its own conditions of service, and with its own special facilities. If we are able to provide and think ahead in those lines, then we will be, to a greater extent, taking sufficient measures to provide for the means of guaranteeing facilities for the maintenance of law and order within the Police Formation.

We also know that there are between 1,500 and 1,600 Police formations throughout the country. That again is a very limited number for our sort of community. We do hope there will be further expansion and that more facilities will be provided for them as a whole.

Hon. Members, I urge you to please kindly approve this Motion because you also have a responsibility, under the Constitution, and if I may draw your

attention to Section 194 subsection 2 (a) which places a responsibility on the House, it says :

*the Nigeria Police Force shall be organised and administered in accordance with such provisions as may be prescribed by an Act of the National Assembly.*

This is a first step towards getting out the problems of the Police Force. The Committee will get out the problems and possibly come to this House with an Act for the National Assembly to consider with a view to creating for the Police Force better image, better facilities and of course, guaranteeing for ourselves the means of looking after our own lives and property.

Hon. Members, I beg to move. (*Applause*)

**Mr George Babatunde Sadiku** (Epe) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to speak on a Motion standing in my name relating to the composition and condition of service of the Police. I went through my dictionary, the Oxford English Dictionary, and the dictionary defines a slave as a servant completely divested of freedom and personal rights. When I made a study of the set up of the Police Force in this country, I discovered a complete and total similarity and a simulation of the Nigeria Police Force as that of a slave institution. I crave your indulgence and parliamentary immunity which protects me on this Floor of the House to declare that Nigeria is breeding a gang of slaves and that the Nigeria Police Force is an organised slavery.

There are nine characteristics of a slave, and if any of them does not conform to the state of the Police Force and to any individual who is a policeman in this country, I stand to be challenged, and I will boldly take up the challenge.

The first condition of a slave is confinement to his master's house or his master's garage. All policemen are bound to live in that concentration camp called the Barracks.

The second is that his movement is monitored and his movement is not a personal innovation of himself but has to be reported, and that report has to be approved. No policeman quits the Barracks without obtaining this permission.

The third is that a slave has no fixed hours of duty. A policeman is on twenty-four hour duty. At two o'clock in the early hours of the morning, even while with his wife on bed, if an alarm raises, hell begets him if he fails to obey that alarm and be in active service. (*Laughter*)

The fourth characteristic of a slave is that of an enforced contribution to his master's deification and glory. The Police have got one of their paramount duties as that of boosting the prestige of those we call the people in power. They serve as an entourage to him, and by that entourage, the man being led becomes like a god and occasionally. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Z. Momodu** (Etsako) : Point of order !

**The Deputy Speaker** : Yes.

**Mr Momodu** : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, permit me to strongly object to the word *slavery*.

I am pointing him to Order 26 (2). Policemen are never slaves in anywhere in the world. So, I am strongly opposing the implication of the word *slavery*. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Yes. Hon. Member for Etsako (*Mr Momodu*), I believe you are no more in the Police Force, but I quite agree with your observation.

**Mr G. B. Sadiku** : Truth is always bitter.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Hon. Member for Epe (*Mr Sadiku*), I believe the word *slavery* has been extinct from the service of this world since a long time. Everybody who is in the service of the country can claim to be a slave of the people he is serving ; but you had better note and use the moderate expression of *servants*. They are servants of the people.

**Mr Sadiku** : Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for saying that all of us are servants of the government. But some are more servant and servile than others, and whatever be the case, I am drawing an analogy. An analogy is not an identity.

The fifth point is that a slave or somebody who is extremely servile has no option in laying down his life for his master. He has no option. In the same way the Nigeria Police Force or in fact, all over the world, have got no option in laying down their lives for the country.

But the major thing is the payment. The difference between somebody who voluntarily lays down his life for his country and those who do it servilely is that the master pays handsomely for the risk involved in the job. But for our policemen as they are composed nowadays, the money they get is not even able to feed them.

Mr Speaker, Sir, another point is Trade Unionism. A section of the Constitution grants liberty of movement and liberty of association. There is no body or association in the Police Force, where Policemen can meet to discuss their welfare. Such association is illegal in the Police Force. On this point, therefore, I am bringing forward a thesis which you are free to either agree with or disagree with, but it is my personal conviction.

**Dr E. Y. Atanu** (Idah South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I am raising a Point of Order and the relevant order is Order 26 (2). I think that the speaker is completely irrelevant. Sir, we are talking about expanding and improving the conditions of policemen, and not creating Trade Unions for them.

**Mr G. B. Sadiku** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I am trying to put two things to this honourable House, that there is now a very dangerous dearth of manpower in the Police Force which can push this nation into some great trouble both internally and externally and we need to face the problem now.

Secondly, Sir, what is responsible for this shortage of manpower in the Police Force is the poor condition of service for the Policemen, and they are suffering in silence from the top to the very bottom. Does it mean that Policemen are not important that they should be so relegated ?

[MR SADIKU]

We must appreciate that the Constitution cannot be worked without the Policemen. All political theorists from Socrates to Plato, to Thomas Aquinas, to Locke, to Russau, to Haggel, and to the present-day Constitutionalists are all agreed as to the very key position which sanction takes in Law. A Constitution is an agreement between people to respect the rights and the obligations of others, but if there is nobody to enforce those obligations and rights, then, the Constitution is nil; and the people who enforce them are the Policemen.

Coming back home to Nigeria, I want this House to understand that the Executive headed by the President cannot function properly without sufficient number and without qualified policemen to assist him.

All the Laws, Motions and Bills that we spend our time and energy in preparing and passing become dead letters if there is no sanction and if the force of Policemen is not available to see that the Laws we pass are enforced.

The Courts of Law cannot move without the Police. It is the Police who make research, it is the Police who arrest criminals, it is the Police who prosecute cases in Courts, and it is the Police who put the criminals and prisoners into cells. When you look at the whole set up, you will notice that our existence is practically reduced to nonentity without the service of the Police.

Mr Speaker, Sir, why are we here? Why is the market woman waking up at five o'clock in the morning to go and trade? Why are the clerks in the offices every day? It is to preserve their lives and their property. Our lives are foremost to us. It is only when we are alive that we can acquire property. If our lives are unsafe, what are we for? All our properties including all our buildings, our clothings and our children are unsafe without Police protection. It is the Police that assist in keeping these together.

Another point I would like to talk about is the unity of this country. There are many institutions responsible for uniting this country together. The Judiciary is one. In addition to the Judiciary, you have the Police Force. Apart from these two institutions, there are other forces like the Civil Service that claim to unite the country. The Army too is another force that claims to unite this country. If you look and study these cadres I have mentioned, you will observe that none has been as patriotic and none has kept the country together as the Nigeria Police Force. Our experience of the past showed that the Army used tribalism to split the country. Our past experience also showed that Civil Servants and their machinations assisted in breaking the country. Our experience of the past showed that the various political leaders and Statesmen did a lot to break the country. The only lever, the only principle keeping this country together is the Nigeria Police.

**Chief Yomi Akintola** (Ogbomosho Central): Point of Order, Mr Speaker. I refer to Order 26 (2) and wish to advise that the speaker should confine himself to the point at issue.

**The Deputy Speaker**: Mr Sadiku may please try to be more relevant.

**Mr G. B. Sadiku**: Mr Speaker, Sir, I have tried to illustrate the importance of the Police in our set up but now what are we facing?

The number of Policemen in this country is grossly insufficient and to this effect, I would like to quote for your information, what the Annual Report of the Police for 1976 says. It reads:

*The main problem affecting both the efficiency and effectiveness of the Force during the year round remains the endemic shortage of manpower. Response to recruitment exercises fell below expectation employment opportunities for youths were better in the long run.*

That means that the employment opportunities for Policemen is at its lowest ebb and therefore, we are short of manpower in the Police Force.

Another Report which came out this year from the Police Headquarters stated that: *As at now, we have only 67,866 regulars in Nigeria, whereas, the target for the country should be 800,000, which means, one policeman to one hundred citizens.*

If this is the case, all of us are from one State or the other, and I have here with me the number of Policemen in each of the States and I will read the figures out to the House. I will give the police strength in each State as well as the number required to maintain law and order in the various States. This should interest all hon. Members and it will enable us appreciate how gigantic and enormous the task before us is on this issue.

In Anambra State, there are only 3,115 Policemen, and we need 31,000, at the rate of one Policeman to one hundred citizens.

Bauchi State has 1,539 Policemen whereas we need 30,000.

Bendel State has 3,515 Policemen whereas we need 29,000.

In Borno State, there are 2,411 Policemen, whereas the need there is 35,000.

Cross River State has a strength of 3,495 Policemen whereas their need is 45,000.

In Imo State, we have only 2,180 and they need 62,000.

Kaduna State has only 3,436 against the need of 50,000.

Kano State has 3,800 as against the need of 71,000.

Kwara State has 2,822 Policemen as against the need of 20,000.

In Lagos State, there are only 4,012 Policemen as against the required 30,000. *(Interruptions)*

**The Deputy Speaker**: Have you finished with your figures?

**Mr G. B. Sadiku** (Epe): I have not finished.

Lagos State—5,012 as against 30,000

Niger State—1,517 as against 35,000

Ogun State—1,270 as against 27,000

Ondo State—1,034 as against 34,000

Oyo State—3,324 as against 65,000

Plateau State—2,990 as against 29,000.

This is the numerical strength. Is it not shameful enough. *(Applause)*

What of the performance? The policemen are not sufficient and the quality is not quite admirable. We expect a policeman to be a man of integrity, a leader in the nation, an emblem of purity, a sun that shows the light to others, a path which others follow. To talk of a Policeman being charged to court for crimes and convicted is scandalous; it is staggering.

On Monday 11-2-80, a sergeant was sentenced to two years imprisonment for trying to screen, to protect and avoid prosecuting a criminal. Not only that, in 1962, the policemen taken to court were as follows; 8 policemen were fined, 40 policemen were imprisoned, 4 were bound over.

To go to court is disgraceful enough. What about internal discipline? In 1962, 12 policemen were discharged for being morally unfit to continue the job; 57 were regarded as completely inefficient and laid off; 48 senior officers were reduced in rank; 373 of them were reprimanded; 1,924 were punished. (*Interruptions*) I have authority for these figures if you will want to know. Finally, 88 policemen were dismissed. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Mr Sadiku, would you please go to the substance of your debate. You have developed a good case—(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Sadiku:** I have thirty minutes at my disposal. (*Interruptions*) Let me wind up. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr A. O. Omisore** (Oranmiyan Central): My point of Order is that the speaker has been talking irrelevancies. He does not need to come and tell us here how many policemen were convicted in the sixties. All that the Motion stands for is the expansion and encouragement in the Police Force. That is all. All that the hon. Member has been speaking about are irrelevant.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Please wind up.

**Mr Sadiku:** Mr Speaker, I agree with your ruling, but I am explaining that the reason for the anomalies they are facing now is because our policemen are not enough in number and they are not the right calibre, and the only way we can get the right calibre is what we are now going to discuss. To discuss it, we must ask why we do not get sufficient and the right men in the Force.

My co-Mover has already analysed to you the salary structure. A Police constable gets only ₦100 in a month. He pays rent and feeds himself with ₦70. Certainly, he has a wife and possibly four children, and transport in Lagos is about ₦20 a month. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Omisore:** My hon. Colleague has been contravening the order of the Speaker. What the Speaker earlier told him was that he should round up, and that he could not introduce other matters. Rounding up means he must summarise all that he was talking about. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Mr Sadiku, you started to develop your argument very constructively, but you are now trying to spoil your Motion. This is not to your advantage.

**Mr Sadiku:** In summary, Mr Speaker, I am saying that the situation now is very grave, grave to the extent that if we do not do something in the immediate future, we shall have in our hands a situation we shall not be able to control, and I am recommending the following to this House:

The first is that the entry salary of a Policeman must be very substantially increased because they are exposed to great risks and great dangers. They do the meanest job; they stay in the sun everyday; they keep sleepless nights; they face robbers and murderers. Sometimes some of them do die on active service. I have figures here of Policemen who lost their lives on active service. There is no life insurance for the policemen. There is no insurance at all.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Mr Sadiku, there are four of you moving this Motion, we are getting to one o'clock and only two of you have spoken so far. Would you give chance to the other two Members to contribute?

**Mr Sadiku:** I am putting these forward as my recommendation in rounding up, Mr Speaker. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Allow him to round up, please.

**An hon. Member:** He has already spent 45 minutes.

**The Deputy Speaker:** No, not 45 minutes.

**Mr G. B. Sadiku:** Please, I am asking in the first place, that the conditions of service of the policemen must be improved. Secondly, the Police Service must be completely taken away from the Public Service Sector. (*Interruptions*) Thirdly, I am asking that, as a matter of expediency, there should be a Committee within the Police Service to cater for their welfare. Fourthly, I am stating—

**The Deputy Speaker:** There is a Bill already in front of you on the Police Service Commission. They are not part of the Civil Service in the present set up of the Presidential System.

**Mr Sadiku:** I am, therefore, asking that the Committee on Internal Affairs should please look very critically into this subject, because it is so grave and very important and, I would like to appear before that Committee. (*Interruptions*)

**Alhaji Sarki Adamu** (Dawakin-Kudu): Mr Speaker, hon. Members of the Congress—

**Mr M. L. Na-Rogo** (Karaye): Point of Order. Mr Speaker, Sir, I am referring to the speech just made by my hon. Colleague addressing this House as Congress. In the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria of 1979, there is no place where this House has been referred to as Congress. This is Federal House of Representatives of Nigeria. So, my hon. Colleague should take note of that.

**Alhaji Sarki Adamu:** Mr Speaker, hon. Members of the Congress.

**The Deputy Speaker:** We are not members of Congress.

**Alhaji Sarki Adamu :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support fully the Motion standing in my name, and I have as many reasons as possible for supporting this Motion. Mr Speaker, Sir, the police have been a most important part of the Public Service in this country. They are a law enforcement agency and the peace and stability of the country depend greatly on the way and manner they do their job.

Now, the hon. Member from Nkwere/Amaigbo (Mr S. M. C. Ihekweazu) and the hon. Member from Epe (Mr G. B. Sadiku) have already briefed you on the history and definition of the Nigeria Police Force, and my own duty now is to brief you on the problems facing the policemen, and how the policemen become a problem to the masses and some suggestions on how to solve all these problems.

Mr Speaker, Sir, taking a look at some of the developed countries of the world where the Police have succeeded in maintaining effective law and order, we can say clearly that all the policemen, even though they are controlled centrally, are still recruited locally. This is the only way they can be given the chance to specialise in their duties.

In Nigeria, Mr Speaker, the policemen are said to be corrupt. Maybe they are, but they are circumstantially bound to be corrupt. A policeman who is initially recruited from Kano on a salary of ₦130 per month is trained and transferred to Anambra State. Leaving his one wife and two children in Kano, he goes to Anambra State with one of his wives, and three or four children to stay with him. Mr Speaker, he also has to pay the school fees of the two children he left in Kano and to maintain the second wife. At the same time he must also feed himself, cloth himself and his family in Anambra. With a salary of ₦130, Mr Speaker, he cannot do this successfully unless he becomes corrupt.

So, Mr Speaker, if all the police officers in Nigeria will be recruited locally but trained federally, and returned to their respective local areas, this would have many advantages. If we look at the period when we had the N.A. Police, we could see that law and order was most effectively controlled, but since the abolition of the N.A. Police, the Nigeria Police became a problem.

In the first place, Mr Speaker, let us look at their problems one by one. I have already stated one on the question of salary which is too small for them, considering the size of their family. In the second place, a policeman is a problem to a rural man nowadays because he has nobody in the locality to control or to advise him. He does not respect anybody except his colleague or his superior police officer. He does not care when he sees a village head, a district head or a councillor in a local government. He does not care when he meets a Commissioner, a Permanent Secretary or even a Governor in the State. He does not care when he meets a Minister, a member of the National Assembly or whatever you are. The only person he respects is his brother a policeman and his superior officer.

So, Mr Speaker, Sir, these are forces which really make him corrupt because he does not fear anybody, he is not checked by anybody and he is not closely

controlled or supervised from anywhere. His salary is very small, he cannot maintain himself and cannot stand on his own. He is, therefore, bound to be corrupt by all means.

Mr Speaker, Sir, my only suggestion on how this should be improved now is that there should be a sub-Committee appointed by the Police Service Commission and not by the Committee on Internal Affairs. The Committee on Internal Affairs has no time and is not motivated to go for wider research. The Nigerian Police Service Commission should be advised to appoint a Sub-Committee with a composition of 15 members drawn from all sectors of the population. It is to set, formulate and make recommendations on how the Police Services in this country could be improved. In my suggestion Mr Speaker, Sir, the composition of the members of this sub-committee should be—

Four Members from the Police ;

Three Senior Officers between the ages of 25 and 35 years, and one junior officer in the position of a sergeant ;

Two members from the Judiciary—One Magistrate and one Alkali ;

Two Local Government Officials, that is one chairman and one senior Local Government Staff ;

A Minister of the Federation and a Commissioner of a State ;

Two Civilians, one typical farmer from a typical rural area and one businessman ;

Two members from District Council, that is, a District Head and a Village Head ;

One Member from the National Assembly. The guidelines for this Committee should be as follows :—

Firstly, to find out exactly the problems of the Police Force and how to solve them.

Secondly, how the Police could be effectively and closely supervised and controlled both locally, at State levels and at Federal level.

Thirdly, the possibility of recruiting Policemen, training them federally and assigning them permanently at their respective local areas.

Fourthly, any other thing that the Committee finds necessary for effective improvement of Police Services in Nigeria. Mr Speaker, Sir, I am sure that, apart from this heavy burden already entrusted to the Police, I think the citizens of this country should be allowed to participate fully in helping the Police to perform their duties. That is by allowing every citizen to expose wrong doers or to expose corruption whenever necessary. At the moment many people may see wrong doings and they may not report them. They cannot arrest them and they cannot do anything because of the danger that they will also be involved. If there is a proper guide from the Federal Government that every citizen has the responsibility to expose wrong doings or corruption, I think this could be a check also on the Police. The Policemen will always be scared if they know that there are people around them who can report them if they do wrong things.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I hope with these few comments, this House will advise the Police Service Commission to appoint a sub-committee which I have requested in my Motion and to assign it the responsibility of improving the Police services.

Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, Mr Uba Iliya Garki.

**Mr Uba Iliya Garki (Garki) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members I am not going to say a lot of things because many Members have already spoken on them. But before I go on, I would have to thank the Business Committee for giving me this opportunity by bringing my Motion on the Floor of this House. I would like to say that the Nigeria Police Force had suffered neglect in the past as compared with other forces like the Nigerian Army and the Nigerian Air Force, in terms of better conditions of service, accommodation, transportation and other supporting facilities for any efficient force.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the role played by the Police cannot be over emphasized in any modern society like ours. Crimes of one form or the other have always been on the increase in our society and the internal security of this country is in danger. In combating the situation we must make our Police Force very efficient at all costs for the peace, order and internal security of the country.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would suggest that all Police Officers from the lowest cadre should be re-deployed to the locality where they can effectively maintain peace and order, because of their customs which would help to solve some political problems of the respective localities. As I have earlier said, I am not going to say a lot in the short time we have. I want this Motion to be debated, and although it is controversial, I would want the support of hon. Members. With these few remarks, I beg to sit down.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, we have no time for further debate—

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**The Deputy Speaker :** Do you want us to come back at three o'clock ?

**Several hon. Members :** No !

**The Deputy Speaker :** Once I allow one Member from any political party to speak I must allow all the five political parties to contribute. I do not mind if we sit here till three o'clock.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Olusola Afolabi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, before the question is put, I just want to make one or two observations. The President has, in fact, received the Report prepared by the Minister of Police Affairs and the various Commissioners as to the ways and means of improving the Police Force so that it can have the same conditions like those prevailing in the Armed Forces. I just feel that I should bring this to the notice of Members.

Hon. Members, I think the time is getting to one o'clock and I respectfully move that the question be now put.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Mr Godwin Nwokocho, do you mean that your bus was burgled or something? Do you leave your staff in the bus ?

**Mr Godwin Nwokocho (Abakaliki East-Central) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I want to bring this information to the House that the Anambra State Government bus parked outside this Hall had just been burgled and the luggage of the Members inside the bus had been stolen.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Where was your driver at the time ?

**Mr Nwokocho :** I just went out now to discover the incident.

**The Deputy Speaker :** But you have a driver for the bus anyway. All right, sit down.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That in view of the need for an efficient Police Force and considering the withdrawal of military policemen to the barracks, this House directs the Committee on Internal Affairs to seek ways and means of expanding and improving the Nigeria Police Force in order to ensure the efficient performance of its duties and the maintenance of law and order throughout the country.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, the Committee on Public Service matters will meet at one o'clock instead of two o'clock in the Committee Room 3.

## ADJOURNMENT

**Mr Olusola Afolabi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that this House stands adjourned till 10 o'clock on Monday, the 25th of February, 1980.

*Question put and agreed.*

*Resolved :* That the House stands adjourned till 10 o'clock on Monday the 25th of February, 1980.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 12.50 p.m.*



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Monday, 25th February, 1980

The House met at 10.35 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, I have gone through the Votes and Proceedings for Thursday, 21st February, 1980, and they reflect the true position of the things that took place in the House on that day. I have therefore approved them.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Committee Meetings

We have Committee meetings today. The meeting of the Committee on Education which was scheduled for today is cancelled because they have another meeting tomorrow which is very important. The Business Committee is meeting at 1.00 p.m. The Committee on Industries is meeting at 1.00 p.m., and the Internal Affairs Committee will be meeting at 11 o'clock. The Director of Prisons, I believe, is already here to talk to the Committee Members. The Committee on Petroleum and Energy will be travelling to Port Harcourt tomorrow. Therefore, the Chairman of the Committee on Petroleum and Energy wants to have a meeting this morning with Members of the Committee to brief them on one or two issues in connection with their trip tomorrow. This meeting is supposed to have been on by now. It was scheduled for 10 o'clock.

Hon. Members, I found that, of the four Committees that were listed to meet on Friday, only one Committee was able to form a quorum for its deliberation on that day.

**The Return of the Nigerian Delegation from the United States**

I am very happy to announce the safe arrival of 10 Members of our delegation that went to United States. They are with us this morning. The Speaker of the House of Representatives, Mr Ume Ezeoke, and the Clerk of the House of Representatives, Mr Olinmah, are on their way to London from United States. They were scheduled to meet the Speaker of the British Houses of Parliament in White Hall on Wednesday and Thursday. They are due back in Nigeria on Thursday the 28th of this month and I hope they too will arrive safely.

The Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture Forestry, Fisheries and Animal Science has been invited by the Ministry of Agriculture to accompany the Minister of Agriculture to Ivory Coast and Kenya on a study tour of Agricultural Institutions in those countries. We, therefore, wish the Chairman a pleasant trip to Ivory Coast and Kenya.

The Committee on Federal Capital Territory left for Abuja this morning at 7.30 a.m.

Hon. Members, I would like to announce that the Leaders of all political parties are to meet today at 5 o'clock in Badagry Quarters to work out the full

details on the question of car loans to Members. The details have been worked out, but the Leaders of the political parties will meet the Liaison Adviser of the National Assembly, Dr Mbadiwe, at 5 o'clock at Badagry. (*Interruptions*) Your car loan problem is solved. I would not like to go into the full details here unless you decide to clear the Gallery.

Hon. Members, I would like to see the following Members of NPP from the Rivers State : Chief S. I. Alete, Chief G. B. Wodi, Dr Eze Nwala and Mr E. Ejoh at 1 o'clock when we are on break. I would like to announce that the Chairman of the Aviation Committee is now confirmed to be Alhaji Rabiuh Ishaq. If you refer to the Votes and Proceedings of 19th December you will find that the appointment of the Chairman of that Committee was described as *Pro-tem*. That appointment is now confirmed. The Chairman of the Committee on Aviation is Alhaji Rabiuh Ishaq.

Hon. Members, as you can see, the Order Paper for today is heavily loaded. Therefore, our sitting today will have to continue till 6 o'clock, because these three Motions on the Order Paper were transferred from the Order Paper of Thursday, and there are other Motions that Members have got. A lot of Members want to speak on these Motions, but because the time is very tight there does not seem to be opportunity for Members to contribute effectively on these Motions. Therefore, I advise that in this circumstance, we have to go through the Order Paper for today and that will mean our coming back in the afternoon.

At the moment the leader of the House will move that the House resolves itself into a Committee to take on the two Bills. We will take on Motions numbers 1 to 3 in the afternoon.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the House resolves itself into Committee of the whole House and proceed to consider the Bills on the Order Paper.

**Mr J. S. Sangha (Bori I) :** I rise to support the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, the Question is that we move into Committee of the Whole House to discuss the two Bills on the Order Paper, the Army (Amendment) Bill 1980 and the Air Force (Amendment) Bill 1980.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**ARMY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1980  
COMMITTEE**

A Bill to make provision for the number of persons to constitute Membership of the Army Council—*considered in Committee of the Whole House.*

**The Chairman :** The Chairman of the Defence Committee, Mr John Laven, will first present his Committee's report.

**Mr John Laven (Langtang) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to move that the House do accept the Bill on the Army Council which was tabled before this House towards the end of last month and which was passed to my Committee on the 29th of January, 1980.

**Mr M. O. Ugwu (Udi)** : I beg to second.

**Mr Laven** : Hon. Members, you have all seen my Report, as this was distributed last week.

Mr Chairman, with your permission, I will read the first Report which has been amended anyway.

I beg to submit to your Committee on Defence Report on the Army Council Bill referred to it on the 29th of January, 1980.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Go ahead please.

**Mr Laven** : Mr Chairman, Sir, hon. Members, I will read the Report :

I beg to submit your Committee on Defence reports on the Army Council Bill referred to it on the 29th of January, 1980.

(2) The first sitting coincided with the visit of the Hon. Minister of Defence who briefed the Committee on the councils from the first Republic to the end of the Army regime. From his brief, the committee noted with due concern the followings :

(1) In the first Republic records showed that the Minister of Defence was the Chairman of the Army Council as well as the Air Force and Navy Councils.

Anyway we are dealing with the Army now. This is in reference to membership only.

(2) In 1966 when the military took over the Government, the Head of State assumed the chairmanship of the three councils.

(3) When Mr Yakubu Gowon became the Head of State the composition of the councils remained the same until 1969 when the Chief of Staff, Supreme Headquarters was made the Chairman (He being Defence Commissioner then).

(4) With the change of Government in 1975 the Head of State again became the Chairman while the Chief of Staff Supreme Headquarters was made a permanent member.

3. From the above therefore, one would observe that the Heads of the Federal Military Government occupied the chairmanship in their acting capacity as commissioner for Defence. (This fact was confirmed by a high ranking military officer).

4. In order to substantiate its reasons for recommending to this honourable House that the membership of the council, namely, the Army Council, be passed as stipulated on the bill, Section 7 (1) and (2) of the Nigerian Army Act 1960, Section 4 (1) and (2) of the Airforce Act 1964 and Section 1 of the Armed Forces Act (Amendment) Decree 1976 were studied.

For removal of doubts, I think, with your permission, I will read the Sections quoted. Section 7 (1) of the Royal Nigerian Military Forces Ordinance, 1960 :

7 (1) *The members of the Forces Council shall be—*

*(a) the Minister charged with responsibility for matters relating to Defence, who shall be the Chairman of the Council ;*

*(b) such other Minister as may be appointed under subsection (2) ;*

*(c) the Commander ;*

*(d) the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry responsible for Defence.*

Section 1 of the Forces Acts (Amendment) Decree, 1976 reads as follows :—

(1) *The members of the Army Council shall be :—*

*(a) the Head of the Federal Military Government, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, who shall be the Chairman of the Council ;*

*(b) the Chief of Army Staff ;*

*(c) the Chief of Staff, Supreme Headquarters ; and*

*(d) the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Defence.*

(2) *The Council may, whenever it deems it necessary, co-opt any officer or any public officer as a member of the Council for the purpose of any particular meeting of the Council.*

These are the two relevant Sections quoted here.

The Committee before putting its recommendation for the membership and chairmanship of the council took into consideration the functions, duties and responsibility of the council and the binding on them as spelt out under Section 6 (1) and (2) of the Armed Forces Act 1960 and Section 3 (1), (2) and (3) of the Air Force Act 1964.

Section 6 (1) and (2) of the Royal Nigerian Military Forces Ordinance, 1960 reads :

6. (1) *There shall be a Royal Nigerian Military Force Council which shall, subject to the provisions of this section, be responsible under the general authority of the Minister charged with responsibility for matters relating to Defence for the command, discipline and administration of, and all other matters relating to the Force.*

(2) *The responsibility of the Forces Council shall not extend to the operational use of the Force.*

This Section has been so much mixed up. Some people brought up a lot of Amendments thinking that this is a Defence Council ; this is not a Defence Council. It is a non-operational Council of the Army and that is why I brought this Section in.

For record purposes, I will read Subsection 2 again ;

(2) *The responsibility of the Forces Council shall not extend to the operational use of the Force, for which use responsibility shall be vested in the Commander subject to the overall directions of the Council of Ministers :*

Here again, an Amendment has been proposed by an hon. Member putting almost all the Ministers in this Council, thinking that this is a Council of Ministers. It is not a Council of Ministers. It is a Council of the Army charged with the responsibility of non-operational command, discipline and

[MR LAVEN]  
promotions. In this one, I will also read also the functions of this Council. Subsection 2 reads on :

*Provided that the Prime Minister may give to the Commander such directions with respect to the operational use of the Force in Nigeria for the purpose of maintaining and securing public safety and public order, notwithstanding that the directions of the Council of Ministers have not been obtained, and the Commander shall comply with those directions or course them to be complied with.*

That is in the case of emergency in the country when we want to go to war, the Council of Ministers will sort of meet, pass their resolution to the Commander-in-Chief or the Head of State, that we are going to war with this country and as such we have resolved that you use the Army. Then, he will take up the case and pass on to the Commander or the Chief of Army Staff who should operate the Army as directed. That is operational use. The Council we are referring to here is a non-operational Council. I keep on repeating that. Now, we go on with my Report :

The Committee viewed the position of the President and the Vice-President of Nigeria as Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the council respectively, as well as that of the Ministers of Internal and External Affairs as members of the council as in the proposed amendment by one hon. Uwandu and one hon. Moh. A. Yelwá, but declined to accept the amendments.

Firstly, as I have said earlier, the Movers of the Amendment putting all the Ministers in the Council are having the thought that this is going to be a Council of Ministers. It is not. Secondly, they were not, in fact, present to defend their Amendments and I am surprised to see them again here on the Order Paper. These are the Amendments of people who never appeared before my Committee, Mr Chairman.

**An hon. Member :** This is serious.

**Mr Laven :** Well, for the position of the President, as I said before their amendment, in the Report we recommend that :

(1) *The President and the Vice-President are already Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the highest security bodies in the country, namely :*

(a) *The President is the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Nigeria and a reference point to which the Army Council, headed by the Minister, reports.*

It, therefore, made no sense for the President to be the Chairman of this Council. Here, the Committee originally thought that, the President, being the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, all the deliberations of this Council will in the end go to him in any case.

Any way, this has been superseded by events and I will come to that later.

(b) The Committee was of the opinion that the President and the Vice-President are already

Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively of the following Councils :

- The National Defence Council ;
- The National Security Council ; and
- The Council of States.

5. It is important to note that all deliberations of this House go to the President too. The Committee, therefore, is of the opinion that, in order to relieve the President of the enormous strains of responsibility which he already has, the Chairmanship should go to the Minister as proposed in the Bill.

6. The Committee felt that since, during the first Republic, this Chairmanship went to the Minister, maybe the government wanted to revert to it and so recommended that the Chairmanship should go to the President.

Mr Chairman, Sir, I now go to the recommendations :

In view of the foregoing reasons, your Committee recommends that the Bill be passed as they are and the Membership constituted as follows :

Membership of the Army Council shall be—

(a) The Minister charged with responsibilities for matters relating to the defence who shall be the Chairman,

(b) The Chief of Defence Staff,

(c) The Chief of Army Staff, and

(d) The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry charged with responsibility for matters relating to Defence, who shall be Secretary to the Council. The Council may, whenever it deems necessary co-opt any officer or any public officer as a Member of the Council for the purpose of any particular meeting of the Council.

Mr Chairman, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to move that the Report be accepted.

**The Chairman :** Hon. John Laven, I think you had better move your Amendment now.

**Mr Laven :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I beg to move the following amendments standing in my name on the Order Paper.

Mr Chairman, Sir, the Committee having produced this Report was faced with a problem which necessitated meeting again to consider the position of the Chairmanship of this Council, and we again went into research and the Constitution. We agreed that the Commander-in-Chief should be the Chairman of this Council.

Therefore, there was need to bring up the following Amendments :—

(i) In page C1 leave out lines 8 and 9 and insert the words *the President who shall be the Chairman of the Council.*

(ii) Between lines 9 and 10 insert line 9 (a) *the Minister charged with responsibility for matters relating to Defence.*

(iii) In page C 2, under EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM, leave out from beginning to the end and insert as follows :—

*The Federal Government has decided to reconstitute the membership of the Army Council, inter alia to retain the President as a Member and Chairman of the Army Council. Accordingly the proposed Membership of the Council in this Bill are as follows :—*

- (1) *the President who shall be the Chairman of the Council ;*
- (2) *the Minister charged with responsibility for matters relating to Defence ;*
- (3) *the Chief of Defence Staff ;*
- (4) *the Chief of Army Staff ;*
- (5) *the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry charged with responsibility for Matters relating to Defence, who shall also be Secretary to the Council.*

*The Act empowers the Council to co-opt any officer or any public officer for any particular meeting of the Council.*

Mr Chairman, Sir, I beg to move.

**Dr O. O. Oreh** (Arochukwu): Mr Chairman, Sir, I beg to second the Amendments.

**Dr Obatayo Ogunkoya** (Remo): Mr Chairman, Sir, I personally congratulate this Committee for a job well done. It could have been a disaster if a Minister would have to be the Chairman of such a strategic and important Council (*Applause.*) I am really delighted by this job and I really want to see more powers vested in the hands of the President, particularly on matters affecting the defence of this country.

I must, therefore, take this opportunity to contribute, and very sincerely too, that the question of defence for the greatest and largest African country in the world should be a matter of great priority. I personally see it this way, that in the last sentence which states—

*The Act empowers the Council to co-opt any officer or any public officer for any particular meeting of the Council.*

I sincerely wish that it could be amended further to indicate :

*The Act empowers the President to co-opt any officer or any public officer for any particular meeting of the Council.*

Any situation that may bring such an act would be a matter of general interest. It is true that on political grounds we could bicker at home, but when we have a common enemy we are brothers and sisters.

I sincerely want to point out an important factor in the question of the defence of this country. This factor is relevant, otherwise I could not have come here to mention it—that Nigeria relies too heavily on conventional weapons as a means of defence. Most of our conventional weapons are obsolete, and the earlier we forget a lot of them the better.

Our infantry is almost at the point of a disgrace. Our artillery is out-moded. It is not the quantity

of soldiers that matters, but the quality of the soldiers. I hope that a time will come when we shall concentrate more, and sincerely more, on Air Force defence that is stronger than the artillery and the infantry. Most of our infantry set-up is based on courage and hard work, while most of our artillery, as I said, is out-moded.

Anybody who saw the Six Days' War between the Israelis and the Arabs will surely agree with me that the time of numerical strength of the Army is over. The time of technological take-off of army combatment is there for us to see. The question of inter-continental ballistic missiles is with us today and is all over the world. If we have a common enemy like South Africa, is a matter of *L* for Lagos and *K* for Kaduna with inter-ballistic missiles for the total destruction and annihilation of our major cities. We must put more efforts on technological defence, on Air Force and less on Army ; more on bombs and rockets. I sincerely wish that this Committee will do more job on this particular issue.

I am happy that this power has been vested in our President, and we have history to back it up, like the attack on Bay of Biscay when President John Kennedy was there. I do not have to go into the history of the Bay of Pigs. I would wish that we give the President more powers, as far as the question of external defence is concerned. That is my contribution. (*Applause*)

**Mr G. B. Sadiku** (Epe) : Thank you, Mr Chairman. We have to commend the members of the Committee for the very noble and very comprehensive report which they have presented to us this morning. We need not over-emphasise the importance of defence in a nation ; it is important for the preservation of our territorial integrity, for peace within us and it is important also in the context of the present Presidential System of government which we are running. But I want the Committee to look into some matters which I think they have not thoroughly looked into. The Chairman of the Committee, Mr Chairman, is not listening to me.

**The Chairman** : He does not have to listen to you now. We are in a Committee of the Whole House. We are listening to you.

**Mr Sadiku** : I was wondering if one method should not have been adopted. The Bill itself is an amendment of an already existing Bill. It is the duty of us here, in fact, to go and search for the first Bill, and know what the contents are, the implications, the pitfalls and the possible amendments we can make to it. But for one reason or the other, we have not been able to do that. Maybe the Committee will consider getting that Bill cyclostyled and sent to Members so that they would study what already was there, and then bring in what they want now to bring up. That is the first point.

The second point is that, I am wondering about the propriety of bringing up an amendment within a Bill that comes from a Committee. That, to me, may be a negation of the essence and the functions of a Committee. The Committee is meant to be a representative of the House, and it is meant to have sat down, collected views, collected amendments invited those who had amendments, and with all

[MR SADIKU]

these materials would have ironed out things and embodied the amendments or rejected the amendments so that what they should have done, therefore, is really to bring these amendments into the Bill they are bringing to us. But where there is a conflict (if somebody brings an amendment and your reasoning is not acceptable to him) then you are bound to bring this amendment to the Floor of the House for a final decision.

So, I think that bringing up the amendment, with the Chairman saying that this is an amendment, without telling us the relationship of the amendment to the substantive Motion is not quite correct. He cannot tell us the relevancy of the amendment, or why he disagrees with the amendment. I think something needs to be done at this level.

Another point I would want elaboration upon (this is exactly the situation now and if you want me to appear before your Committee I would do that) is that there appears to be now a distinction of importance between the chairmanship of the Minister of Defence and the chairmanship of the President of the Republic as regards the Council. I think it will be nice if you tell us the reasons why you feel that it is inappropriate that the Minister should be the Chairman, and you prefer the chairman to be the President. It is after doing this that we can decide because this is a vital issue.

The President is the Head of the Armed Forces. When he is not the Chairman, then we are now asking that the Chairman should be reporting to him. It will be a second-hand report and where matters of diplomacy come in and there is conflict of identity, it is not unlikely that the Chairman will wrongly represent to the President, and the President will be forced to take action on wrong representation to him by the Chairman, since the President himself is not present at the place.

The fourth point which I think the Committee should take note of is the functions of the Council. I think we need an education and elaboration on the specific functions of the Council, not merely putting it in the paper for us, but explaining it to us. In the Police Force, for example, we have the functions of the Council.

**The Chairman :** Please hon. Member for Epe (*Mr Sadiku*), this Bill was deposited into your pigeon-hole since the 29th of January, and all these things you are asking should have been things about which you, as a Member, are entitled to go to the Committee and make all your views known, and find out whatever information you want to find out. You are asking us now that we should dispense with this Bill that is in front of us, until we get all the Acts and the information before we take a decision. This is something that you should have done before now.

**Mr Sadiku :** I agree with you, Mr Chairman.

**The Chairman :** There are other Members who have a lot to contribute to this matter. Could you round up what you have got to say anyway.

**Mr Sadiku :** Mr Chairman, what I am saying is the at the time the Committee was sitting these

amendments which hon. Members are trying to bring in should have been ironed out within the Committee itself. This is what the Committee should have done. I am winding up by saying that the report, as it is to us now, is very scattered, unco-ordinated, truncated, and it is not clear. If I ask about sixty per cent of the people in this House now, they will not, from the brief which the Chairman has given to us, be able to tell us how clear it is.

**The Chairman :** All right hon. Member for Epe (*Mr Sadiku*). The hon. Member for Ibadan North (*Mr Debo Akande*) you have a question to ask the Chairman ?

**Mr Debo Akande (Ibadan North) :** Mr Chairman, I listened to the Chairman of the Defence Committee. He did emphasize that the composition of the Council, as being proposed, is for the non-operational aspect of the Army. Therefore, I find it odd, and rather upside-down if the President should also be the Chairman of the Army Council. Under Section 198, the President of the Republic is already the Commander-in-Chief and Head of the Defence. Of course, the Chairman of Sub-Committee also said that the President is already the Chairman of the highest security organ of this country.

I find it rather wasteful of the time of the President of the Republic just to be the Chairman of this small Committee which is going to deal—

**An hon. Member :** He may send his representatives.

**Mr Akande :** No, there is no need for his representative.

In my own submission, Sir, this is just a Council that would deal probably with promotion and matters which we regard as internal affairs of just a quarter of the Armed Forces. How do you drag a whole President of the Federal Republic to come and sit on such a Committee ?

In my own humble opinion, the Defence Committee should be asked to go back and find more useful work for the President of the Republic. Leave the Chairmanship to the Minister as was originally proposed. We want to respect the President. We want the Budget to be looked into properly. Let the President have enough time. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

**The Chairman :** Mr Debo Akande, you made the point clear that you have not got a copy of the report of the Committee. If you look at the report of the Committee, you will find that it shows that prior to 1966, the Head of the Armed Forces was Chairman of the Army Council. Then, after 1969, it fell on the shoulders of the Chief of Staff, Supreme Headquarters. In 1975, it reverted again to the Head of State. This is what is contained in the report which you have not got. Yes, Mr Gapsuk.

**Mr Ambrose N. Gapsuk (Shendam East) :** Mr Chairman, my hon. Colleagues, I rise to support the report which has been laid before this honourable House by the most distinguished Chairman, Mr John Laven.

It is an opportunity which we should seize to make some comments and congratulate the Defence

Committee. The significance of the defence of this nation cannot be over-emphasised. We are aware of the serious need, as earlier mentioned by one hon. Member, to get a well equipped, modern and sophisticated defence machinery for this most important nation in Africa. The situation world-wide, you are aware (not to speak of the situation in Africa) requires a very sophisticated and strong standing defence machinery. When I say machinery, I do not refer to only one arm of the Defence body. I imagine that if we were as sophisticated a nation in matter of defence, Lord Soames presently playing on the intelligence of the Blacks in Zimbabwe, would not have been messing around like that. Secondly, he would not have been inviting the army from South Africa to stand by and intimidate our Black Brothers in Zimbabwe. Thirdly, you are all aware of the situation in Afghanistan. Nigeria is a very fertile ground for any foreign invasion because we are rich and because we are the strongest and most feared nation in Africa.

**Mr Sadiku (Epe) :** Point of order !

**The Chairman :** Yes, what is your point of order ?

**Mr G. B. Sadiku :** My point of order is, Order No. 26 (2). We are now discussing the composition of the Army Council ; we are not discussing its duties. We are not discussing how the Army is going to fight somewhere ; we are discussing about the internal composition of the Army Council ; that is, what would be the functions of the Council, and what would be its membership. We are not talking about what the duties of the Council should be.

**The Chairman :** Thank you. Yes, you may continue, Mr Gapsuk.

**Mr Gapsuk :** Thank you very much for your protection, Mr Chairman. I imagine that, given any opportunity, one would have to set out the reasons for the President being the Chairman of the Army Council. However, we should accept the report and then look into the composition as presented by the Chairman of the Defence Committee.

I was only pointing out the significance of having got a very strongly composed Council on Defence, and I wanted to pin-point (if my Friend has not interrupted me, and of course, I am going to do so now) the fact that it is important that the President should find time to chair all the Councils that would have to do with Defence. In any case, I would like to inform my hon. Colleague that the President of this nation is the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. It does not mean that the President would have to be attending every meeting ; he can delegate his powers, at any given moment, to whoever he considers fit. We should give him the opportunity to be the Chairman because of the significance of the very sensitive area like Defence. That is the point I want to make. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

**Mr Mohammed Shu'aibu Kaugama (Aliyo/Kaugama) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, the importance of having the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as the Chairman of the Army Council cannot be over-emphasised. This is because past experience

shows us that the slightest opportunity which people got in laying their hands on the defence of this nation put the country in disarray. We should not forget that Nigeria is taking another step backward now by realising that there is a colony, which is posing a threat to our internal security.

So, the necessity of having the President as the final arbiter in the Army Council should not ever be disputed. Making the President the Chairman of the Army Council, would mean the same thing as making him the final authority on the Defence of this country. This is because the Army Council is part of the Security of this country.

So, anyone who rises up to drag his feet about this Amendment is just misunderstanding the functions of this Army Council, and internal security is something that we should never play with.

With these few remarks, I beg to take my seat. *(Applause)*

**Mr Sidi Ali (Danbatta) :** In supporting the Motion that the President should be the Chairman of the Army Council, I would join my Colleague, the Doctor from Ijebu-Remo, to congratulate this Committee. I think the Committee has done an excellent job and we should pass this Bill without any difficulty.

Mr Chairman, the problem here about the question of the Security Forces—the Army, the Navy, the Air Force even the Police, who during the Military regime told us that they were military and who are now saying they are civilians—the question is a sensitive one because one single misleading of the President could put the country in fire. *(Interruptions)*

As I said, this is a very sensitive issue, especially at this period when we are starting off on a new Constitution, we need people with level-headed approach to issues and not people who would like to rush here and there and cause commotion. Therefore, Mr Chairman, I think we do not need too much debate on this issue. It is straight-forward and I think replacing the Minister with the President is a very decent and nice approach.

We have had problems in this country. Our Army needs to be reorganised like most African countries. Therefore, we need somebody who is cool, who can look at things from a purely national point of view rather than somebody who will look at things from what will satisfy me as a person.

With these few words I support the Amendment and I hope everybody would give it the fullest support. *(Applause)*

**Mr Mohammed Yelwa (Yauri) :** I rise to support the Bill, and in doing so, I would call on the Chairman of Defence to withdraw his first report. This is the first thing he should do because all the arguments he gave in the report do not correspond with the amendments which he has brought. I fully support the Amendments. As he mentioned in his report, I even proposed that the chairmanship of the Army Council should be the President because experience has shown us that whoever leads the Government should automatically be fully involved in the chairmanship of these Committees.

[MR YELWA]

The mistakes which we have had in the past, which have been expressed by previous speakers, concerns this chairmanship.

The first one happened when the Minister of Defence was the Chairman. The second happened also during Gowon's Regime when Gowon surrendered the chairmanship to the Chief of Staff, Supreme Headquarters. So, from this experience we ought to learn something, and make sure that the President of the Nation should take the full responsibility of the chairmanship of this Committee. With these remarks, I fully support the Amendment and I commend the Bill to the House.

**Mr E. D. N. Uwandu** (Mbaitoli) : Mr Chairman, according to the Order Paper, the Amendment is in my name and that of an hon. Member—

**The Chairman** : I am not calling on you because of the Amendment. The House is open to general debate. Everybody should say what he wants to say on this.

**Mr Uwandu** : I thought you called my name.

**The Chairman** : I know you have an Amendment but I am calling you for contribution. If you just want to speak on your Amendment, please sit down.

**Mr Uwandu** : Thank you, Mr Chairman. I do associate myself with some hon. Members who have congratulated the Chairman and his Members for going into this matter in a very reasonable way especially with the question of the President being the Chairman of the Council.

From the civilian era, we could see that we had the Prime Minister who had to give commands or instructions to the Commander of the Armed Forces in case they wanted to carry out any operational duties. But in the present situation where the embodiment of the whole forces—the Air Force, the Navy and the Army—are concentrated on the President, I do not see any reason why a Minister of the State should be the Chairman of the Army Council.

Under the present system which we are operating, as a matter of fact, the Ministers are aides to the President, they are Secretaries to the President. In other countries like the U.S.A. you have them as Secretary of State for Industries to the President, Secretary of State for Defence, etc. to the President. So, they are all working for the President. That is why it is very necessary that the President should be the Chairman.

I will refer the House to Section 199 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria ; as a matter of fact, before you read Section 199 fully, you have to look at Sections 197 and 198. Section 199 says—

*The National Assembly shall—*

*(a) in giving effect to the functions specified in section 197 of this Constitution ; and*

*(b) with respect to the powers exercisable by the President under section 198 of this Constitution. by an Act, establish a body which shall comprise such members as the National Assembly may*

*determine, and which shall have power to ensure that the composition of the armed forces of the Federation shall reflect the Federal character of Nigeria in the manner prescribed in the said section 197 of this Constitution.*

In the former 1960 Act, Military Forces Act, there was no operational command given to the Prime Minister. But Section 198 (3) says :

*The President may, by directions in writing and subject to such conditions as he may think fit, delegate to any member of the armed forces of the Federation his powers relating to the operational use of the armed forces of the Federation.*

Again Section 198 (1) gives the President, as Commander-in-Chief, power to determine the operational use of the Armed Forces of the Federation. So, it would look very ridiculous for us to leave the President and ask his own Secretary who is the Minister, to be the Chairman of the Army Council.

With these few remarks, I beg to take my seat. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam** (Oron II) : Mr Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Amendment proposed by the Chairman of the Defence Committee. In doing so, Sir, I would like to share the credit for this Amendment with those who had earlier proposed an Amendment to the original Bill because I feel, Sir, that but for the two gentlemen who proposed the Amendment which is yet to be debated, the Committee would not have come up with this Amendment. This is even demonstrated by the position which the Chairman of the Committee took while presenting his report to this House. His position was quite in conflict with the Amendment which he later moved.

In any case, Sir, I want to say that our contention is that whether the Army Council is operational or not, the President who is, by our Constitution, the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, should be able, at any given time, to mobilise the entire Armed Forces for action in this country. I think it would be very dangerous to allow somebody who is subordinate to the President to preside over the meetings of the Army Council.

Having said that, Sir, I want to go down to Item 5 of the Committee's amendments where the Permanent Secretary of a Ministry charged with responsibility for matters relating to Defence is also a Member as well as the Secretary of the Council. I think this again, Sir, needs some further clarification. It is not in the interest of security that a Civil Servant who is not responsible to the people of this country as a whole in the performance of his functions should be a member of the Army Council. I will, therefore, appeal to the Chairman of the Defence Committee to consider the advisability of further amending this Section of the Amendment to ensure that the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Defence would only serve as secretary to that Council and not as member as well as Secretary.

There is no doubt, Mr Chairman, that, from past experience, the Army is the basis of the strength of our entire Armed Forces. If the Army Council has a solid structure which is based on the needs, the desires and the aspirations of the

entire nation as reflected in the Nigerian Constitution, then the power base, the integrity of our nation and the economy of this country will be guaranteed. This is the only way too by which we can meaningfully articulate the foreign policy of this country. If we do not have a very strong and powerful Military base, I do not see how we can effectively articulate a dynamic and militant foreign policy outside this country.

With this observation, Mr Chairman, I would like to say that I support the Amendments proposed by the Defence Committee. I would also like to say that the explanatory note which accompanies the Amendments also needs some clarification and I read, Sir, it says :

*The Federal Government has decided to reconstitute the membership of the Army Council, inter alia, to retain the President as a member and Chairman of the Army Council. Accordingly, the proposed membership of the Council in this Bill are as follows :*

*The Act empowers the Council to co-opt any officer or any public officer for any particular meeting of the Council.*

Here, Sir, emphasis again, is being placed on the involvement of only public officers, and the motive here, Sir, may turn out to be that it is again the civil servants who may likely be co-opted. I would like to appeal to the Chairman of the Defence Committee, again, to reconsider this with a view to changing or adding something like *any person* not necessarily *any public officer*, so that any person of integrity, who is a patriot of this country, can also be co-opted as a member of this Council.

With this observation, Mr Chairman, I would like, with due respect, to give notice of my intention to withdraw my support for the original Amendments.

I beg to support.

**Prince J. S. Sangha (Bori I) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I want to draw Members' attention to a few organisational concepts. I want us to look at the Army formation as a very vertical organisation whose actions are precise, and as such, must be viewed in that light. To think of delegation of power is purely to run away from the Army tradition. So, I am supporting the Amendment proposed by the Committee, especially now that the two gentlemen who proposed the second Amendment appeared to have sandwiched their Amendments into this, or have supported the Amendments proposed by the Committee. So, I may now think that we are speaking on the first Amendment only. I think they have given up and that is in agreement with Section 30 (4) of our Standing Order. If you permit me, I would read :

*A Member who has moved or seconded a dilatory motion which has been negatived may not subsequently move or second another such motion during the same debate, whether in the House or in committee of the whole House.*

So, my view is that in any organisational structure, you need some constraints. An organisation has its norms and traditions. These constraints are enforced

in basically two ways, by coercion or by reward, and it appears to me that the President alone is prone to the man who has these two variables.

The Council sees to the welfare of the Army Formations in terms of promotion, discipline and other measures, and to delegate such functions to a Minister would amount to an intermediary. We are witnesses to recent events in this country when the Minister precipitated actions that turned out to be very negative. So, I cannot see why people would think that a Minister, a State Minister for that matter, should be the Chairman of a Council such as the Army Council. We must remember that this Council deals with promotion, upliftment, reward and caution, and as long as this instrument rests with the President, he alone should be the Chairman of this Council. If we really want security in this country, if we are interested in cohesion and togetherness, we must run away from those things that will delay reward to these Army officers. Already it is overdue. So, Mr Chairman, Sir, I want to emphasize once more that since it is the President alone who has cohesive powers and reward powers, he should be the Chairman of this Council. All of you know what the Army Council is, especially its operational functions in terms of welfare of Army officers. The President knows those who are loyal to him, those who will keep this country intact and so he will use his discretion in seeing to their welfare.

So, I support completely the proposal of the Committee on Defence, and taking for granted that all other Amendments, especially number two Amendment has lapsed. With this, I beg to support.

**Dr M. B. Ukpong (Abak) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I associate myself with the views of the reasonable hon. Gentlemen to thank the Committee for the work well done, and in fact for the amendments because the amendment made is in consonance with Section 46 of our Standing Order—Scope of amendments in Committee. It reads as follows :

*Any committee to which a bill is committed shall have power to make such amendments therein as they shall think fit, provided that every amendment shall be relevant to the subject-matter of the bill and to the subject-matter of the clause to which it relates ;*

I think this Amendment is a very appropriate one.

The Army is a very sensitive issue in any country, because the existence of any country is particularly dependent on the strength of its defence. As a matter of fact, the Army Council, no matter whatever name is given to it, whether it is operational or unoperational, plays an important role in helping effective defence of the country. When you are talking about the effectiveness of the Army, you have to provide means of making the Army very effective, very loyal and very active to the country.

The Council is a policy making body and the policy of the Council will affect the operation of the Army. Therefore, it is very relevant to have the President who is the embodiment of the country and whose duty it is to ensure that the Army is loyal to him, to be the Chairman. This, as the other speakers have said, will help the country to avoid any



[DR UKPONG]

conflict between the Chairman and the President, because since the President is the Chairman of the Council as well as the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, he really knows what the problems of the Army Personnel are. I am very sure that exactly the same thing would happen to the Navy and the Air Forces so that if there is anything wrong, we would just hold the President responsible as he will be in position to do exactly what he thinks is good for the country.

You know the organizational structure of the Army, and as I talked about the Army last time, if the President were in a position to pay this pension to the Army he could have done so. The Army is such a group of people that you must give them adequate protection for loyalty and adequate care in order to be effective in protecting the nation.

Mr Chairman, Sir, I very strongly support this Bill particularly since the withdrawal of the two Amendments and I hope that everybody will support it and congratulate the Committee for the work well done.

As far as the question of the Permanent Secretary is concerned, I do not share the view that the Permanent Secretary does not represent everybody. Any Permanent Secretary who is working in the Federal Ministry is representing the interest of this country in its entirety, because the Federal Ministry has function that affects all parts of the country. I am very sure that the Permanent Secretary is not an irresponsible person; he is a very responsible person who can act as the Secretary, and as a matter of fact, we have to distinguish between policy-making and execution. The policy maker does not execute; it is the Permanent Secretary that is going to see to the actual execution. I am strongly supporting the idea that the Permanent Secretary, as a very reasonable person, who is also serving the nation in its entirety, is qualified even to be a Member and not only a Secretary.

With these remarks, Mr Chairman, Sir, I support the Bill.

**The Chairman :** Alhaji Umaru Abdullahi will now take on his Amendment. I understand he is not here, so that Amendment has lapsed. I also take it that the second Amendment proposed by Mr E. D. N. Uwandu and Mr Bassey Etienam has been dropped.

**Mr E. D. N. Uwandu (Mbaitoli) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, may I make an explanation. When you called upon me to speak, I thought it was my Amendment, but I have spoken only on the President which I sincerely agreed to. I have already circulated the Amendment before this time but I still have the Amendment on the Permanent Secretary and on the co-optation of some Members of the Council.

**The Chairman :** We take on your Amendment now and you should speak on it.

**Mr Uwandu :** Mr Chairman, Sir—

**The Chairman :** There is a point of order.

**Mr I. Mac-Eteli (Brass) :** I have a point of order on the Amendment number two which you are

trying to allow the hon. Member for Mbaitoli (Mr E. D. N. Uwandu) to speak on. He has already spoken on this Bill and on our Standing Order 34, he cannot speak on a Bill or Motion two times.

Thank you.

**The Chairman :** He is not speaking on this Bill generally now but on his own Amendment.

**Mr Uwandu :** Thank you, Mr Chairman. With respect, Sir, I wish to withdraw Amendment 1 (b), 1 (f) and 1 (g).

I want to speak on the President who shall be the Chairman, that is (i) (a) and (ii) (a) and (b) of my Amendment.

**The Chairman :** You have already spoken on (i) (a). You can only speak on (ii) (a) and (ii) (b) now.

**Mr Uwandu :** Exactly, Sir. As I mentioned in the paper which I circulated, the Permanent Secretary in the former system during the Military Rule, was the Chief Executive at that time. He was making the policies, but in the present system which is the Civilian Rule, which we are now back to, the Permanent Secretary is an Executive quite all right, but he is not the Executive. The Chief Executive is the Minister who is in charge of the Ministry. Now, in the former Civilian Rule, under the 1960 Act, that is the Military Rule Act, 1960, the Permanent Secretary was the Secretary of the Army Council only and not a Member of the Council. So, there is no reason for his being a Member of the Council now. In addition, last time in this honourable House—

**The Chairman :** Point of Order !

**Prince T. O. Olusi (Lagos South) :** My points of Order are Standing Orders 44 and 46. In respect of Standing Order 44, I would like to draw your attention to the committal of bills to the committee which we have done. At the moment, we are considering the Report of the Committee. Then, Standing Order 46 comes in and it states :

*Any committee to which a bill is committed shall have power to make such amendments therein as they shall think fit.*

Mr Chairman, at this stage, we should address ourselves to the Report of the Committee and no Member can propose any Amendment at this stage. The Amendment that is being moved by the hon. Member ought to have been made at the Committee stage. That is the pertinent point, Sir.

**The Chairman :** You see, the procedure would have been that if any Member has an Amendment to make, he should make it at the Committee Stage, but if the Amendment is rejected by the Members of the Committee at the Committee Stage, that Member could then come to the Committee of the Whole House and propose his Amendment and that Amendment needs not appear on the Order Paper. This Amendment appeared on the Order Paper by mistake. For this reason, at the next Committee, we are not going to allow any Amendment that has been sent to the Committee to appear on the Order Paper, but if you feel strongly about your Amendment, you can come and move it as an individual when the Committee of the Whole House is sitting. So,

[THE CHAIRMAN]

I will allow him to make this Amendment because it is already on the Order Paper.

**Mr Uwandu :** Thank you, Mr Chairman.

As a matter of fact, when the Chairman of the Committee was speaking, I noticed that he was saying something about invitation. I must say before this honourable House that when I circulated my Amendment on the 4th of February, 1980, nobody invited me to any Committee to come and defend it.

I have finished with the Permanent Secretary which is Amendment (ii) (a). Now, I will go on to Amendment (ii) (b). As far as Amendment (ii) (b) is concerned, the purpose of having any other person to be a Member of the Council, apart from the public officer or any soldier or something like that is that co-option here is only for people to come and advise the Council and no more and that is why the Act says that they can co-opt some Members. Now, we went further to say that these Members shall be co-opted for the purpose of any particular meeting of the Council, but such officer, or public officer or person shall have no votes should his membership shall cease at the end of that particular meeting.

The Council may have some problems. Suppose the Council wants to know something about the strategy of Russia or U.S.A., it may invite somebody who knows something about the strategic situation there or how they get their arms or the type of arms they have, to its meeting. So, it could invite somebody who knows very much about the arms from Yugoslavia or the U.S.S.R. So, if we leave it like that, once they co-opt, they cannot leave the person there without changing him for somebody else during the next meeting.

Another point is that if you bring only the public officers who are civil servants as we all know, they may be in the Corporation in the Civil Service or somewhere else, but there are also some retired Army Officers who know something about the Armed Forces and who can advise the President in the Army Council from their past experience. Most hon. Members must have been reading about the events happening in Afghanistan in some of our newspapers, that at one time, President Jimmy Carter had to invite the former Chief of Defence Staff to come and advise him on certain things regarding the Armed Forces. So, this is the type of thing this section is trying to do. They should not necessarily be public officers. That is why we say, if I may read again :

*The Council may, whenever it deems it necessary, co-opt any officer or any public officer or any person as a member of the Council for the purpose of any particular meeting of the Council but such officer or public officer or person shall have no votes and his membership shall cease at the end of that particular meeting.*

So, again, we do not want to involve the Army Council in unnecessary expenses. Once a person has finished with the meeting, he should leave.

**The Chairman :** You have to round up. You have only five minutes to move your Amendment.

**Mr Uwandu :** As the Army Council is a very specialised Council, you need some people who know something about the Armed Forces.

With these few words, I am urging this House to accept my Amendments that the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Defence shall only be the Secretary of the Army Council and not a Member, and that you should accept the second leg of my Amendment that is, Section (ii) (b) after taking into consideration what I have said.

**Mr E. B. Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I would like to associate myself with the views expressed by my co-Mover of the Amendments. I want to speak only in support of Amendments (ii) (a) and (b). As you know, Sir, I had already given notice of my intention to withdraw my support for other sections of the Amendments. I would, therefore, like to go straight to (ii) (a).

I want to say that in proposing that the Permanent Secretary should not be a Member of the Council, we do not intend to impugn the integrity of the Permanent Secretary, or any Civil Servant for that matter. What we are saying, Sir, is that since the Army Council is such a strategic machinery, an instrument of defence in the hands of the government of the day, it is our submission that the Permanent Secretary, who is not necessarily a Member of the government of the day, may not feel committed to the policies and programmes of that government. And to that extent, Sir, his presence as a permanent Member of the Council may undermine the security of the work of that Council. We, therefore, submit, Sir, that the Permanent Secretary should be limited only to the administrative functions as Secretary of the Council and not as a permanent Member.

Then on Amendment (ii) (b) we feel, Sir, that the Amendment, as proposed by the Defence Committee excluding some other persons, except public officers from Membership of the Council as co-opted Member is inadequate. As you very well know, Sir, the retired Army Officers cease to be public officers and they can be very useful as co-opted Members of this Council especially in time of National emergency. Similarly, we feel too that some politicians who belong to the Government of the day and whose experience in military matters can be useful to the nation in time of emergency should also be eligible for co-option as Members of this Council. These are non-controversial Amendments and we crave the indulgence of this honourable House to accept these two Amendments. Before I conclude, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House to a fundamental error in the title of the Bill itself. It states—

*A Bill for an Act to make provision for the number of persons to constitute the Membership of the Army Council.*

It is only when you go down, Sir, that you realise that this is only a Bill for an Act to amend the existing laws. So, I would like to propose an Amendment to the title of this Bill. The Amendment should read as follows :

*A Bill for an Act to amend the Army Council Act No. 26 of 1960, and the Army Council Amendment Decree No. 17 of 1976, to make provision for the number of persons to constitute the Membership of the Army Council.*

[MR ETIENAM]

With this contribution, Mr Chairman, Sir, I beg to support.

**The Chairman :** That is a very valid point on the title of this Bill. We shall take on the Amendments—(ii) (a) and (b). There is no debate on this. The Mover of the second Amendment, Alhaji Umaru Abdullahi is not here, so that Amendment lapses. We had better dispose of the Amendments.

**Mr Kabir Umar** (Kaduna South) : There is a point of explanation.

**The Chairman :** Point of explanation on which matter?

**Mr Umar :** We are talking of different issues here. There are those who are in support of the Permanent Secretary being a Member of the Army Council, and there are those who are against the idea.

**The Chairman :** That is what I want to propose now. I am putting it to the House now.

**Mr Umar :** We would not be able to know exactly what to do because we are dealing with two things. Which one are we going to accept?

**The Chairman :** I would put them one by one. Hon. Members, on Amendment No. (i), this Amendment requires that the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Defence shall be the Secretary to the Army Council ; which means that the Permanent Secretary should not be a Member and Secretary but just be a Secretary to the Council.

*Amendment put and agreed to.*

Well we go to Amendment No. (ii) (b), that the Council may, whenever it deems it necessary co-opt any officer or any public officer or any person as a member of the Council for the purpose of any particular meeting of the Council but such officer or public officer or person shall have no votes and his membership shall cease at the end of that particular meeting.

*Amendment put and agreed to.*

We shall now go to main Amendment as proposed by the Chairman of Defence Committee—

The Federal Government has decided to reconstitute the memberships of the Army Council, *inter alia* to retain the President as a Member and Chairman of the Army Council. Accordingly the proposed membership of the Council in this Bill are as follows:—

(1) *the President who shall be the Chairman of the Council ;*

(2) *the Minister charged with responsibility for matters relating to Defence ;*

(3) *the Chief of Defence Staff ;*

(4) *the Chief of Army Staff ;*

Number (5) has just been amended.

*Amendment put and agreed to.*

**Clerk of the House of Representatives :** The Bill, as amended, reads :

*BE IT ENACTED by the National Assembly of the Federation of Nigeria and by authority of the same as follows :—*

1. *For subsection 1 and 2 of Section 7 of the Nigerian Army Act 1960, as amended by section 1 of the Forces Acts (Amendment) Decree 1976, there shall be substituted the following new subsections :*

1. *The Members of the Army Council shall be—*

(a) *The President who shall be the Chairman of the Council ;*

(b) *the Minister charged with responsibility for matters relating to Defence ;*

(c) *The Chief of Defence Staff ; and*

(d) *the Chief of the Army Staff :*

*The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Defence (charged with responsibility for matters relating to Defence) shall be the Secretary to the Army Council.*

(2) *The Council may, whenever it deems it necessary, co-opt any officer or any public officer or any person as a Member of the Council for the purpose of any particular meeting of the Council but such officer or Public Officer or person shall have no vote and his membership shall cease at the end of that particular meeting.*

2. *This Act may be cited as the Army (Amendment) Act 1980.*

*Clause 1—(AMENDMENT OF THE ARMY COUNCIL 1960 No. 26, 1976 No. 17)—as amended, ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

*Clause 2—(SHORT TITLE)—ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

**Mr Olusola Afolabi** (Oyo East) : Mr Chairman, hon. Members, I move that the Chairman should report progress to the House.

(The Deputy Speaker resumed the Chair)

**Mr Afolabi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the Bill be read a Third time and passed into law.

**Mr C. O. Agbor** (Obubra I) : I beg to second.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill reported with Amendments, read the Third time and passed.*

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, the Bill for an Act to amend the Army Council Act of 1960 so as to make provisions for the number of persons to constitute the membership of the Army Council has now been passed as amended and now stands as a law. All the Amendments were taken into cognisance. The Bill now stands as a law.

I call on the Leader of the House to again move that we fall into the Committee of the whole House to take the Air Force Council.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi** (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I move that the honourable House do resolve itself into the Committee of the Whole House and proceed to consider the Air Force Bill. I beg to move.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Yes, any seconder, please ?

**Mr H. M. J. Wachukwu** (Ukwa) : I rise to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

#### **Air Force (Amendment) Bill 1980**

A Bill to make provision for the number of persons to constitute the Membership of the Air Force Council—CONSIDERED IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE.

**The Chairman** : The Chairman of the Committee on Defence, there is no need for you to read the whole Report again.

**Mr John L. Laven** (Langtang) : Mr Chairman, Sir, hon. Members, in my report, you would notice that the membership of the Air Force Council ran the same as the Army Council. I beg to submit the Bill on the Air Force Council.

**Mr N. Uwechue** (Aniocha) : Mr Chairman, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to second the Bill.

**The Chairman** : Yes, the Chairman of the Committee on Defence.

**Mr Laven** : I hope the honourable House will take this now with due speed because it is just in line with the Army Council and since we have accepted the Army Council and passed it, I hope my recommendations and amendments on the Air Force Council will be concurrent with the first one. The membership is as amended, you have it there, and it is only the Amendment we are going to deal with. I beg to move, Mr Chairman, Sir, hon. Members, that the Bill should be amended as follows :

(i) In page C1, leave out lines 7 and 8 and insert as follows :

(a) *The President who shall be the Chairman of the Council.*

(b) Between lines 8 and 9, insert line 8 (a)—*The Minister charged with responsibility for matters relating to Defence.*

(ii) in page C 2 under *Explanatory Memorandum*, leave out from the beginning to the end and insert as follows :

*The Federal Government has decided to re-constitute the Membership of the Air Force Council.*

Accordingly, the proposed membership in this Bill are as follows :—

(a) *the President who shall be the Chairman of the Council*

(b) *the Minister charged with responsibility for matters relating to Defence*

(c) *the Chief of Defence Staff*

(d) *the Chief of the Air Staff and*

(e) *the Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry responsible for matters relating to Defence who shall be the Secretary of the Council.*

**Prof. O. Ola** (Ekiti West) : Point of Order.

**The Chairman** : There is a point of order. I do not know what he is calling me to Order for.

**Prof. Ola** : If you allow me, Sir, my point of order is Order No. 43—Second reading of Bills :

(1) *On the order for the second reading of a bill being read, a Motion may be made. That the bill be now read a second time and so on.*

That is before a general debate. We have not done that, Sir.

**The Chairman** : Pardon ?

**Prof. Ola** : Order 43 provides for a full reading of the Bill before any action, before any debate, before any discussion.

**The Chairman** : The Bill has been read, has it not ?

**An hon. Member** : He was not here in the morning.

**The Chairman** : He was here.

**Another hon. Member** : He was late.

**The Chairman** : Hon. Members, he was reading the Parliamentary System. When the Bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Defence, the deliberations of the Committee on Defence and whatever you did there including all the amendments you pushed in are regarded as the Second Reading.

**Mr Laven** : I stopped at (d). I shall now continue.

(e) *the Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry responsible for matters relating to Defence who shall be the Secretary of the Council ;*

*The Act empowers the Council to co-opt any officer or any public officer as a member of the Council for any particular meeting of the Council.*

Mr Chairman, I beg to move.

**Prince J. S. Sangha** (Bori I) : Mr Chairman, I rise to second the Bill.

**The Chairman** : Yes, Mr Uwandu may now move his Amendment.

**Mr E. D. N. Uwandu** (Mbaitoli) : Mr Chairman, my Amendment is as at 2 (ii) (a) (b) of the Air Force Council Bill.

I am still of the opinion that the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Defence shall be the Secretary of the Council, and not a member of the Council. That is, that he should just be in attendance, by virtue of the reasons I gave in the Army Council Bill.

Similarly, on (ii) (b), we are of the opinion that any other person could be a member of the Council as well as public officers, plus all other things which I said in the last exercise. By virtue of what I said during the last debate of the Army Bill, I most humbly urge the honourable House to delete the *Permanent Secretary* as member of the Council. Let him just be the Secretary to the Council and let other persons too be appointed to the membership of the Council.

[MR UWANDU]

With these few remarks, I beg to move the Amendment.

**The Chairman :** Is anybody seconding the Amendment?

**Mr Bassey Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I beg to second the Amendment. In doing so Sir, I would like to say that the reasons which I gave during the debate on the Army Council Bill are still valid. I would only go further to say, Sir, that it is not in the interest of our national security that the Permanent Secretary should be a member of the Council.

I also have an Amendment to the Title of the Bill. It should read :

*A Bill for an Act to amend the Air Force Act No. 11 of 1964 to make provision for the number of persons to constitute the membership of the Air Force Council.*

With these few remarks, Mr Chairman, I beg to second the Amendment.

**Mr S. A. Shiyanbola (Ede South) :** Point of Order!

**The Chairman :** What is your point of Order ?

**Mr Shiyanbola :** My point of order is Order No. 5. The Chairman should look at the time.

**The Chairman :** The House is sitting in Committee of the Whole House, and the time now is ten minutes to one o'clock. The wall-clock in this Hall is not correct.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I move that the question is formally put now.

**The Chairman :** The Question is on the Amendment proposed by Mr E. D. N. Uwandu and Mr Bassey Etienam on the Air Force Amendment Bill ; that is, No. (ii) (a) and (b) as listed on the Order Paper.

*Amendments put and agreed to.*

**The Chairman :** Hon. Members, the Question is that this Act may be cited as the Air Force (Amendment) Act 1980.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Clerk of the House of Representatives :** The Bill, as amended, reads :

*Be it enacted by the National Assembly of the Federation of Nigeria and by Authority of the same as follows :—*

1. For Section 4 of the Air Force Act 1964, as amended by section 2 of the Forces Acts (Amendment) Decree 1976, there shall be substituted the following new section :—

4.—(1) *The Members of the Air Council shall be—*

(a) *The President who shall be the Chairman of the Council ;*

(b) *The Minister charged with responsibility for matters relating to Defence ;*

(c) *The Chief of Defence Staff ; and*

(d) *The Chief of the Air Staff ;*

*The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Defence charged with responsibility for matters relating to Defence, shall be the Secretary to the Air Force Council.*

(2) *The Council may, whenever it deems it necessary, co-opt any officer or any public officer or any person as a Member of the Council, for the purpose of any particular meeting of the Council but such officer or public officer or person shall have no vote and his membership shall cease at the end of that particular meeting.*

2. *This Act may be cited as the Air Force (Amendment) Act 1980.*

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Chairman, hon. Members, I move that the Chairman do now report progress.

**Mr John Laven (Langtang) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*(The Deputy Speaker resumes his Chair)*

**Mr Olusola Afolabi :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members I move that the Air Force Bill be read the third time and passed into Law.

**Prince J. S. Sangha (Bori I) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill reported with Amendment, read the Third time and passed.*

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, the Bill has now been read the Third time and passed into Law and it will be sent to the Senate for their concurrence.

This House stands suspended till 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

*Sitting suspended : 1.00 p.m.*

*Sitting resumed : 3.20 p.m.*

## NOTICES OF MOTIONS

### The Pilgrimage Fare

**The Deputy Speaker :** This motion stands in the names of Alhaji Ibrahim Garba Bakwai, Alhaji Abdulkadir Ja'e and Mr E. O. Chukwu.

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II) :** I want to raise a Constitutional point of order on this Motion, Sir.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Let them move the Motion first.

**Alhaji Ibrahim Garba Bakwai (Sabon Birni) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name and in the names of two other Members :

That in view of the fact that Muslims and Christians are periodically required to perform pilgrimages outside Nigeria and in consideration of the fact that most of these followers are low income earners, this House requests the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to reduce the

travelling fare of pilgrims by 40 per cent as their mission is purely for religious purposes.  
I beg to move.

**Alhaji Saidu Kanti (Hade)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Yes, may we now have the Constitutional point of order.

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to move a Constitutional point of order on this Motion, Sir. My point of order arises out of the provision of Section 10 of the Nigerian Constitution of 1979 which, with your permission, I beg to read :

*The Government of the Federation or of a State shall not adopt any religion as State Religion.*

Mr Speaker, Sir, the intention of this Motion, as you find on the Order Paper, seeks to involve the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in religious politics.

**Some hon. Members** : No.

**Alhaji Bakwai** : Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Yes.

**Alhaji Bakwai** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, this Motion which I brought before this honourable House is a Constitutional one. I refer you to Chapter 4, page 17 Section 35 (a) of the Constitution which says, and with the permission of Mr Speaker, I would like to read :

*Every person shall be entitled to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom (either alone or in community with others, and in public or in private to manifest and propagate his religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice and observance.*

So, Mr Speaker, this Motion is constitutionally right. We are not influencing the people of Nigeria as a whole to adopt any one religion. The Constitution has given right to every individual person to worship in any religion he desires and to get any fundamental human right if anything is going to interfere with or prevent the smooth take off of his religion.

**Mr Etienam** : May I continue, Sir ?

**The Deputy Speaker** : Alhaji Rilwanu Garba, I better finish with one Constitutional point of Order before I take on another one. Mr Etienam, you were quoting Section 10 of the Constitution, have you not finished ?

**Mr Etienam** : Mr Speaker, Sir, the Motion says what it wants the State to do, that is, that this honourable House requests the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to reduce the travelling fare of Pilgrims by forty per cent as their mission is purely for religious purposes.

My point, Sir, is that Nigeria is not a Muslim State, neither is it a State based on the Christian religion. I think the Constitution, according to the Section quoted by my hon. Colleague, the Mover of this Motion, allows all citizens of this country freedom of religion. They are free to practise whatever religion they like without involving the State in the

practice of the religion. I think the intention of this Motion is to involve the State and the Government of this country in the practice of their private religion and belief.

**Prince T. O. Olusi (Lagos South)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to direct your attention to the Second Schedule, Legislative Powers Part I, under the Exclusive Legislative List. Item 2, Mr Speaker, Sir, says *Aviation including Airports Safety of Aircrafts and Carriage of Passengers and Goods by air.*

Mr Speaker, Sir, this Motion is not in respect of the adoption of any religion by the State. It is in respect of carriage of passengers and I think it is appropriately in order. That is my point.

**Mr Etienam** : May I complete my submission, Mr Speaker, Sir ?

**The Deputy Speaker** : You may complete it and I will give a ruling.

**Mr Etienam** : But another point of order has been raised.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Yes, he has raised another point of Order and I do not know what else you want to complete. I supposed the point of Order he has just raised is a very valid one. Section 10 of the Constitution which you are quoting says that the Government of the Federation or of a State Government shall not adopt any religion as a State religion. Hon. Etienam, is this Motion seeking to adopt any religion as a State religion ?

**Mr Etienam** : No, Sir. My contention, Mr Speaker, Sir, is that this Motion seeks to involve the State in the practice of partisan religion.

**Several hon. Members** : No ! No !

**Mr Etienam** : I feel that this is an infringement of Section 10 of the Constitution and the Motion should, therefore, be discountenanced.

**An hon. Member** : Point of explanation, Mr Speaker, Sir.

**The Deputy Speaker** : There is no point of explanation on this matter. The hon. Member raised a Constitutional point of Order on Section 10 of the Constitution and another valid observation has been made on the Second Schedule of the Constitution, Part I No. 2 on this matter, bordering on air fare and not the imposition of any religion on the State of Nigeria as a State religion.

#### Quorum

**Mr O. Akinboro (Oke-Ona/Owu/Gbagura)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I respectfully refer this House to Section 60 of the Constitution which talks about quorum.

**The Speaker** : There is no need for you to talk about quorum at the moment. We shall talk of quorum only at 4 o'clock.

**Mr O. Akinboro** : Mr Speaker, Sir, the rule says 4 o'clock but the provision of our Constitution says at any stage. In this case, the Constitutional provision over-rides the provision of our rules because this is a Constitution to which we must always be loyal.

**The Deputy Speaker :** As far as we are concerned, irrespective of the provision of Section 50 of the Constitution, the session of this House was suspended at 1 o'clock.

**Mr T. O. Badejo (Mushin Central I) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, if Section 270 is connected with Section 270 (3), then the Constitution by what we call incorporation by reference, refers legally and validly to our Standing Order. I repeat. Section 50 declares when to form a quorum, and Section 270 (3) refers validly to our own Standing Order and by the Standing Order it overrides, by incorporation by reference, because it reads :

*The Standing Order of the House of Representatives established under the former Constitution shall apply in relation to the proceedings in every other Legislative Houses.*

**The Deputy Speaker :** Is it a point of order ?

**Mr A. O. Omisore (Ife Central) :** Yes it is a point of order on the same thing.

**The Deputy Speaker :** On the quorum ?

**Mr Omisore :** Yes.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The Point of Order on quorum has been overruled. There is no question of quorum until 4 o'clock. That is the final ruling.

**Mr Omisore :** What the ruling amounts to is that the Constitution is not supreme.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The Constitution is saying that this House is not competent to transact business after such an interval as may be prescribed in the rules and procedures of the House, and the Rules and Procedures are in the Standing Order.

**Prince Awa-Ekpo (Eket II) :** Point of order : Section 15 of the Constitution says that :

*The motto of the Federal Republic of Nigeria shall be Unity and Faith, Peace and Progress.*

*2. Accordingly, national integration shall be actively encouraged, whilst discrimination on the grounds of place of origin, sex, religion, status ethnic, or linguistic association or ties shall be prohibited.*

Mr Speaker, I am submitting that the Motion on the Floor which calls for support to religious pilgrimages to Europe is a discriminatory act and, therefore, should not be allowed. Sentiments should be left aside.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Are you not expressing the same thing now ?

**Prince Awa-Ekpo :** Reduction of fares for those who go abroad is discriminatory to those who do not go. (Interruptions)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Shall we make progress before 4 o'clock. (Interruptions)

**Alhaji Bakwai :** I rise to move the Motion standing in my name, and in the names of two other hon. Members on the Order Paper—

That in view of the fact that Muslims and Christians are periodically required to perform pilgrimages outside Nigeria and in consideration of the fact that

most of these followers are low-income earners, this House requests the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to reduce the travelling fare of pilgrims by 40 per cent as their mission is purely for religious purposes.

Mr Speaker, hon. Members, if you compare the travelling fares charged in another country with the fares charged the pilgrims in this country, you will find that there is a great difference.

With your permission, I would like to state then my comparison. Mr Speaker, hon. Members, you will certainly share the same sympathetic feelings with me and you will discover that a person travelling from Lagos to New York, to and fro, pays ₦698. Nigeria Airways takes ₦5 while United States takes ₦2 and that is ₦705 for the distance of 6,542 miles.

Compare also a person travelling on a pilgrimage from Lagos to Jeddah, and back, the travelling fare charged is ₦534. Jeddah charges ₦25 while the Nigeria Airways charges ₦5. On the whole, the distance is 3,493 miles. Hon. Members, there can be no logical or scientific reason, if honesty is required, for a pilgrim to pay ₦500 for travelling 3,000 miles since ₦600 has been paid for 6,000 miles. Moreover this gentleman travelling to New York by any yardstick, whether he was on an official or personal trip, was likely to be on a commercial venture and he would have had every opportunity for transacting business there for profit.

Hon. Members, if at all you consider the fare charged using the same Nigerian Aeroplane— (Interruptions)

**An hon. Member :** Mr Speaker, the hon. Member is reading his speech. (Interruptions)

**Mr Omisore :** Mr Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member is not properly dressed, and so he should not be allowed to speak further in this Assembly. (Interruptions)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Please you should not read your speech. Just make your contribution.

**Alhaji Bakwai :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, judging from this comparison, this House will agree with me that there is injustice in the determination of the travelling fares, because it would be easily seen that by using the same Nigeria Airways, a person travelling for over 6,000 miles has been charged ₦600.

By any yardstick there is no point at all, if we are to practise justice, why you should charge a person travelling three thousand miles five hundred naira. I am, therefore, appealing to this honourable House to give full support to this important Motion, and to appeal to the President to direct the Committee which is in charge of the Pilgrim's Board to reduce this fare by forty per cent so that the low-income earners which constitute about seventy per cent of the population of this country, whether Muslims or Christians, will have the means to perform their religious obligations without encountering any unnecessary hardship which will prevent them from practising their religion efficiently.

If we refer to the main principle for creating human beings, the Almighty Allah has created us solely to worship Him. It is clearly stated in the Holy Bible

for the Christians as well as in the *Holy Quran* for the Muslims. It is also clearly known that journey on pilgrimage for the Muslims, by going to Mecca, is not for fun and it is not for commercial purposes. It has been in practice for several years. In the olden days, there were no means of transport and Muslims, because they were enjoined by their religion to perform pilgrimage, sacrificed their lives to travel on foot to Saudi Arabia for their religious obligations. Therefore, there is no need now for any society or any group of persons to overcharge those innocent people in their attempt to perform their religious duties. What is more, the Constitution of Nigeria has given liberty to any person to perform his religious belief without any interference.

In this respect, I am strongly appealing for the full support of this honourable House to investigate and find out from the Nigeria Airways organisation the reason for fixing the sum of five hundred and sixty naira for a journey of three thousand miles, while six thousand miles cost only six hundred naira. The Committee should find out whether this five hundred and sixty naira for three thousand miles is fixed purely on commercial, official or personal basis. I am still appealing to the President concerning this Hajj Operation—(Interruptions)

Hon. Members, you will discover that the Pilgrim's Board received eight hundred and forty naira for a pilgrimage, the remaining two hundred and seventy naira is being kept by the officials and they claim that they are spending two hundred naira on accommodation in Saudi Arabi, but the reason for keeping the remaining seventy-six naira is best known to the high officials of the Board.

Moreover, the intended passport being recommended by the Federal Government with which to perform Hajj which costs six naira to obtain is never issued by the Board. Rather they force the intending Pilgrims to take an International Passport and they receive one hundred naira on that passport only.

So, all these obstacles have been created intentionally to prevent the low income earners from performing their religious obligations. Hon. Members, I sincerely seek your indulgence to give this Motion your full support because it is not controversial. Thank you very much.

**Alhaji A. Abdulkadir Ja'e (Rano)** : I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Inuwa Ali (Jos North)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion, but in supporting it, I have a very small Amendment, Mr Speaker, if this House—

**An hon. Member** : You should not bring it now.

**Alhaji Alli** : I know that I have not brought my Amendment at the stipulated time, but it is a minor one. (Interruptions) My Amendment, Mr Speaker—

**The Deputy Speaker** : No, you cannot bring any Amendment now.

**Alhaji Alli** : All right, my suggestion is that this Motion should be referred to the Committee on External Affairs because the Pilgrims Welfare

Board is under the Ministry of External Affairs. Rather than discussing it now without sufficient data I think the Committee on External Affairs will be able to scrutinise everything and report back to us.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Is it Committee on Aviation or Transport ?

**Alhaji Alli** : Anyway, it should be whatever Committee that is appropriate.

My suggestion is to refer it to the Committee because, Mr Speaker, only recently I read in some *Dailies* that the National Pilgrims Board advertised for Airlines to submit their quotations.

I think this Motion needs some details which the Mover has not brought out very clearly. I am appealing to this House to refer this Motion to that Committee to scrutinise every thing and to report back to us in time. Mr Speaker, Sir, this is my contribution.

**Chief Thomas Ekpo Etuk (Eket III)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I have sympathy for this Motion and for having sympathy, I have come back home to think about Nigeria and the economical affairs of this country. There have been some Motions brought into this House because people want airlines and people want the Airways to come and open air fields here and there.

Already, there had never been a time the Nigeria Airways had ever declared a profit, they are always running at a loss. At the same time we are asking the Nigeria Airways to continue running at a loss by bringing humanitarian services into the economical affairs of this country. So, I believe that this Motion looks very good, but do we actually think about how much money is going to be involved ? Do we actually think about how much financially the country is going to lose ? Because already we have been hearing that the financial position of this country is not in order and, we are trying to force this country again into reducing the air fares.

I will really urge this House to suspend this Motion until the time that the record proves that we have got surplus money to reduce air fares in this country. Thank you, this is my contribution.

**Several hon. Members** : No ! No !

**Prince A. O. Awa-Ekpo (Eket II)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to oppose this Motion in its entirety. I want to place it on record because the integrity of this House is being tested by this type of Motion.

**Some hon. Members** : No ! No !

**Prince Awa-Ekpo** : I want to submit once again that in so far as this country allows freedom of religion, religious organisations are free to carry out their worship in any manner they like. But think of this—

**The Deputy Speaker** : There is a point of order.

**Alhaji Muhammadu Ali Kaita (Kaita)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I refer to Order 26 (2). It says :

*A Member must confine his observations to the subject under discussion and may not introduce matter irrelevant thereto.*



**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, Prince Ekpo continue.

**Prince Awa-Ekpo :** Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir. I want to say this, a point has been made that travelling fares between Lagos and New York is almost the same as between Lagos and Jedda whereas the distance between Lagos and Medina is almost half. Economic law is being applied in this case. When there is greater demand, there must be higher prices for insufficient products.

I want to say this. Last year 50,000 pilgrims alone went on pilgrimage, and this year it is proposed that about 60,000 will be going. If this country can allow as many as 60,000 pilgrims alone and maybe the same number of Christians—

**The Deputy Speaker :** There is a point of Order.

**An hon. Member :** I refer to Order 26 (2), we are not talking about the number of pilgrims going to Mecca, we are talking of reducing the fares.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Alhaji Ibrahim Garba Bakwai (Sabon Birni) :** Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** What Order number ?

**Alhaji Ibrahim Garba Bakwai :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I refer to page 17, Section 35 (1) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. It says :

*Every person shall be entitled to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.....*

Therefore any person is entitled to worship anyway he wishes without any consultation or restriction. Checking the number of people who make pilgrimage is a violation of this Section of the Constitution. The Constitution does not restrict the number of people to worship in any religious organisation.

**An hon. Member :** Point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Order what ?

**Mr G. B. Sadiku (Epe) :** I have a constitutional point of Order. I do not believe that this House, under the Constitution, has a right to dispute anything that seeks to prosper or to give improvement to the welfare of any people or Section of Nigeria. Section 34 of the Constitution—

**The Deputy Speaker :** Please, Mr Sadiku, take your seat ; you know that the point you are making is most invalid.

**Mr Sadiku :** I am talking on a point of Order, Sir.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Do you mean that you cannot sit down and advocate something to take place in a particular area of the country ?

**Mr Sadiku :** I am saying that we are not right to debate this point here. The point I am making is that we cannot say that if a group of people in Nigeria—

**An hon. Member :** What Section are you quoting ?

**Mr Sadiku :** I am quoting Section 16, Sections 35 and 14.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Please take your seat, Mr Sadiku. Unless you sit down and make an Act

here abolishing the Pilgrims Welfare Board, then that point of yours is out of order. Will you round up Chief Awa-Ekpo ?

**Mr Ekok Ojogu (Ikom) :** I have a point of Order. I refer to Standing Order 8 (1) and submit that there is no quorum in this House.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Are you moving for the suspension of Order 8 ?

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**The Deputy Speaker :** Let the Clerk check.

**Mr Fola Omidiji (Egba Alake) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move for the suspension of Order 8.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Is anybody seconding him ?

*Quorum taken.*

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, I believe so far we have three Committees meeting at the moment. They started the meetings after one o'clock. We have about one hundred and twenty Members present and with the people who are meeting in the three Committees, there is still quorum.

**An hon. Member :** That is rigging.

**The Deputy Speaker :** There is no rigging. The Committees are part and parcel of the proceedings. Hon. Member for Eket II (*Prince A. U. Awa-Ekpo*) can you round up, please ?

**Prince Awa-Ekpo :** What I am saying is that if the fares for the pilgrimages are already considered to be very high, and yet between 60,000 and 120,000 Nigerians go out of the country every year to drain our foreign exchange, I think it is high time we did not consider a thing that will bring about more drain to the economy. I sincerely appeal to this House. I am not opposed to pilgrimages as such. I do go on my own, but I think, as a religious man, I would like my religious organisation to sponsor and do everything about religious pilgrimage and not the Federal Government.

**The Deputy Speaker :** There will be the meeting of the Party Leaders in Badagry at five o'clock. It is unfortunate that we have these three Motions which I would very much have liked us to finish, but because of the meeting, the Question will be put now if you have no objection.

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to move that the Question be now put.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Any Seconder ?

**Mr Agya Agbujoro (Wukari) :** I beg to second.

*Question put.*

**The Deputy Speaker :** Please, I am putting the Question once more.

*Question put.*

**An hon. Member :** The ayes have it.

**The Deputy Speaker :** There is no quorum.

*National Assembly Debates (Representatives)*

1759

[*The Pilgrimage Fare*]

25 FEBRUARY 1980

[*Adjournment*]

1760

Hon. Members, this is a very sensitive issue and one finds himself in a very precarious situation. As such this Motion is adjourned until tomorrow.

Hon. Members, this House stands adjourned till ten o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly without Question put pursuant to Order 8 (2) at 4.15 p.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

*Tuesday, 26th February, 1980*

*The House met at 10.40. a.m.*

**PRAYERS**

(The Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

**VOTES AND PROCEEDING**

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, I have gone through the Votes and Proceedings for Monday, 25th February, 1980; they reflect the true position of things that transpired in this House. I have, therefore, approved them.

I have received one complaint which has nothing to do with the Votes and Proceedings from the hon. Member, Mr E. N. D. Uwandu, that the credit of the Amendment to his Motion was given by the Press to Mr Bassey Etienam, who did not share the credit. Mr Bassey Etienam, being a trade unionist, did, I believe, his manoeuvres somewhere. Mr Uwandu, unfortunately the members of the Press are not here to make the correction. I can see only one member of the Press there.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Hon. Members, it is unfortunate that due to the heat in the Chamber because of lack of its airconditioning and coupled with the fact that I am required in the State House at 11 o'clock, I have to adjourn the House till tomorrow. This will enable

the Business Committee to re-schedule the Motions on the Order Paper for today, Tuesday 26th February, 1980, because they contain some very explosive topics. The Motions need a bit of modification before they actually appear on the Order Paper, particularly the Motion on the Federal Roads. Everybody wants the tiniest road in his village to appear on this Order Paper because it will determine whether he comes back to this House in 1983 or not. So, I have been receiving Amendments and counter Amendments from Members, everybody inserting the roads in his Constituency, irrespective of whether they are trunk A roads or not.

**Meetings of Committees**

The Business Committee is meeting at 11 o'clock. Members of the External Affairs Committee should please meet the Chairman outside the Foyer now for a very short meeting.

**Mr E. B. Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Colleagues, I would like to move that in view of the intense heat in this Chamber, this honourable House do adjourn until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Aliyu Adamu (Ungogo) :** I beg to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Resolved :** That this House do adjourn until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 10.47 a.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Wednesday, 27th February, 1980

The House met at 10.20 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

The Deputy Speaker : Hon. Members, I have gone through the Votes and Proceedings of yesterday and have approved them as being the correct things that transpired here.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Committee Meetings

I have one or two announcements.

We have the following Committee Meetings for today—

Committee on Commerce will meet at 10.00 a.m. in Committee Room 3 ; Committee on Banking and Currency will meet at 10.00 a.m. in Committee Room 4 ; Committee on Education will meet at 10.30 a.m. to tour WAEC offices ; Committee on National Planning will meet at 12.00 p.m. in Committee Room 3 ; Committee on Communication will meet at 1.00 p.m. in Committee Room 4.

In respect of Committee Meetings, the Chairmen of the Committees, when making bookings of their meetings with the Clerk of the Committees, should please state the purpose of the meeting of the Committee or the subject matter of the meeting, so as to enable hon. Members to know if such purpose or subject matter interests them to make them want to attend hearing as witnesses, assistants of Committees or mere observers. That is, there are times Members would like to go and watch Proceedings of Committees on matters that they have an interest in. So, it is better for Committee Chairmen to be stating the purpose of their meetings for announcement to Members.

Letter from the President

We have received two letters from the Executive which read as follows—

Cabinet Office,  
Lagos  
26th February, 1980

Secretary to the Government of the Federation  
Ref. No. 59495/S.4/57  
The Hon. Speaker of the House of Representatives,  
National Assembly,  
Tafawa Balewa Square,  
Lagos

PRESENTATION OF BILL

I am directed by His Excellency, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, to withdraw the National

Provident Management Board and the National Dock Labour Board Bills which had earlier been lodged with the National Assembly and substitute the attached revised versions, which have been prepared, for the consideration of the National Assembly and subsequent enactment :

(a) A Bill for an Act to make provision for the reconstitution of membership of the National Provident Fund Management Board.

(b) A Bill for an Act to make provision for the number of persons to constitute membership of the National Dock Labour Board.

S. A. MUSA.

Secretary to the Government of the Federation

Inter-Parliamentary Union

We also received a letter yesterday from the Secretariat of the UNION OF AFRICAN PARLIAMENTS. The letter reads as follows—

Mr Speaker and Dear Colleague,

I have the honour to remind you that, further to the invitation of the Legislative Council from Zaire, the Union of African Parliaments will hold its next session in Kinshasha (Republic of Zaire) according to the following time table :

From 13th to 15th March, 1980 : 7th session of the Executive Committee ;

From 17th to 19th March, 1980 : 4th General Assembly.

The provisional agenda of the 7th session of the Executive Committee includes the following items :

- 1 Financial statement for 1979 financial year and budget for 1980 financial year ;
- 2 Application for membership ;
- 3 Agenda of the 4th General Assembly ;
- 4 Miscellaneous.

The provisional agenda of the 4th General Assembly includes the following items ;

- 1 The New International Economic Order as seen by African Parliaments ;
- 2 The role of the Agricultural Sector in the development of African countries ;
- 3 New membership ;
- 4 Budget of the U.A.P., for the 1980 financial year ;
- 5 Place and venue of next General Assembly ;
- 6 Miscellaneous.

The Zaire National Group agreed, upon by the Provisional Secretary General of the U.A.P., material welcoming conditions of the delegations.

So, Zairian Authorities have decided to assume responsibilities for ;

Room reservation and accommodation on full-board terms for the heads of all delegation plus two other members of each delegation (three persons of each delegation) ;

## [THE DEPUTY SPEAKER]

*Making a chauffeur-driven car available to the head of each delegation ;*

*Making buses available to all other delegates on a shuttle system between their hotels and the meeting places.*

*In order to be able to welcome their colleagues in the best possible fashion, the Zaire National Group would wish to know, as quickly as possible, the number of members of each delegation.*

*These informations must be directly forwarded to : Citoyen NZONDOMYO A'DOKPE LINGO, First Vice-President of the Legislative Council and Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee of the U.A.P., B.P. 3170—KINSHASA—GOMBE. Phones, 30 842 and 31 298 KINSHASA Telex 21 354 NATION ZAIRE.*

*Copy must be addressed to the Provisional General Secretariat of the U.A.P.—01 B.P. 1381—ABIDJAN 01—Phone 32 60 69, Telex 2338 ASSENACI.*

*In other respects, I have the honour to ask you to be kind and communicate to the Provisional Secretary-General your conclusions from the resolutions taken during the meeting of RABAT and the activity report of your Group.*

Now, we were not inaugurated at that time and therefore we were not at the Rabat meeting.

*Please accept, Mr Speaker, and Dear Colleagues, the assurances of my highest and fraternal consideration.*

They sent a special Member of the U.A.P. yesterday to deliver the documents for the application, and so on, for our completion. They require a minimum of three official delegations from Nigeria, but if the National Assembly can sponsor more Members they say they will be very grateful to receive as many Members as possible, but it means the National Assembly will have to foot the bill for the additional Members over and above three.

Hon. Members, the Clerk of the Senate has just come into the Chambers to plead that, after the announcements that I made in connection with the meeting of Committee Members in the afternoon only, the Chairmen are now beginning to put their Committee Meetings in the morning. So, both the Senate and ourselves are now scrambling for Committee Rooms to meet.

So, please, for the future, it is understandable that the Senate hold their Committee Meetings in the mornings so that they have their sittings in the afternoon ; and if we have our sittings in the morning, we should do our Committee sittings in the afternoon. Members of the Committee on Commerce should note that there is no electricity in the room they were supposed to meet, Committee Room 3. Therefore, they cannot meet there. Instead they are shifting the meeting to my office because the Minister of Commerce is coming this morning.

On the point that was raised by the hon. Member for Mbaitoli (*Mr E. N. D. Uwandu*), the hon. Member for Oron II (*Mr Edet Bassey Etienam*) can you make your point clear, please ?

## Personal Explanation

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Colleagues, I want to say, on a point of Personal Explanation, that I was surprised yesterday by the announcement made by the hon. Deputy Speaker about the publicity given to the joint Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for Mbaitoli (*Mr Uwandu*) and myself, on the Bills on the Army Council and the Air Force Council respectively. I want to say, with due respect, Sir, that I reject totally the implications of the insinuations made on behalf of the hon. Member for Mbaitoli (*Mr Uwandu*) on this matter. The fact is that none of us controls the media, and whatever way the media feel to publicise any issue is based on their own sense of news value. I think it was most unfair for hon. Member for Mbaitoli (*Mr Uwandu*) to have used the good offices of the hon. Speaker to make the statement which was made on the Floor of this honourable House yesterday.

I would like to implore the hon. Speaker not to entertain this type of insinuation because it is not in the interest of the spirit with which we have been working in this honourable House. If two hon. Members propose an Amendment to an issue, a Motion, or a Bill jointly, I think it is only fair that both of them should be given a hearing. It will be unfair for one party to claim that the Amendment was solely his personal responsibility. This is the explanation I would like to make, Mr Speaker, for the purpose of record, because the insinuations of yesterday were most unfair to me.

Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, the hon. Member for Oron II (*Mr Edet Bassey Etienam*), we have been having this problem in the honourable House on making reports by the media on Movers of Motions and so on. There were instances where people who actually moved Motions just get blocked out and people who ordinarily just got up to speak on the Motion got the whole coverage by the media. This really, as you can see, makes hon. Members become a bit unhappy and frustrated that there is an indirect way of their being silenced. So, I just pray that the members of the media will correct this impression.

Yes, the hon. Member for Ikeduru (*Mr T. N. Ochiama*) now can speak.

## Despatch Riders

**Mr T. N. Ochiama (Ikeduru) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, of this august House, in as much as we are here to work for the stability, progress and unity of this great country, I think it is also very adequate for the Executive or any other body to realise and also accord us our democratic rights and protocols which we know are due to us.

My statement, Mr Speaker, Sir, is going to be brief this morning. Sometime ago, some despatch riders were attached to us to assist us in coming to the National Assembly and thus minimising the problems of traffic congestions on the roads to the National Assembly.

Mr Speaker, Sir, irrespective of wherever the arrangement was made, since last week, we have not seen anybody, and nobody has ever escorted

hon. Members to the National Assembly. Mr Speaker, Sir, I am appealing to you, on behalf of the hon. Members, to use your good offices and make sure that by tomorrow the hon. Members of this august House are escorted to the National Assembly, because I think it is our democratic right that these people should accord us this protocol for only one despatch rider to help to bring us to the National Assembly. Thank you.

**Several hon. Members :** Sit down !

**Some hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr F. O. Iyayi (Okpebho) :** Point of explanation.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Point of explanation ? You should put it in writing and bring it to me. You just do not get up and say Point of Explanation, you write and bring it.

**Mr Iyayi :** I just want to do a little personal explanation.

**The Deputy Speaker :** No, Sir, you have to follow the order. All the other Members who spoke have their papers here with me.

## PRESENTATION OF PUBLIC BILLS

### National Dock Labour (Amendment)

#### Bill

A Bill for an Act to make Provision for the Number of Persons to constitute Membership of the National Dock Labour Board ; presented by Alhaji Y. Kaltungo, read the First time and referred to the Committee on Labour.

### National Provident Fund Management Board (Amendment, etc.) Bill

A Bill for an Act to make Provision for the reconstitution of Membership of the National Provident Fund Management Board ; presented by Alhaji Y. Kaltungo, read the First time and referred to the Committee on Labour.

## NOTICES OF MOTIONS

### Audit Report

**Mr T. O. Badejo :** Mushin (Central) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name and that of my noble Friend, Alhaji Hamman Dikko—

That this House direct the Public Accounts Committee to scrutinize the Annual Report of the Auditor-General of Nigeria on the accounts of the Federation for the year ended 31st March, 1978, and ascertain the present position of the losses as well as cases of misappropriation contained therein and report back to the House.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Is anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr S. A. Oduntan (Ifu/Otta) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, Mr Badejo.

**Mr Badejo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I would say, with due respect, that this Motion hangs on three walls,

as contained in the Order Paper. These three walls are, first to scrutinize, which means to make detailed examination ; secondly, ascertain the losses, which means acts, facts or processes of taking money or tangible assets from someone by trilogy of causes, namely, misfortune, accident or carelessness ; thirdly misappropriation, which means illegitimate use of money which does not belong to one.

I shall conduct my debate on these three elemental walls as contained in the Motion. Hon. Members know that there must be a preamble before any speech is made. I am conscious of the rules of debate, but I would make my preamble very short.

My preamble is this, Mr Speaker, There is no nation which has a superfluous supply of its resources. I am also sure that no nation has ever attained any superfluity in goods or services. So, the purpose of economics is allocation of resources, and no nation has ever survived where its allocation of resources has been done haphazardly.

Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of this House, one will go on the voyages of discovery by scanning this report. This is a national forum. As jurors for this country, it is for you to decide whether our resources have, been well husbanded or not.

Now let me get back to my destination. As for detailed examination, or scrutiny, with all respect, I believe that this is not our job here. That is for the Committee. I would, however, say something on this aspect in passing. But in order to highlight or show the seriousness of this matter, I will dwell extensively, and subject to the permission of the Speaker, I will sometimes refer to some portions of the Report.

At paragraph 20, page 8 of the Report, reference is made to a large amount of money, a sum of ₦5,850 and ₦16,411. The incident took place in Lagos. The money was drawn on the Central Bank of Nigeria, on behalf of Customs, to be paid to one company known as Stokvis. I shall spell the name so that you can know—

**The Deputy Speaker :** No, do not worry ; you can continue.

**Mr Badejo :** At the time this money was drawn, this particular Company was asking for settlement for services rendered. In the interim this crossed cheque had been altered, the payee had been altered, and this particular money was paid to another Company. So, the original Company, up till today, has not got that money, not a kobo of it. Now, Sir, let us go back to page 6, paragraph 8.

This time, Sir, this happened under our nose here. There is a collusion, a conspiratorial, squalid, heinous, act by the Government Printer and the Federal Ministry of Works, Do you know what happened, Mr Speaker, Sir ? It involves a lot of money, twenty-five thousand, nine hundred and ninety-three naira, ninety-eight kobo. An official of the Ministry of Works made fictitious requisitions, with forged signatures to the Government Printer for supply of stationery to the Ministry of Works. The pretence was that the Ministry of Works needed to use these lots of stationery. In the criminal process, that huge sum of money was pocketed

[THE DEPUTY SPEAKER]

And with all due respect, these armed robbers, robbing with their pens not with their cutlasses or with any sharp instruments, have taken away with about twenty-five thousand naira and above. Let us go back a bit, Sir. If you go to page 7 paragraph 16—

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member, every Member of this House has a copy of the Report.

**Mr Badejo :** Yes, but I want to highlight to the nation the seriousness of this Committee. It is very serious, Mr Speaker, Sir, and one of our duties is to see how our resources are being spent. I am speaking not only to the House but also to the nation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, page 7 paragraph 16, takes us to Benin, to show you that this corruption has federal character, Mr Speaker, so, we go from Lagos to Benin. At the National Museum, a sum of twenty-six thousand, three hundred and thirty-three naira was not accounted for. That would have been all right. And to show you that corruption has no sex barrier in it, a curator of that very Museum diverted thirteen thousand naira to her personal account in her home town. So, Mr Speaker, Sir, let us go to Owerri, page 7 paragraph 12. We are now at Owerri, so we have to go round. A sum of twenty-six thousand naira—

**Some hon. Members :** Million, why just thousand, thousand ?

**Mr Badejo :** I am on my leg, I do not want to be confused. I have been on this job of advocacy for a long time. I do not want to be confused.

A sum of twenty-six thousand naira at Owerri Police Station has been fizzled out. Why ? There were two gentlemen there. They had what you call contracts based on fictitious, bogus payments and up till today that money has been fizzled out.

Now, Mr Speaker, Sir, let us go to Port Harcourt : page 9 paragraph 24. This is a classical way of fraud involving forty-four thousand naira. Mr Speaker, Sir, do you know the *modus operandi* of this ? I will try to say it in resume. The Abandoned Property Implementation Committee made an offer to a would-be buyer about abandoned property for the sum of forty-four thousand naira. One of the conditions of acceptance of the offer was that this amount should be deposited in the Central Bank, and that the paying-in slip should be taken to any treasury office to get treasury receipt. Do you know what happened ? This gentleman deposited forty-four naira and he doctored his paying-in slip by adding three zeros, and between the words *forty-four* and *naira* he added the word *thousand*. So, he completed in a classical form his fraud both in figures and in words.

But that is not enough, Mr Speaker. This fraudulent person had the effrontery and the audacity to go back to the Implementation Committee of Abandoned Property saying he did not want this property again either because he did not need it or he was not there. This fraudulent enemy of this nation was given a crossed cheque of forty-four thousand naira. And that is not all. That very day he opened an account at Port Harcourt Pan Bank. The only Pan Bank I knew when I was young is no more. I never knew there was another Pan Bank. He deposited the

crossed cheque fraudulently that day with the Pan Bank and forthwith he withdrew forty-four thousand naira. It was a crossed cheque, with no reference, nothing ; which means there was a grand conspiracy from the Bank Manager up to the Implementation Committee.

Let us go back, Mr Speaker, Sir, to page 11, paragraph 33. That is one more river to cross. We are now in Cross River. (*Laughter*).

At Calabar, Sir, there was one clerical officer who, under a cock and bull story, said that a sum of ₦74,393.48 was lost in the safe he was keeping, but unfortunately for him, after Police investigation, a sum of ₦54,500 was recovered from both his father-in-law and his mother-in-law.

**An hon. Member :** That is better.

**Mr Badejo :** You say that is better. This is how our money has been fizzling away and his father-in-law automatically has come to be a Bank.

Now, Sir, page 29 shows that there are many other similar and serious frauds in Ikeja, Kaduna, Jos, Ondo and everywhere. I am not holding brief for anybody, or any fraudulent person for that matter. Mr Speaker, Sir, if you go to page 14, paragraph 41, and I will read that portion subject to Mr Speaker's permission :

*The Returns of arrears of Revenue submitted show that the revenue totalling ₦157,901,765.33 remains uncollected as at 31st March, 1978.*

With all due respect, Mr Speaker, Sir, this is recklessness and I have it on good authority that a species of recklessness is a criminal intent. All these are happening in this country where we are crying every day that we are poor. Though the auditors have done a good job, but this revenue was not even categorised and we do not know whether it is revenue on taxes from imports and exports otherwise known as customs and excise duty, whether it is on mineral tax, otherwise known as royalty, or whether it is on Company Tax. This was not spelt out at all in the Report.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am saying this because this money must be recovered to the last kobo. No serious-minded country has allowed its kobo to go out by frauds, and for us to stay here and to allow over ₦150 million to fizzle away just like that by one Mr Nobody, is a slap on the face not only of this honourable House, but of this nation as a whole. For a country of people who are suffering day and night to make honest living to suffer such large frauds is a serious indictment to this nation, and with the help of all of us, the situation can be arrested. (*Laughter*). Some people are laughing! This is a very serious matter and we can laugh out our heads to hell. (*prolonged laughter*) If you can allow these frauds to go unchecked, I do not know where we are getting to. (*Applause*)

**Mr Speaker :** Mr Badejo, will you please put on your cap.

**Mr Badejo :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Finally, Sir, I will talk on misappropriation, and I will only take one single example. Look at the

Kings College there. It was founded in 1908 and a lot of men of respectability, men of good morality, men of timber, not men of rotten timber, have passed through that institution. Do you know what happened in that College? A contract of about ₦45,000 was signed in 1975 to build a classroom. Let us forget about the value of the contract; I will tell you how the fraud I am trying to expose was perpetrated. Forget about the value for the moment, and refer to paragraph 93, page 29 of the Report. A contract of ₦45,508 was signed for the construction of a classroom. On the surface, it looks simple but do you know what happened? The contract was paid in three separate instalments. Some time in March 1976, ₦27,484.74 was paid later, another sum of ₦18,484.74 was paid and finally, another sum of money was paid. These three sums paid resulted in an overpayment of ₦27,484.74 to the contractor. That is not all. Even though they had no right to award this particular contract, they lobbied this contract on Federal Estimates for 1976-77. That was not all. They know they will be caught. In law, there is what we call *teaming and leading*, and a good criminal lawyer should trace everything. This is for both sides.

In 1977-78 again, they took these Estimates to the old site at *Victoria Island*. That was not all. They signed another contract for the construction of three classrooms to be built at this very old site for ₦27,312.50 per classroom and up till today, we have not seen the terms of the contract. Mr Speaker, Sir, when a classroom—

**Chief S. I. Alete** (Ikwere/Etche I): On a point of order, Mr Speaker, Sir. My point of order is Order 26 (2). My hon. Colleague is wasting our time and he is not talking in the spirit of the Motion. The Motion says that we should refer the Auditor-General's Report to the Public Accounts Committee of the House to ascertain losses and misappropriations and he is now doing what the Committee would do, if we agree on this Motion.

**Several hon. Members** : No ! No ! Sit down.

**Chief Alete** : I am coming, (*Interruptions*) Mr Speaker, Sir, I feel the hon. Member should keep to the Motion and not give us details about which we have no evidence before us. Thank you.

**The Speaker** : Mr Badejo, would you wind up, please.

**Mr Badejo** : In winding up, Mr Speaker, Sir, I have to thank the author of this Book. On the Floor of this honourable House, I am thanking the Auditor-General and his group; despite the odds they are facing they did not join the multitude to do evil and if there is any nobel price to be awarded, I think these gentlemen are worthy of one. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**Alhaji Hamman Dikko** (Maiha) : Mr Speaker, I rise to contribute to what my Colleague hon. Badejo has already said in support of our Motion. Mr Speaker, many Ministries and Departments do not recognise and take action on the Auditor-General's Reports. Mr Speaker, I would like to mention that on page 9, paragraph 3 of the first Report of the Public Accounts Committee of 1979, it was stated that the Board of

Customs and Excise did not produce 160 vouchers amounting to ₦8,163,382.20k, during the Audit Inspection. With your permission, Mr Speaker, I will read the relevant paragraph in the Report of the Public Accounts Committee, on page 9 paragraph 3.

#### *Board of Customs and Excise*

*The Committee saw that one hundred and sixty payment vouchers involving a total amount of ₦8,163,382.20k were not produced for Audit inspection. The representatives of the Board of Customs and Excise informed the Committee that they had lost the list of vouchers and they had requested the Federal Audit Department to forward details of these vouchers to them to enable them to look for the vouchers on their Department. The Committee viewed this laxity on the part of the Board of Customs and Excise seriously and therefore directs that the Board should find the missing vouchers and produce them to the Auditor-General.*

The representatives of the Board of Customs and Excise informed the Committee that they had lost these vouchers. Mr Speaker, the loss of these vouchers meant that the vouchers were false. They drew this amount and put it in their pockets.

With your permission, Sir, I will read Financial Regulation 627 which says :

#### *Loss of Payment Voucher*

*If a payment voucher is reported lost prompt investigation will be made. It must be established immediately whether payment has been made or whether the cash drawn is still on hand. If a loss or fraud had occurred action will be taken in accordance with Chapter 15 of the Financial Regulation.*

With your permission, Sir, I will also read Chapter 15 of the Financial Regulation :

*F.R. 1501 (a) where a cash loss to the value of ₦200 or under has occurred without fraud or theft being involved, Permanent Secretaries or Heads of Extra-Ministerial Departments are personally empowered to surcharge the officer or officers responsible up to the full amount of the loss, provided the officer's salary is not above level 09. The Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Extra-Ministerial Departments are personally responsible for ensuring that any surcharges they authorise are duly recovered. Where loss is treated under this Regulation the Permanent Secretary or Head of Extra-Ministerial Department must immediately send a brief report of the circumstances including the value of the loss and the names of the officers he has surcharged, together with the amount of the surcharge in each case, to the Secretary, Federal Public Service Commission, Auditor-General and the Accountant-General, Federal Ministry of Finance on receipt of this Report and after consideration and acceptance of it, write-off approval, if still required, will be conveyed to the Permanent Secretary or Head of Extra-Ministerial Departments by the Accountant-General, Federal Ministry of Finance.*

(b) A shortage treated under this Regulation will be charge as a personal advance against the officer responsible for the cash, pending a decision.



[ALHAJI DIKKO]

Mr Speaker, these 160 vouchers amounting to over eight million Naira under the Board of Customs and Excise are actually false vouchers. They drew the money and put it in their own pockets for their own personal use. I said this because during the Audit inspection, they did not produce these vouchers.

Mr Speaker, Sir, on page 15 of the Report of the Public Accounts Committee of 1979, there is an amount of money to the tune of ₦1,149,000 as advance account outstanding against some public officers. It was negligence on the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance for not recovering the outstanding advance accounts. Therefore, Mr Speaker, we are appealing to the Committee on Public Accounts to investigate these losses of public funds with immediate effect.

With this very little contribution, I hope my colleagues will support our Motion. Thank you very much.

**Mr Cornelius Okpa Agbor (Obura I)** : I rise to support the Motion. We are citizens of a great country and it is all our intention that Nigeria should lead Africa in particular, and perhaps, the world in general. If we are going to keep to that aspiration, we must have to purge our nation of all corruption. We also know that in some countries of the world, and in Africa as well, people have been shot over corruption in terms of embezzlement of public funds, and we know that no nation can progress unless it has made the utmost use of its resources. Nigeria is one of the most blessed countries in the world that have a lot of these natural resources. We have oil, mineral resources, agricultural commodities and so on. I think if we make proper use of all these our resources and direct the funds or monies that accrue from these resources, we should be able to better the lot of the common man in the country.

I would like to pray the Committee on Public Accounts to make sure that, in their efforts to scrutinise all these malpractices, they should bring to the Floor of this House what legal actions have been taken in respect of the recommendations of the Auditor-General. Otherwise, I do not see any reason why this nation should employ Auditors at all, except we are prepared to implement their reports.

I whole-heartedly support the Movers of this Motion because any corrupt nation cannot progress anywhere. We must make sure that all those people who have mis-appropriated public funds, and enriched themselves for their own self-aggrandisement, must be brought to book. In which case, the entire Members of this House should give their support to this Motion. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Alhaji Saidu Kanti (Hadeija)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion, but before I deliver my speech, I would like to commend the Movers of this Motion, because, Mr Speaker, Sir, there is widespread report in this country of fraud, mis-appropriation, embezzlement and breach of trust as revealed in this audit report. Everybody who reads it will find that, in the Ministry of Defence especially, the Army opened a current account without the authority of the

Accountant-General, with the amount of ₦148,759.03. Further investigation revealed that it originated from a remittance of ₦1.6 million from the Central Bank.

This is contrary to the financial regulations of this country, and it is not accounted for in the balance sheet up to date. Again, Sir, it is in the same Ministry of Defence that an examination was made on some Air Force vouchers in the year 1966-67, and it was revealed that un-receipted payment of 129 vouchers amounted to ₦4.2 million which are not supported by any documents—letters, signatures, bills or invoices. Up to date no reply has been received from the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Defence.

If you go to page 50, section 66 of the Auditors, Report, under Ministry of Health, there was to be a gross profit from the sale of Lottery Cards, estimated at ₦23,000 but only ₦2,000 was collected from the sale of these lottery cards. There is, therefore, a short-fall of ₦21,000. Why is it so? They were sold and the money was collected, and maybe it was put in some people's pockets.

Also on page 51 of this Report on Rent on Government Property, Senior Staff quarters, an estimate of ₦1.5 Million was made, but only ₦201,000 was collected while there was a short-fall or under-collection of ₦1.2 Million. These are just rents which should be deducted from salaries of civil servants or Government officials and put in the Treasury. The money was perhaps collected but was not paid into Government Account.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of this honourable House to the need to take this matter up, and treat it with seriousness. We should ask the Committee on Public Accounts to investigate the matter and recover the money. Thank you.

**Chief S. I. Alete (Ikwerre/Etche I)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to oppose this Motion. Do not be surprised that I am opposing it and I will give you my reasons. Mr Speaker, Sir, before I go on to give my reasons for opposing the Motion, I would like to outline the duties of the Public Accounts Committee, and the procedure by which Auditor-General's Reports are dealt with. This is necessary so that we will be quite clear on whether what we are talking about now is correct or not.

I happened to have had the opportunity to serve on Public Accounts Committees. Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, Public Accounts Committee is, in fact, a Committee of Parliament, and the procedure for dealing with the Auditor-General's Report is this. When Parliament receives the Auditor General's report, they automatically refer it to the Public Accounts Committee whose duties are clearly set out in the instrument by which they are set up. If you look at their duties, you will see clearly that first they have to scrutinize the Auditor General's Report and ascertain losses, misappropriation or what have you.

**An hon. Member** : Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Yes, what is the order number ?

**Mr Gbadebo A. Adewumi** (Oshogbo South) : It is a constitutional point of order, Sir. What he is referring to is under the Westminster Constitution and not the Presidential Constitution.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Which section of the Constitution is that ?

**Mr Adewumi** : I am referring to our Constitution.

**The Deputy Speaker** : What number ?

**Mr Adewumi** : He did not cite any section, so I do not need to cite any section too.

**The Deputy Speaker** : You said you had a constitutional point of order, which section is that ?

**Mr Adewumi** : I am saying that the procedure he is referring to is under the Westminster and not under the Presidential system.

**The Deputy Speaker** : What is the order now under the new Constitution ?

**Mr Adewumi** : Order 262.

**Several hon. Members** : No, it is a lie.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Chief Alete, please go ahead.

**Chief S. I. Alete** : Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, Sir, for protecting me. As I was saying before I was rudely interrupted—

**Some hon. Members** : No ! No !

**The Deputy Speaker** : Will you withdraw that language please ?

**Chief Alete** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I withdraw the word *rudely*. Considering what my hon. Colleague said, the Motion itself supports my argument to the effect than my referring to the procedure is quite correct, otherwise, we would not have bothered ourselves to refer this matter to the Committee on Public Accounts.

Well, I was outlining the duties of the Public Accounts Committee. When the Auditor-Generals reports is referred to it, it scrutinises it and ascertains losses or misappropriations or what-have-you.. The members have power within their jurisdiction to examine even individuals connected with anything in the accounts they examine, and to do everything by which they arrive at the report they submit to Parliament. It is when they have made their recommendation to Parliament that we would then sit over it and decide on the recommendation. We do not sit in this House to scrutinise the Auditor-General's Report and take action ourselves.

The Public Accounts Committee has a defined statutory duty to do for us because it is a Committee of the National Assembly. So, I do not see why we should stay here and begin to do the duties of the Public Accounts Committee.

**The Deputy Speaker** : There is another point of Order.

**Mr Yusuf Ibn Muhammed** (Moro) : The first Constitutional point of order is Section 82 of the Constitution and the second one is Section 97 of the same Constitution.

**The Deputy Speaker** : What has that got to do with the Motion that is before us ?

**Mr Yusuf Ibn Muhammed** : Mr Speaker, Sir, the last speaker was outlining the work of the Public Accounts Committee, but under Section 82 (1) (a), we have power vested in this House. I beg to read :

*Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, each House of the National Assembly shall have power by resolution published in its journal or in the Official Gazette of the Government of the Federation to direct or cause to be directed an investigation into—*

*(a) any matter or thing with respect to which it has power to make laws.*

So, this House is competent to investigate any matter, be it money or otherwise.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Who is disputing that ?

**Mr Yusuf Ibn Muhammed** : He is saying that he is opposing it.

**The Deputy Speaker** : No. From what he is saying, he does not mean that. The Motion is seeking that this Auditor-General's Report be referred to the Committee on Public Accounts. This is not contradictory. The Public Accounts Committee is a Committee of this House.

**Mr Yusuf Ibn Muhammed** : Mr Speaker, Sir, the man is opposing the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker** : He is opposing the Motion, but he is not saying that it should not be referred to the Committee on Public Accounts.

**Mr Yusuf Ibn Muhammed** : He said that we do not have the right to do it, but the Constitution gives us the right to do it.

**The Deputy Speaker** : My understanding of what the Member who is opposing this Motion is saying is that he is pointing out, in effect, that this Motion should not have come to this House, but automatically, the Auditor-General should have taken this report straight away to the Public Accounts Committee to investigate what went wrong. That is what he is talking about.

**Several hon. Members** : No ! No !

**The Deputy Speaker** : I am saying that this is my understanding of what the Member is talking about. Chief Alete, would you correct me if I am wrong. Is that not your inference ?

**Chief Alete** : What I am saying, Mr Speaker, Sir, is this. I have outlined the procedure by which the Auditor-General's Report is dealt with by Parliament. We will receive the Auditor-General's Report here. It is after receiving it that we can refer it to the Public Accounts Committee. The Auditor-General's Report is not before us here now, and we cannot through the back door refer it to the Public Accounts Committee. This is the point I am making.

**An hon. Member** : We have been given a copy each.

**Chief Alete** : Having been given a copy does not mean that you have introduced it to the House.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, Section 79 (3) of the Constitution says :

*The Auditor-General shall submit his reports to each House of the National Assembly, and each House shall cause the reports to be considered by a committee of the House of the National Assembly responsible for public accounts.*

I allowed debate on this Motion because the Business Committee allowed it to come up on the Order Paper, but I believe that this Motion should not have come up on the Order Paper.

**Chief Alete :** That is my point, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Section 79 (3) of the Constitution points out that the report will be laid on the Table in the House as coming from the Auditor-General, and automatically that Report is referred to the Public Accounts Committee. With due respect, Mr Badejo, unfortunately, the Report from the Auditor-General was simply put into the pigeon holes of Members but this was wrong. It should have been laid on the Table here, accepted and distributed to Members.

**Chief Alete :** Mr Speaker, Sir, thank you very much for protecting me and confirming my argument on the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Up till now, the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee has not been appointed. Therefore, I think we had better put the Question, and when the Chairman is appointed, this thing will be referred to him immediately. Chief Alete, please take your seat.

**Chief Alete :** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, that is my point.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I respectfully move that the Question be now put.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Resolved :** That this House direct the Public Accounts Committee to scrutinise the Annual Report of the Auditor-General of Nigeria on the accounts of the Federation for the year ended 31st March, 1978, and ascertain the present position of the losses as well as cases of misappropriation contained therein and report back to the House.

#### National Road Transport Corporation

**The Deputy Speaker :** Motion number 2, National Road Transport Corporation, is standing in the names of Mr Yusuf Ibn Muhammed and Mr G. B. Sadiku.

**Mr Yusuf Ibn Muhammed (Moro) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to point out some minor mistakes. My name is not Yesufu, it is Yusuf Ibn Muhammed. Secondly, there is a mistake in the choice of word. It is the National Road Transport Authority, not Corporation.

(402)

#### National Road Transport Authority

Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, the Motion standing in my name and in the name of hon. G. B. Sadiku reads as follows :

That this House direct the Committee on Transport to examine the present road transport system in the country and therefore to explore the desirability of establishing a National Road Transport Authority with a view to co-ordinating road transport facilities throughout the Country. I beg to move.

**Mr S. A. Adesina (Kajola) :** I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Yusuf Ibn Muhammed :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. In discussing this Motion, references would be made to other means of transport we have in Nigeria. One of these transport systems is the Nigerian Railways or the Rail Services. It is observed that while the colonial administrators were constructing the rails in the country in the past, it did not appear as if they took the transportation of human beings and goods into consideration, rather it was based purely on economic reasons. What I mean is this. The rails starting from Lagos did not reach Jos until Tin was discovered. The same thing happened to Enugu. Not until Coal was discovered, rails did not get to Port Harcourt, and so on and so forth.

Recently, the Federal Military Government saw the rail services as one of the ways they could provide transport facilities for this nation. At present, it has been announced by the Federal Minister for Transport, and read by all of us from the different *Dailies*, that between now and 1983 all the State Capitals will be linked with rail services.

Having said that on the rail services, we move on to Water. We all know that water is not an easy means of transport to diversify since water itself is a natural phenomenon. Where there is no river or ocean there is nothing anybody can do to improve the services. But again, it has been announced by the Federal Minister of Transport that in addition to the present sea ports we have in Nigeria, we would be having an additional fourteen river ports in the country. With the permission of Mr Speaker, I beg to read out all the towns which would be included :

*Disclosing this at a press briefing in Lagos yesterday, the Minister of Transport Alhaji Umoru Dikko said, the Ports would be cited at Omisha, Idah, Ajaokuta, Baro, Jebba and Yekwa on River Niger. Others will be at Ibi, Lau and Yola on River Benue as well as Yenegoa, Idembe, Oguta and Patani in Creek Routes. This is an attempt to further improve the transport system in the country in regard to Water-Ways.*

The other means of transport we have in the country is by Air and the Nigeria Airways is trying its best to have more international Airports in the country and Air-strips in various State Capitals and so on.

In bringing out this Motion, therefore, it appears to me as if we have seen so far, government activities in the improvement of rail services, water services

and air services, but there is nothing concrete yet announced in terms of road transport system in the country. The prayer of this Motion, therefore, is that it is our view that, in this country, since Government is not taking active interest in the Road Transport System, a lot of damages have been done especially to our lives. It was reported in the *Daily Times* of yesterday and I quote :

*During the last five years 35,426 people died on the road.*

One of the reasons for road accidents in this country is that Government does not have any great interest in the road transport system. While I am not calling on either the Federal Government or the State Governments to take over road transport system, we are trying to suggest that a National Road Transport Authority should be created within the Ministry of Transport. This will be responsible for highly commercial transport system in Nigeria. We have big commercial transporters by road in the country namely; Ekene Dili Chukwu of Enugu, Kano Expressways, different State Lines and so on. But, there is no co-ordinating organ of the Government or authority which will set certain standards and procedures, which anybody or any private organisation that wants to embark on road transport must follow, especially when we talk of long distance road transport in Nigeria. There must be an authority therefore, which would be regulating the activities of these road users especially the transporters. I am not saying that the Federal Government should be interested in how a taxi, *molue* or *kiakia* operates within Lagos or any other place but they should be interested in highly commercialised and centrally controlled road transport system.

If we look at Section 14 (2) (b) of the Constitution, that is, under the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy, we find :

*the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government ;*

Because of lack of this Authority in co-ordinating the road transport activities in the country, we are recording perhaps one of the highest rate of road accidents in the world.

Unfortunately, when we talk of accidents in the country, hardly can we see a single white man being involved in these accidents. When I was discussing with a Canadian friend about this high rate of accidents on our roads, his own feeling was that we had no value for our lives and that we were just killing ourselves and nothing was being done by the government to remedy the situation. Therefore, there is need for the establishment of the National Road Transport Authority to oversee the activities of the road users.

Not only that ; still on the constitutional aspect of this Motion, if we look at the Exclusive Legislative List, page 99, Item 57 (d), this honourable House has the power to make laws to regulate tourist traffic in this country. So this Motion which we have brought has a constitutional backing. We can make laws to regulate tourist traffic in this country, and since these roads have been neglected in the past, I think it is high time this House did something about them.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member, what interpretation are you giving to Item 57 (d) ?

**Mr Muhammed :** The interpretation I am giving is that this honourable House (even if it is not in the plans of the Executive) has power to make laws to regulate tourist traffic in this country.

**The Deputy Speaker :** That is, the amount of people coming into the country. The traffic you mean here, is not in the sense of motorable roads.

**Mr Muhammed :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am still on the constitutional backing. If Mr Speaker says that that one is not suitable, there is another under the Concurrent List at page 103, paragraph 17 and I read :

*The National Assembly may make laws for the Federation or any part thereof with respect to—*

*(a) the health, safety and welfare of persons employed to work in factories, offices or other premises or in inter-State transportation and commerce including the training, supervision and qualification of such persons ;*

I am interested in transportation here. If this Motion we are praying the House to support is accepted and the Motion is referred to the Committee on Transport, there are so many values to be derived ranging from social, economical and job opportunities. For instance if there is any authority which is regulating the activities of the road transport system in Nigeria, the benefits to be derived would be that accidents on our roads would be reduced. This is one of the social values. The economic value is that private individuals, firms or organisations may be interested in setting up highly commercialised transport system. It is because the government did not take any active interest in participating in the affairs of the road users that many organisations are not taking active part. For instance, we have people who own coaches and wagons with the Railways. We have different Air liners but they are all under the control of the Nigerian Airways Authority.

If this House adopts this Motion and the Committee on Transport studies the situation, private individuals firms or organisations may be interested.

Another thing is that if this motion is accepted there will be need for the National Road Safety Corps. Some States have already embarked on this Road Safety Corps system and if any of them is working at all, I am sure that of Oyo State is working. If we have the National Road Safety Corps that would be patrolling the major or trunk A roads checking the speed of motorists and so on I think this is not too much because of the number of lives that would be saved on the Nigerian roads.

Another thing that would be derived from this Motion is that different State Governments or even the Federal Government will have Driving Schools all over the country. This would remove the recklessness of just issuing a driving licence to any body who just happens to know how to handle the steering. This is one of the causes of the high rate of accidents on our roads. If we have Driving Schools this would help greatly and these schools can have departments in all the Technical Schools in the country. May be after getting your first

[MR MUHAMMED]  
School Leaving Certificate you could go there and learn how to drive, and at the end of your driving course, if you succeed, you would be issued with a Certificate. This would minimise the loss of lives on our Nigerian roads.

My Co-mover's contribution is pregnant with so many facts on this Motion, so with these few remarks, I beg to take my seat. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr G. B. Sadiku (Epe)** : This Motion is non-controversial, because failure in the past to have this corporation or authority has caused the country a lot of money, a lot of lives, a lot of emotional discharge and a lot of human waste. Today, we are only waking up to remedy the past and to be more conscious of our duty to this nation. Somebody who talked on transportation had this to say—

*Transportation has had profound influence on currents of history. No nation has ever become great that did not give major attention to development of transportation.*

Nigeria had done this, and we have the Ministry of Transport. Recently we split the Ministry of Transport into two Ministries—Ministries of Transport and Aviation. Now there are four major areas of transportation in the country. There is the Airways under the Ministry of Aviation, there is the Ministry of Transport and under it we have the Railway Corporation and the Inland Waterways but there is no corporation at all for the Highways. This is exactly, what we are asking the House now to address its mind to.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Hon. Member, there is a National Freight Company.

**Mr Sadiku** : That is haulage. There is no authority at all for the Highways and that is exactly what we are addressing our minds to. The most useful transportation to us in the country is the Highways. And the reasons are these ; the greatest number of people use the roads. A low percentage go by air, very few again by the Railways and still fewer by the Inland Waterways. Not only that, the largest quantity of commodities in this country are conveyed on the roads.

The roads are the most penetrating means of transport into every part of the country. We know the limit of the operations of the airways in the country. In areas where there are no natural water or lagoon or ocean, the operation of the waterways is very limited. It is on this basis therefore that that aspect of our transportation which is most important has been neglected in that there is no separate body taking care of it, whereas much attention is being put upon the minor ones.

Between 1975 and 1980, I have statistics here of how much this country had spent on each of these areas of transportation and that of roads takes the greatest—very fantastically greater than any of the rest. Listen and let us get the figures. Between the period we are talking of, ₦885 million was spent on railway transportation. On Civil Aviation, ₦476 million ; on Inland Waterways, ₦110 million ; on development of Ports ₦322 million. Road was ₦4,355.96 million. All the rest put together is just

around 40 per cent of how much was spent on roads. And yet, each of these has a corporation monitoring its activities, but highways has none. That is the first point.

On Administration, it is the same thing. We are talking of development now. Money spent on pure administration, paying the staff is as follows : road consumed ₦176,000 whereas Aviation consumed just in terms of, not the technical but, staff a bit less than a million. This is a proof for us that these roads need the attention which is commensurate with the money we are spending upon them.

Not only that ; the progressive way Nigeria has gone with roads is very remarkable. Expansion on the railways had been static for over a decade, but road has always been a centre of attraction, a centre of improvement, and a centre of continuous emotional involvement of government.

In 1950 we had only 45,000 kilometres of road in Nigeria. In 1960, 45,000 increased to 72,000. In 1975, 72,000 increased to 80,000 kilometres. You can see how progressively we have been going on in this matter, and to say that this progression lacks a control or a guiding principle is, in fact, a very big imperfection in our administration.

Not only that ; every State is affected. We can count on our finger tips how many States are involved in water transportation. We can also count on our finger tips how many States are involved in air transportation. In fact, it is just now we are moving a Motion that the Capital of every State should be endowed with an aerodrome.

But I want to give you statistics of how many projects right now each State is having in its hands in terms of highways. Anambra has 39 projects as at now. Bauchi has 17 ; Bendel has 68 ; Benue 28 ; Borno 13 ; Cross River 40 ; Gongola 25 ; Imo 57 ; Kaduna 22 ; Kano 33 ; Plateau 31 ; Kwara 31 ; Lagos 67 ; Niger 24 ; Ogun 41 ; Ondo 69 ; Oyo 40 ; Sokoto 22 and Rivers 25. In fact, the existence of any State economically or politically is unthinkable without the highways, yet there is no separate body assisting to dictate directives or principle of administration to these various States.

Not only that. We found out that these roads link us with the outside world and they are in fact our mouthpiece of living. We have two great ports in the country, that is, Port Harcourt and Lagos. The roads we are talking of now are the roads which carry all the goods from US and from overseas. Every importable commodity we can think of at all that we do not manufacture here, these roads are the channels of their diffusion and penetration into the country.

These are the roads again that connect every part of the country from East to the North, from East to West, from West to South. I need not enumerate the major roads, but in fact they are here.

Not only that. Of recent, Nigeria is embarking on two carriage-way system of roads and we have already spent millions and millions in the construction of these two carriageways, like Lagos-Ibadan Express Road, Ibadan-Oyo-Ilorin Express Road, Warri-Benin is under consideration, and Kaduna-

Zaria-Kano, Port Harcourt-Enugu, Shagamu-Benin-Asaba Express roads. All we are only doing is spending money in building these roads, but doing nothing on how they can be more lasting and how they be better administered.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I think we should direct our minds more to the evils that have been happening without the body we are now talking about. What are the evils which have been digging and hunting this country without the body we are now discussing? The greatest of them is loss of lives.

There are statistics of loss of lives on our roads. It is so fantastic, so terrible, so alarming, so shocking and so shameful to us as a country. It looks as if we are a country of suiciders. We are procreating, we are multiplying in thousands but we do nothing to check mortality. One year's statistics I will give you alone and all over the States. This is only 1976. In Lagos (Ikeja) there were cases reported of accidents of 5,917. But what mortality? 351 died. When we talk of one death, you can imagine how many people are tied to one man's death—his family, his relations even the place where he works. At one time the death of one man threw the whole nation into chaos. We know what it was when our former Head of State Murtala Muhammed died. So, when you talk of one man dying, you can think of innumerable connections and losses to the country.

In Ibadan alone there were 4,098 cases reported and the death was 759. In Akure we had 375 mortality on road accidents alone. In Benin we had 539; in Calabar we had 629; in Enugu we had 383; in Owerri we had 384; in Port Harcourt we had 251; in Sokoto we had 168; in Kaduna 531; in Minna 349; in Ilorin 244; in Jos 481; in Makurdi 288; in Bauchi 452; in Kano 499; in Maiduguri 310; and in Yola we had 271, a total of 6,761 died in Nigeria alone in road accidents.

**Mr Aka Ogbobe (Igbo Etiti) :** Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Mr Ogbobe :** Order No. 26 is my point of order. What he is saying now is not relevant to the Motion on Road Transport Corporation. I do not see how this can stop accidents. It is quite irrelevant.

**Mr Sadiku :** Thank you, very much. You are only helping me more by raising this point.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Can you confine yourself to the substance of the Motion.

**Mr Sadiku :** I am proving to you now that if this Authority that is, this Corporation, exists, it will do a lot of things and the job will be the job that will minimise Road accidents.

What are some of the things this Corporation will do? It will increase the number of Policemen who will be at check points and it will also control speed which in turn will minimise accidents.

**The Deputy Speaker :** The hon. Member for Epe (*Mr G. O. Sadiku*), will this Authority control the number of policemen or employ more policemen?

**Mr Sadiku :** It will employ more Policemen.

**The Deputy Speaker :** This authority?

**Mr Sadiku :** What I am saying is this, Mr Speaker Sir—

**Mr Tubo O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II) :** Point of order!

**The Deputy Speaker :** There is a point of order

**Mr Bob-Manuel :** My point of order is Order No. 29 (1) :

*Debate upon any motion, bill or amendment shall be relevant to such motion, bill or amendment, except in the case of a substantive motion for the adjournment of the House.*

Now, the Motion before this honourable House is very mis-represented. The Motion says National Road Transport Corporation, but our hon. Colleague is telling us about accidents and something about highways. If we call the Motion National Highway Corporation, then he can debate like this, but it is not that. He is talking about roads. We want Highway Corporation, and not Transport Corporation. Thank you.

**Several hon. Members :** No! No!

**An hon. Member :** Highways and roads are the same.

**The Deputy Speaker :** They are not the same. National Road Transport Corporation and National Highway Corporation are not the same.

**Mr Sadiku :** That seems to embarrass me because we expect that the hon. Member will know that Roads and Highways are synonymous terms.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Are you amending your Motion to read National Highway Corporation now?

**Mr Sadiku :** No, Sir, it is National Road Corporation. The roads are the highways.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Can you confine your observations to the roads then?

**Mr Sadiku :** The Roads are the Highways. Not only that, hon. Members, this body we are talking of now will also make the choice of vehicles. As at now, what we are witnessing is the situation where Nigerians are being transported in vehicles that are not even suitable for animals to be transported with. The choice of vehicles for passengers will be determined by this body. Hours of departure from place to place will equally be regulated. Not only that; the load weight that should go on each road will be determined. The conditions of some of our roads and highways, as at now, are deteriorating because the weight of the vehicles plying them are by far heavier than what they were built for. So, a body like this which will cater for management and occupation of our roads will also determine the weight of the vehicles to ply the roads and effectively monitor to ensure that these regulations are not contravened.

The drivers who will be employed to drive on our highways will be better trained. This Authority will see to it that the issue of licences is better regulated. The Road Worthiness Certificate being given now is imperfect and not thorough. So this Corporation will also make sure that this aspect of road worthiness is once and for all settled

[MR SADIKU]

There are some amenities needed on our roads that are at present lacking. For example, if you are travelling from here to Benin, there are no side mechanics or workshops for occasional breakdown. The body like the corporation which we are discussing will make provision for repairs and first-aid attention at intervals. When an accident happens on our roads, now you cannot be treated until you get to the next hospital. An accident victim is left to suffer, thereby worsening his condition. Petrol Stations will also be sited at intervals. These are just a few of some of the activities which this authority or Corporation will take care of.

We should address our minds to one point, that is, this Authority which we are talking about is not a novelty in the world of transportation. We are copying the American system and I will just give you what obtains in the United States of America. In America, we have an overall authority in charge of transportation and under this authority are various Corporations. There is a Corporation in charge of the Coast, one in charge of Aviation, one in charge of the Railways and one in charge of the Urban Mass Transportation. There is also an Authority in charge of River St. Lawrence, and there is also another one in charge of the Highways and Roads called, the Federal Highway Administration. So, what we are talking of now is exactly what obtains in the United States. Since we have the Airways Corporation and a body taking care of the Inland Waterways, we are also asking that a body should be constituted to take care of transportation on the Roads and we have no doubt that this body will be of a very immense use to us.

Constitutionally, some parts of our Constitution give directives on this job, that is, regulating the economy of the country, maximising the welfare of the people and making sure that the people are not exploited. Without this body we are talking of now, fares are charged arbitrarily as there is no control. There are some people who are called *Agbero* in our Motor Parks. They do not perform any job but only serve as intermediary, and collect money which belong to the transporters.

One point we want to clear about this Motion is that, as at now, our Transport Industry is in private hands. We are not asking that it should be removed. The private transporters will continue to own their private vehicles which will be plying the roads, but what we are asking for is a regulation of their mode of movement and even more than that. Where a body of people come up as transporters, the Government should be ready to make available to them loans to improve on their vehicles and to purchase standard vehicles for carrying passengers. So, in the same way as the Government subsidizes small scale industries, and agriculture, Government should also subsidize individuals or a group of people who may be interested in this area of our industry.

Mr Speaker, and the House, I am stating that this Motion is a Motion that should receive your maximum support in order to complete the complexity of our transportation system just as we have body in charge of the Airways, a body in charge

of the Ports Authority, a body in charge of the Inland Waterways, and a body in charge of the Railways, so we are seeking that this honourable House should ratify a body to be in charge of our roads and the Highways Transportation.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Ambrose Gapsuk** (Shendam East): Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to apologise on behalf of my Colleagues who have actually brought this Motion before this honourable House. The Movers are so confused that I consider the Motion to be a waste of our time.

I am not at all clear about what exactly is the philosophy behind this Motion. Is it actually an authority for the construction of roads for this country? Or, is it an authority for the control of traffic and regulating of the sizes of vehicles that this country can use? I cannot really understand the object of the Motion. This is why I felt that, my time, having been wasted, most of you, hon. members, would have felt the same thing.

In fact, this very Motion appears to be socialistic in orientation, a philosophy towards which, to the best of my knowledge, this very country has not yet tilted. It would appear that if we want to compare the proposed Road Transport Authority with the Airways or Waterways, it would mean, therefore, that we are trying to say that the private transporters should be ousted, and the Federal Government should introduce the vehicles and direct the flow of traffic on roads as this Motion seeks. That is what I think this Motion is trying to achieve. If I am wrong, I apologise to the Movers of this Motion. But if it is so, Ladies and Gentlemen, have we yet agreed to jettison our present free enterprise economy? Or, are we saying that our electors would agree to be pushed out of private transportation business for the Federal Government to move in and provide vehicles to cater for all our interests? In any case, is our economy as sound as to really satisfy the need of these transportation requirements? The answer, to me, is just no.

I would have thought that my Colleagues would have suggested a kind of authority that, perhaps, would take away from the Ministry of Works the construction and maintenance of roads. Here again, I would say that it would not even work. This is because I come from a State (Plateau State) in which, half-way within the Military rule, there was a proliferation of corporations. There were Water Corporation, Electricity Corporation, and all kinds of corporations which were mounted in my State. I personally observed, with disgust, that these were conduit pipes through which public funds were going to be siphoned; and it did happen. This was what happened in Plateau State. The NPP Government has now reorganised and re-merged various corporations of this nature which we discovered were actually veins for the escape of public funds. Therefore, I would say that I seriously oppose any authority or corporation that would offer the opportunists, who were going to manage that type of authority, a way of enriching themselves.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to oppose.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, is any PRP Member willing to speak ?

**Alhaji M. I. Mustapha (Gaya South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to oppose this Motion.

My reason for opposing this Motion is that the Movers of this Motion did not put their Motion clearly. In actual fact, we cannot nationalise our transportation system. This is because most of the vehicle owners and the drivers are Nigerians. Then, what is the need for centralising the business ? After all, some State Governments, like the Kano State, Bendel State, and Plateau State, have introduced something like Bus Transport Corporations, and we learnt that these corporations are running at a loss. So, there is no need to reintroduce this system at the Federal level.

Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, is any GNPP Member willing to speak ?

**Alhaji Mohammed A. Yelwa (Yawuri) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, looking at the Motion, the Movers of the Motion are emphasising the desirability of establishing a National Road Transport Authority. But seriously, the arguments advanced by the Movers have been based on anti-accidents, road supervision, roadside mechanics, *et cetera*. In my view, these are not necessary at all. I do not see any reason for singling out road transportation and forming an Authority on it as at now.

Already, Nigeria is having too many sick babies in the corporations. It is better for us to try and improve the corporations that we have now to a certain standard, than to create more corporations. Let us improve these corporations we have now to the extent that they would be profitable to the country, rather than organising an authority for some people to have other corporations put under them.

What I thought the Movers of the Motion should have asked the Transport Committee to do should have been to find ways of getting revenue for the Government through road transportation. This can be done by reducing licence rackets, by improving the atmosphere along the transport line, by discouraging the Police from harassing transport owners, and also by encouraging transport owners to buy more vehicles so that more vehicles could ply roads. This would be better than having one authority on road transportation.

With these remarks, I do not support the creation of the National Road Transport Corporation.

**Dr Eze O. A. Nwala (Ikwerre/Etche) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to oppose this Motion.

As previous speakers have indicated, the Movers of this Motion are not quite clear on what they have in mind. As a result, they have been unable to effectively deal with the Motion. If we are to understand them, they want the Federal Government to intervene in a private sector business, that is road transportation or movement of people and the flow of goods along our Highways.

I think that it is a very dangerous proposition to really make a case wherein Government should intervene in every aspect of our economic life. I think this is very unhealthy for a capitalist, free oriented economy like ours. In fact, it would be better for us to de-emphasize direct Government intervention in private sector business rather than to encourage it.

Now the previous speakers have pointed out the inefficiency of existing institutions of this nature, and I beg to draw your minds to such existing institutions as N.E.P.A. We all know the problems of N.E.P.A. That is a Corporation run by the Federal Government and it has been unable to provide efficient services. Now, why do we have to create another conduit-pipe just for the sake of draining our limited financial resources ? I think this Motion is uncalled for, and I want Members to kill it right away.

With these few remarks, I beg to oppose the Motion.

**Chief Thomas Ekpo Etuk (Eket III) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I rise to oppose this Motion. The Motion, as I find it, has no meaning in the sense that the Movers of this Motion have not been able to tell us really what they want. They have not been able to tell us what was their intention, their mind and their thinking on the Motion they have brought to this honourable House.

We have all seen the way transport system is being run in this country. The Lagos City Transport is an example. We know the trouble we have. The vehicles cannot be maintained ; there are no good mechanics ; there are no spare-parts. We look around and see how reckless Government drivers are. Immediately a thing belongs to the Government, it becomes everyman's thing, and nobody takes care of it. I feel if anybody will encourage the Federal Government to sink in millions of naira to buy vehicles, start to employ drivers, start to employ people who have to buy spare-parts on commission and so on, you will discover that the whole thing will be a waste.

So, I believe this Motion lacks substance. At the same time, I would like to appeal to this House on the type of Motions we bring. We should bring Motions with good intentions and not Motions that look so flamboyant that if members do not look into it very well, this House will one day be misled. If we look at this type of Motion on Transport system and everybody says it is transport system and we approve, the House will be misled and tomorrow when it comes to be known, the whole thing will revolve back on this House. So, I beg to oppose this Motion in its entirety.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Is there anybody speaking for the Motion ?

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to explain some implications in this Motion. When I read the Motion on the Order Paper, I thought the Motion was on Highway Transportation, that is something like the Federal Government opening a Highway Corporation such as the Nigerian Airport Authority which



[MR BOB MANUEL]

is responsible for the infrastructure of the Nigeria Airways. Now, the road from Lagos to Ibadan is being maintained by the Federal Ministry of Works. If the Motion were on the need for a Highway Corporation to maintain this road perfectly so that there would be no accidents, this House could view it otherwise; but coming to tell us now to create another Corporation in order to buy buses, trailers and to maintain these things again is very wrong. But, if the Movers said that they wanted Highway Corporation in order to compare with Nigerian Airport Authority, the Nigerian Ports Authority and the Nigerian Inland Waterways, then I think this House can contain such a Motion; but not a Motion calling on the Federal Government to establish Road Transportation Authority to usurp the functions of the private businessmen, who carry passengers and goods from there to Ibadan, Ibadan to Abeokuta and so on. I think that is very wrong for this Motion.

So, on this score, I would like the Movers to withdraw the Motion and bring it back in a very good form so that the House will understand what they mean. Now, the House do not understand what they mean, and then it will be very wrong for anybody to stand and say he opposes what he does not understand. The Members who spoke said that they did not understand the Motion, and you cannot oppose what you do not understand. From my understanding, this Motion is on Highway Corporation. The Movers should take the Motion back and bring it to reflect the way the Highway Corporation could be established in the Federation so that the roads from Port Harcourt to Aba, Aba to Enugu, Lagos to Ibadan, Ibadan to Abeokuta, and Sokoto to anywhere would be properly maintained. If these roads are maintained, I think the accidents will be less. So, they should withdraw this Motion and bring it back as National Highway Corporation and the Committee to look into it should be the Committee on Works. So, I beg to explain. *(Laughter)*

**The Deputy Speaker:** You are not explaining the Motion and you are not supporting it. I want one speaker who will seriously support the Motion and one speaker who will seriously oppose it. Then we will put the question.

**Prince T. O. Olusi (Lagos South):** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion. The proposers of this Motion have put forward sufficient argument to justify the content of the Motion, and I would only like to suggest that instead of having a Corporation we should have an Authority.

Road Transportation in this country is important, and it is the live-wire of our economy, therefore, it is an aspect of our life that should receive the serious attention of the Federal Government as well as of the National Assembly. Therefore, Mr Speaker, Sir, no amount is too much to spend on the improvement of our road network. I commend the explanation of the hon. Member for Degema II (*Mr Bob-Manuel*) to the House. The Movers of the Motion directed your attention to incessant accidents on our roads, and this is another important aspect that ought to receive your attention.

A Member spoke about some Corporations not functioning well and about some buses not functioning well. To some extent, this may be correct but you, as a representative of the people, have a duty to improve those Boards and those Corporations that are not functioning well.

Mr Speaker, with these few remarks, I urge all hon. Members to support the Motion. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Members, there is no need for further debates on this Motion. The Movers of the Motion want to move the withdrawal of the Motion.

**Mr Sadiku:** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am seeking the protection of Section 24 of the Standing Orders. This Motion, and what we are seeking to establish, are of such enormous importance that this country cannot afford not to understand it, or afford to throw it away. We take it that the implication, the meaning, the importance and the goal of the Motion have not been fully understood by this House, and we take the responsibility that the Movers are under the obligation to convince their other hon. Colleagues as to the necessity and meaning of the Motion. Therefore, because this Motion is an important one and I am convinced that in the future, after we might have given you further elucidation on it, you will all support it, I beg leave to withdraw the Motion as at present, and bring it up later after the spade work has been properly done.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I will put the Question for the Movers to withdraw the Motion.

**Mr Sadiku:** Mr Speaker, Sir, Order 30 says:

*A Member who wishes to postpone to some future occasion the further discussion of a question which has been proposed from the chair may claim to move "That the debate be now adjourned", or in Committee of the whole House that the Chairman do report progress. If such Motion is agreed to, the resumption of the business shall be set down for the day named by the Member in-charge.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Mr Sadiku, what do you want us to do now?

**Mr Sadiku:** I am saying that we should postpone debates on this Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Members, when you raise that Standing Order 30, it is to seek postponement of a debate that is already in progress. Now, with this debate we are having, we have come to the point at which the Question is to be put. It is now for us to put the Question that the Question be now put. If you say no, then the debate would be adjourned and we continue at a later date, but if you say yes, I will put the Question and dispose of it. Mr Afolabi, do not let us waste too much time on this.

**Mr Olushola Afolabi (Oyo East):** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hold on Mr Afolabi, there is a point of order.

**Mr F. A. Akinbisehin** (Ifesowapo) : Mr Speaker, Sir, may I, with due respect, draw your attention to Order 8 which concerns the quorum of this House. I believe that—

**The Deputy Speaker** : Will the hon. Member please take his seat and let us make progress.

**Mr Olushola Afolabi** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I respectfully move that the Question be now put.

**Mr G. N. Uwechue** (Aniocha) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question put and negatived.*

## ADJOURNMENT

**Mr Olushola Afolabi** : Mr Speaker, Sir, considering the fact that the time is far spent now and it is almost 1 o'clock, I beg to move that the House do now adjourn till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

**Mr Yahaya Aremu** (Ilorin East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That the House do now adjourn till tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 12.55 p.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Thursday, 28th February, 1980

The House met at 10.30 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, I have gone through the Votes and Proceedings of Wednesday, 27th February, 1980 and I have approved them as being the correct thing that took place in the House yesterday.

I have one observation to make to the Editors and Reporters here on the report in the *Hansard* made on my opening remarks about Mr Uwandu's explanations on the Motion he moved. That comment should not have appeared in the *Hansard*. You should therefore make the necessary correction, please, I believe the Editors were informed yesterday about this.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Committee Meetings for today are as follows :

The Committee on Commerce will meet at 10.00 a.m. in Committee Room 3. They are to meet the Chairman of the Price Control Board ; I believe they are now meeting in the Speaker's office. The Business Committee is to meet at 10.00 a.m. in Committee Room 4. The Committee on Public Service Matters will meet at 1.00 p.m. in Committee Room 3. The House Committee (H.R.) will meet at 1.00 p.m. in Committee Room 4. The Committee on Public Petitions will meet at 1.30 p.m. in Senate Committee Room. The Committee on Judiciary will meet at 1.30 p.m. in the House of Representatives Chambers.

I believe Members of the Special Committee on NNPC should meet because of further documents received by the Secretary from the Chairman of the NNPC, so that they could fix a tentative date for the meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Hon. Members, I would like to seize this opportunity to inform you again, as I did on Monday, that the Speaker hopefully will be arriving from London today. Because we are not going to have sitting tomorrow but Committee meetings, this is my day of bowing out before the Speaker takes his seat on Monday.

I would like to seize this opportunity therefore, to thank all of you for the co-operation you have given me at a time when we were having some very serious and very explosive issues in our hands. Nobody is above mistake, and you should please forgive any mistakes I might have made while on this Chair. Whatever is being conducted from this Chair is never deliberate but may be an act of omission. I, therefore, thank all of you for the co-operation you have given me and I hope we will continue later on as we have been doing ever since.

Personal Explanation

**Mr V. U. Ekpo (Ikot Abasi I) :** Mr Speaker, I want to draw the attention of this House to a publication in the *New Nigerian* of 11th February, 1980 on page 2 which says : *Shell Company drills 24,500 barrels of oil daily from my constituency Ikot Abasi in Cross River State.*

Since this publication, there has been series of excitement arising from the public as to the payment of compensation, by what ever name called. I understand there was a time when compensation was paid to the State Government, and the State Government in turn made some compensation, by whatever name, to the people of the area.

The poverty-stricken people of Ikot Abasi, having been told of the abundance of oil and the drilling of so many barrels per day had become excited. Some of them thanked God as they were thinking money has come. But they are disappointed that no money has ever been sent to them. I use this opportunity therefore to call on the Federal Government and the Revenue Allocation Committee, now working, to find ways and means whereby the payment of royalty to the State Government could be restored so as to make adequate compensation payable to the poverty-stricken people of the area from where this oil is drilled.

Secondly, I would like to call the attention of the Federal Government using this media, to the oil which is reserved in all parts of this country.

**The Deputy Speaker :** We are not a media here.

**Mr Ekpo :** I am really sorry. I withdraw the word *media*. I am calling the attention of the present Administration, through this honourable House, to look into the question of commissioning more wells to be drilled so as to boost the economy of oil in the country, particularly in Cross River State. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I want to make a point of personal explanation, on the letter which we received this morning dated 22nd February, 1980 from the Chief Accountant of the National Assembly.

This letter, Mr Speaker, deals with the question of income tax and tax clearance certificate. With your permission, I would like to read the relevant section of this letter upon which I want to speak.

National Assembly,  
Parliament Buildings,  
Lagos  
22nd February, 1980.

To : All Senators and Representatives,

Income Tax and Tax Clearance Certificate

*Sequel to exchange of correspondence between the Commissioner for Internal Revenue, Lagos State and this Office, it is evident that your residence as at 1-4-79 should be ascertained. This will enable this office determine the tax authority which would earn revenue arising from tax deducted from legislators*

salaries for period 2-10-79 to 31-3-80. The on-payment of the tax will also facilitate the issue of tax clearance certificate for the period.

I want to say, Sir, that this letter from the Chief Accountant of the National Assembly has been written in very bad taste.

The implication of this letter, Sir, is that hon. Members of the National Assembly should pay their tax to the Government of Lagos State.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Etienam :** Please, let me make my point, hon. Colleagues, I have not finished. Mr Speaker, Sir, from the tone of this letter, it is implied that either with effect from the 1st of April, 1979 or with effect from the 1st of April, 1980, hon. Members of the National Assembly will be paying their tax to the Lagos State Government. That is the point I want to make. It is my humble submission, Sir, that it would be wrong for Members of this honourable House to pay their tax to the Lagos State Government for the following reasons.

Firstly, it is the practice in the United States of America that Congressmen in the U.S. pay their tax to their Constituencies, that is to their State Governments. It, therefore, follows that all of us who are here temporarily in Lagos have a duty to pay our income tax to our State Governments, and not to the Lagos State Government. The Lagos State Government cannot eat its cake and have it. The Lagos State Government has been over indulged and over pampered. Since we came here, there has been no regular water supply, and nothing whatsoever to give us a sense of belonging in Lagos State.

Some time ago, Sir, when we asked the Governor of Lagos State to allow our cars (*Interruptions*)—

**The Deputy Speaker :** Would you round up, please. Confine your observations to the subject under discussion.

**Mr Etienam :** Some time ago, when we asked for the co-operation of the Lagos State Government on the issue of repealing the odd and even number the Lagos State Governor said he was not going to bend his law for our convenience. Why should he turn round now to demand tax from us ? We are not going to pay a kobo to the Lagos State Government.

The Chief Accountant of the National Assembly should be told that he has no right to issue circular letters to us. We are not employees of the National Assembly. It is an insult for him to issue circular letters of this nature to us. With these observations, Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to submit once more that we are going to pay our tax to our State Governments.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, please, this is unfortunate. I think the Principal Accountant was obviously trying to do his duty but what is objectionable is the way he wrote the letter and the insertions he made on the letter that he has been pestered by the Commissioner for Revenue of the Lagos State Government to deduct tax from the salaries of Members. It is on account of that he is

writing letters to Members. It is obvious that Members who are elected here have Constituencies in their States. Each and every one of you owes it duty to pay his tax to the Constituency of the State he comes from.

**Mr Isaac Ayodeji Olaleru (Oyun) :** Point of information.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Give us your information.

**Mr Olaleru :** I talked to the Accountant this morning on this particular issue and he told me that the purpose of the form is only to determine where each of us comes from so that our various taxes could be sent to our various States. (*Interruptions*) Let me land. The Accountant said that our taxes would be paid to our various Constituencies. That was what he told me this morning.

**Several hon. Members :** No! No!

**The Deputy Speaker :** Mr A. B. Yahaya.

**Mr A. B. Yahaya (Ilorin East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I would like to make a point of explanation on the procedure of Motions before the Floor of this House. (*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker :** Order, please.

**Mr Yahaya :** Some time ago, about a month ago to be precise, the Chairman of the Business Committee did say to us that there were well over five hundred Motions in his pipeline which were yet to come before the Floor of this House, and he was sharing these Motions at the rate of three Motions per day. I did, at that time, raise a point that the proper procedure, and indeed, I think it was to buttress what the hon. Speaker then said, that the proper procedure was for Motions to come to the Speaker and the Speaker then distributes them to the various Committees, and if these Motions ever need to be stored at any stage, it can only be done at the Committee Stage. It is a pity that the Chairman of the Business Committee is not here at the moment, but my explanation is that the procedure we agreed at the time was wrong, and I am surprised that up till now, we still continue to practise it. I did mention that I had a Motion which I would like to bring to the Floor of this House, but somehow, this has not materialised for reasons best known to the Chairman of the Business Committee.

I would like to use this opportunity to request that we change the procedure, because there have been a lot of grumblings among us about the Motions which are brought to the Floor of this House. In addition we also have the example of what I have seen reported this morning about reports to be adopted on the Defence Bills which may necessitate that these Bills will be rediscussed or will be redebated in this House. Similarly, Motions which have gone before Committees are likely to come up again before the Floor of this House to be redebated which will then mean that we are debating the same Bills two times.

So, I would implore the Speaker and all Members to use whatever means they can to pressurise the Business Committee to get these Motions to go through a proper procedure, namely that the Motions are sent direct to the Committees first before they are reported back to this House and then eventually debated.

[MR YAHAYA]

And if you all agree, I will implore that the Speaker uses his good office as his last day in this House to instruct or determine that this Procedure be the new Procedure and be followed forthwith. Thank you, hon. Members.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, I think what we will do is to have a meeting of the Party Leaders and the Party Whips when the Speaker comes back, to thrash out this question of well over 500 Motions with the Business Committee. And it is obvious that something has to be done to be able to bring in as many of the Motions as possible to the different Committees for discussion. If you read the Order Papers daily, it is for us to debate on a Motion and refer it to the Committee, and the Committee will report back to the House again.

**Prof. Opeyemi Ola (Ekiti West) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, in addition to what my hon. Friend from Ilorin East (*Mr Yahaya*) has said, I would like to make a point of explanation on Motions that in addition to Bills, I feel and think that Motions are ways of legislating for the country. And this Honourable House, since its inception, has been doing all its best to pass numerous Motions, but from my own understanding and observation, nothing has happened by way of implementation to these numerous Motions we have been passing, with the Leadership of the Speaker and his Deputy using their time and intelligence to guide this House. I notice that almost every hon. Member has been racking his brain to make contributions to the passing of Motions. But I would say that the implementation of these Motions is in inverse proportion to our energies and contributions.

So, in effect, Sir, we are merely debating here, sometimes even to the point of fighting, and yet nothing happens. What I would like to say, Sir, is that, directly or indirectly, the Executive has no right and should not neglect these Motions.

**An hon. Member :** There is a point of Order.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Let him finish. Prof. Ola, finish with what you have to say.

**Prof. Ola :** Finally, Sir, I would like to say that this Legislature, the National Assembly, as a very important arm of the Government should not be ignored and should not be silenced. All the contributions that we have been making in order that this Nation should make progress ought to be implemented. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member for Ekiti West (*Prof. Ola*), you as an hon. Member of this House understand that Motions are not laws. All the Motions that have been resolved have been referred to the relevant Committees that they are supposed to go to, and the House is still waiting for the report from these Committees. And for your information, all the Motions that are passed in this House are sent directly to the Secretary to the Federal Government, who in turn, sends these Motions to the respective Ministries that are responsible for the Motions that have been sponsored both in the House of Representatives and in the Senate. So, the information you are adducing to the House is not correct.

### Report from the Committee on Defence

The Chairman of the Defence Committee, Mr John Laven, there is a supplementary Order Paper for today—Presentation of the Report of the Committee on Defence on the Navy Board Bill H.R.4. The Chairman of the Defence Committee will you lay your Report on the Table please ?

**Mr John L. Laven (Langtang) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, on the 18th of this month, a Bill, marked H.R.4, for an Act to make Provisions for the number of persons to constitute membership of the Navy Board was referred to the Committee on Defence. It is my humble pleasure to present to the House my Report on the Bill.

I, therefore, move that the House should receive the Report from the Committee on Defence in respect of the Navy Board. I beg to move, Sir.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Any Seconder please ?

**Mr Muhammed Tudun Wada (Waje) :** I beg to second.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Mr F. O. Iyayi (Okpebho) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I just want to draw the attention of Members to a matter which I consider to be at variance with established practice in handling Bills on the Floor of this House. For some time now, a number of Bills have been referred to us here. They have undergone First and Second Readings and were referred to some Committees.

I feel worried that there is an aspect to which attention should be drawn. It is a very serious omission. Now, take the case of this Navy Act of 1964, we do not have copies of the Navy Act. Take also the Forces (Amendment) Act of 1976, we do not have copies of the Decree. And from time to time, we are asked to amend this or that. We do not have extracts of the provisions which are to be deleted and for which provisions are to be substituted. More importantly, we do not have copies of Decrees or Bills. These are very important matters for us to study before we can make meaningful contributions to the debates affecting the Amendment Bills. I feel this should be taken into account. My view is either that somebody in the Drafting Office is being inept, very lazy or something, that all the sponsors of the Bills are interested in, is to bull-doze these things through. We are never given opportunity to debate these things *in extenso*. We should debate the principles of these Bills before they are bull-dozed through this House.

I referred to this aspect some weeks ago, when a Bill was brought before this House, that we should be given an opportunity to discuss the principles and merits of these Bills. From now on, I think we should take it as a matter of principle and a binding duty on the part of the Sponsors, that copies of the Acts or Decrees that are being amended should be made available to Members of the Legislature to enable them to make meaningful contributions to the debates on Amendment Bills.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Yes, hon. Member for Langtang (*Mr Laven*).

**Mr Laven :** Mr Speaker, Sir, Hon. Members, I wish to enlighten my hon. Member a little bit on this issue of references to Laws and Acts. I think my hon. Member is aware that we have a library over there. There is a Reference Library and there is a Lending Library. I have given you these handouts in time so that you could use the library and find out what sections I am referring to.

It is not the duty of the Chairman of any Committee to distribute copies of Acts or Laws to the Members. You are about 449 Members and you can imagine how I could go about distributing copies of such things to you. You should use your library my hon. Member. Thank you.

### NOTICES OF MOTIONS

#### The Universal Primary Education Scheme

**The Deputy Speaker :** The Motion is to be moved by Mr Mohammed Kabir Umar, Mr Paul Mshelia, Mr Josiah Y. Mallo and Mr I. D. Hassan.

**Mr Mohammed Kabir Umar (Kaduna South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members I rise to move—

That in pursuance of section 18 (1) of the Nigerian Constitution and in view of the serious financial hardship encountered by State and Local Governments in the implementation of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) Scheme, and also in view of the deterioration and imminent collapse of the scheme, this House directs the Committee on Education to investigate and recommend ways and means of boosting the said UPE scheme in order to make it a success.

I beg to move.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Anybody to second the Motion?

**Mr Hassan Gambo (Mayo-Balwa) :** I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Umar :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I believe we are all aware of the importance of education in this country. When this UPE Scheme was launched by the former Federal Military Government, a lot of people seized the opportunity to send their children to be registered in all the nooks and corners of this country, and I believe it really helped quite a lot of our people who are in rural areas.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is my candid opinion that the then government rushed this programme and it has been grossly under-estimated, thereby causing a lot of hardship to States and local governments towards its funding. From the onset the Federal Military Government made it abundantly clear to all the State Governments that the responsibility of the Universal Free Primary Education is entirely their responsibility. By that the States did not make any provision towards the funding of the scheme because the government made it clear to them that they (the Federal Government) would shoulder all the responsibilities of such scheme.

At first, the Federal Government normally spent ₦35 per child per annum. Later on, I think last year, they made it ₦40, and forced the States to spend ₦25 per child, and the Local Government ₦5 per child per annum. If one views the number of enrolments in each of the local governments in this country and multiply it by ₦5 per child you will find that the burden is too much on the local government in addition to its other commitment to its own locality.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with your permission I would like to read a summary of what is applicable in Kaduna State in particular, the State that I come from. I believe this is not only peculiar to Kaduna State. What is happening in Kaduna State happens in all the other States of the Federation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, Kaduna State estimates for 1979-80 approved recurrent revenue and expenditure including UPE are ₦76,168,896 and ₦78,699,056 respectively. The UPE expenditure is estimated at ₦48,791,302.

Mr Speaker, Sir, Kaduna State has 14 local governments and with your permission I would read the following :

Katsina Local Government has a revenue of ₦2,516,681 ; expenditure excluding UPE ₦2,146,495. They had a surplus of ₦379,186. But then the Katsina Local Government was asked to contribute ₦5 per child per annum thereby making their contribution ₦300,000 per annum. The State contribution to UPE in Katsina Local Government alone is ₦4,386,820. The surplus of Katsina Local Government in that year is only ₦79,000.

Funtua Local Government has a revenue of ₦2,414,123 ; their expenditure is ₦2,364,680. They had only a surplus of ₦48,523 out of which they were asked to contribute ₦279,000 towards UPE development, thereby leaving them with a deficit of ₦230,477.

Mr Speaker, Sir, all the 14 local governments suffered a similar problem. In Kaduna Local Government they had a revenue of ₦2,612,386, their expenditure is ₦3,799,310. They have a deficit of ₦1,636,924 over and above the contributions to UPE scheme which is ₦370,000. The State's contribution to UPE in Kaduna Local Government amounted to ₦5,206,840.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with this deficit which is far greater than the revenue income of some of the local governments, you find that the local government will definitely not be able to shoulder the responsibility placed on it by the Federal Government because the States are not having enough fund from the Federal Government in order to implement the UPE. And if at all they get such a fund the Federal Government directs such a fund to either the Ministry of Finance or the Ministry of Local Government, thereby the Ministry or the State Government diverts such fund to other areas thereby making the UPE suffer a lot.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to give the breakdown of schools, classes, teachers, enrolment, *et cetera*, so that when this Motion is debated and

[MR UMAR]

the House agrees to refer it to the Committee on Education, then I would be able to supply the Committee with other information in relation to this particular thing I am talking about. The breakdown is as follows :

Local Govt.	1978 December			
	No. of Schools	No. of Classes	No. of Teachers	No. of Pupils
Katsina .. ..	281	1,332	1,670	63,071
Funtua .. ..	255	11,142	1,380	45,698
Mani .. ..	187	896	936	39,455
Kankia .. ..	220	1,230	943	50,105
Malumfashi ..	178	995	1,202	48,797
Dutsinma .. ..	234	1,045	1,021	42,186
Daura .. ..	150	726	785	32,240
Zaria .. ..	368	2,074	2,233	101,947
Kachia .. ..	275	1,655	2,157	83,228
Ikara .. ..	205	803	1,041	41,176
Saminaka .. ..	142	875	1,296	35,193
Jema'a .. ..	257	2,011	1,780	75,869
B/Gwari .. ..	46	171	211	6,465
Kaduna .. ..	57	1,570	1,642	81,687

Mr Speaker, Sir, I give these statistics in order to enable this House to multiply the number of students enrolled by each Local Government by ₦5 to get the Local Governments' contributions on the UPE, and by ₦25 in order to get the State Government's involvement in funding the UPE.

The point I am trying to make by this statistics is that the Local Governments and the State Governments were rushed to embark upon funding the UPE scheme unilaterally. The reason for my saying so is that the States were not being given adequate time to make provisions towards funding the UPE which was entirely the brain child of the Federal Military Government at that time.

That being so, I find it very necessary to bring this point to the Committee on Education to find out ways and means of rebumping and boosting this scheme in order to save it from eminent collapse. The Committee should also make sure that all loopholes are plugged. What now happens is that you find that the Federal Government would send money to the State Governments in order to boost the UPE expenditure; this money would be sent directly to the Ministry of Local Governments whereby there is quite a lot of maybe misunderstanding, jealousy or something of that nature between the Local Governments and the Ministries of Local Governments in various States. The Ministries, having got that money, use it their own way and so embarrass the Local Governments. Therefore, you find that invariably teachers are normally on sit-down strikes here and there because they are not paid their salaries on time.

With this few contribution, I would like to limit myself at this juncture in order to enable my hon. Colleagues to contribute to this Motion. I do hope that the House would support this Motion because it is not controversial in any way. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Members, I would like to announce the presence, in our midst in the V.I.P. Box, of His Excellency, the Governor of Niger State, Alhaji Anwal Ibrahim, who has come to watch the proceedings of this House. Your Excellency, you are welcome. From the programme that we have, now we are Guests of the Lagos State Governor, Alhaji Lateef Omokayode Jakande, and by 1982, Your Excellency, we shall be your Guests at Abuja. Welcome, Your Excellency. (*Standing ovation*)

Yes, Mr Paul Mshelia.

**Mr Paul Mshelia (Biu South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to make further contribution to the Motion on the Floor of the House in respect of the boosting of the Universal Free Primary Education in the country.

As ably put by my co-Mover, the Scheme was initially the Federal concern and almost everybody thought that the Federal Government would squarely shoulder the responsibility thereof. Since it was regarded as the Federal concern, most of the States and Local Governments were, in fact, not prepared for the Scheme. In most cases, the Local Governments discovered that the figures they gave, as to the number of students that would be qualified for the Scheme increased threefold.

As such, monies meant for the proper implementation of the Universal Primary Education, in most cases were mismanaged or mishandled, to the extent that in some States or in some Local Governments, the classrooms were poorly constructed. Zinc, plywood and a few other local materials were erected. It is true that some of the classrooms erected for the UPE were in fact sub-standard, and were not conducive to, or good enough for, good learning situation. Since classrooms were not properly erected to cope with the number of students enrolled for the UPE, it became a common practice to see classes held under mango trees or outdoor shades. Such classes held under trees or very poor classrooms did not attract parents to be eager to send their children to schools.

Again, due to the fact that most of the Local Governments and State Governments regarded the UPE Scheme as Federal concern, they also thought it was a Federal bonanza in terms of distribution of building contracts to contractors. As such, the Scheme was poorly handled in many respects. For example, teachers were not adequate, and as a result the government started to erect UPE Teacher Training Colleges that were also not adequate to cope with the millions of school children who enrolled for the Scheme.

Since the infrastructures necessary for the scheme were poor, everybody will agree with me that the products of such UPE scheme will also be poor, because learning is not something that should be rushed into or something that should be planned haphazardly. Such products from the UPE will in fact be frustrated products because in most cases 98 per cent of them will not have any place to go.

The UPE Scheme should have taken off properly if adequate consultation and implementation methods

were employed. Some people thought that since the Federal Government had provided money for the Scheme and it was mishandled by the State or the Local Government, then nobody should put in more money into this Scheme.

But I disagree with this school of thought for the simple fact that we need to draw a line between the mismanagement of public funds by Government officials and contractors and the hopes and aspirations of our young children who will be the leaders of tomorrow. If we allow the scheme to carry on like this, then I am sure that in years to come, the scheme will deteriorate to the extent that it would be regarded as schools meant for very poor people in this country. At that time, special schools would be established to take care of the privileged class and nobody is going to pay attention to this UPE Scheme and, as such, it will tell badly on our generation, that we planned an educational system that could not stand the test of time.

Because of this there is every need for the nation to review the UPE scheme and provide the necessary funds that will sustain the UPE Scheme so that it does not become a total failure. Also, the money provided for this scheme will ensure that—

**Mr T. O. Badejo** (Mushin Central I) : As much as I like the spirit of this Motion, I think it is badly drafted, and we do not have jurisdiction on this issue. If you turn to Item 28 of the Concurrent List on page 105 of our Constitution, Item 28 says :

*Nothing in the foregoing paragraphs of this item shall be construed as to limit the powers of a House of Assembly to make Laws for the State with respect to technical, vocational, post-primary, primary or other forms of education, including the establishment of institutions for the pursuit of such education.*

Mr Speaker, I think at the moment we are dealing with the functions of the States. What we are doing now is *ultra vires* and it has no effect.

**Some Members** : No ! No ! (Interruptions)

**Mr Badejo** : To buttress my opinion, please refer to Item 57 paragraph (d) of the Exclusive Legislative List, page 99, and it says :

57. *The establishment and regulation of authorities for the Federation or any part thereof—*

(e) *to prescribe minimum standards of education at all levels.*

What we here can make laws about is to prescribe whether to go to university, this is the minimum level, whether to qualify as a teacher in primary schools, these are the minimum levels. Any other thing we are doing, with all respect, Sir, is not effective. This is my point of Order, Sir, and I want your ruling on this.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Hon. Member, if you read the Motion sponsored by the four hon. Members of this House, it is requesting the Committee on Education to investigate and recommend ways and means of boosting the said UPE Scheme in order to make it a success. From the Constitution, the problem of UPE is entirely the responsibility

of the State Government, and this Motion should have said that the Federal Government should help the States to alleviate the financial burden of the UPE, which is not in the Motion.

**Some Members** : It is there.

**The Deputy Speaker** : The Motion reads thus :

*That in pursuance of section 18 (1) of the Nigerian Constitution and in view of the serious financial hardship encountered by State and Local Governments in the implementation of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) Scheme, and also in view of the deterioration and imminent collapse of the Scheme, this House directs the Committee on Education to investigate and recommend ways and means of boosting the said UPE Scheme in order to make it a success.*

**Several hon. Members** : No ! No !

**The Deputy Speaker** : Mr Mohammed Kabir Umar, you are one of the Movers of this Motion.

**Mr Mohammed Kabir Umar** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, this very Motion is quite in order. When I brought this Motion, I did not think of any party affiliation and I would like us to look at this Motion. The fact is that the UPE Scheme was not started by any State Government, but by the Federal Government. So, at this point, nobody will come here and say that UPE is a State child. We should look responsible and accept facts. So, this Motion is in order. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker** : The UPE Scheme was started before the Constitution came into effect on the 1st of October, 1979. The Constitution started operating as from the 1st of October, 1979 but the UPE Scheme started before then. The Constitution has now given the responsibility of the Universal Free Primary Education to the States, and this Motion should have sought to alleviate the financial burden of the State through the help of the Federal Government. Nobody is trying to kill this Motion because the Movers of the Motion come from different political parties. So, it is not based on party basis.

My ruling on this matter is that I will allow an Amendment on this Motion to the effect that the Federal Government should take the financial burden of the UPE, because from the analysis which you have made, the total revenue of the State Governments goes to pay for other projects and there is nothing left for them to pay for the UPE at all. So, definitely, the Federal Government has to take over the responsibility there.

**Mr Mohammed Kabir Umar** : Mr Speaker, Sir, you will agree with me that if the UPE Scheme were not a Federal Government affairs, why did the Federal Government agree to pay ₦40 per child *per annum*. What we are asking is that let the Federal Government pump more money into this UPE Scheme in order to alleviate the financial burden of the States. I do not think that there is anything wrong with this Motion, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker** : This is what I am saying and the only omission is the Federal Government participation.



**Mr Mohammed Kabir Umar :** I think my Motion is in order, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Can you put in the Amendments?

**Mr Mohammed Kabir Umar :** I think it is in order, Sir.

**Mr Ingo Mac-Eteli (Brass) :** I think this Motion is quite in order, Mr Speaker. We are aware of the constitutional powers delegated to the States about the UPE Scheme, but the Motion is now calling on the Committee on Education of this House to look into it and make possible recommendations, and these are not stated there. So, Mr Speaker, we cannot over-rule now just because the State is not stated in the Motion and therefore the possible recommendations should not be made to the States. So, I feel that this Motion is quite in order and it should not be over-ruled, please.

**Mr Sidi H. Ali (Danbatta) :** I think we have to be very honest to ourselves. This Motion is absolutely out of order. First of all, the Motion seeks to investigate and recommend. This really puts us in a situation where we are interfering with the administration of the States. We know what the Local Governments and the States' administration should do. We have elected Governments in various States who have their Commissioners for Education. If the thing pinches them, I think they will bring it to the notice of the Federal Government. So, I think, Mr Speaker, you are right to rule this Motion out of order or they should bring an Amendment later. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Paul Mshelia (Biu South) :** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for saving from the interruptions.

The Motion really is not out to create ways and means of interfering with the various State Governments' policies on Education. The Motion is seeking ways and means of helping the States to implement whatever policies they have for their education, and it is also about the financial hardship of the States. I am sure that the House Committee could recommend something to this House so that maybe during allocation of funds, more money could go in for Education.

So, Mr Speaker, as I said before, this UPE Scheme must be boosted. Enough funds must be provided for its proper implementation, in terms of teachers and infrastructures necessary, so that the Scheme could be a successful one that is functional in nature and qualitative. In that case, I strongly appeal to all hon. Members here to look at this Motion as a sincere Motion aimed at boosting or revamping the Universal Primary Education. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Hon. Member for Akwanga (*Mr Josiah Mallo*) is not here, I think. I believe he has gone home. Hon. Member for Dase-Tafawa Balewa (*Mr I. D. Hassan*).

**Mr I. D. Hassan (Dase-Tafawa Balewa) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of this House, as a specialist in primary education, it is only appropriate that I give a brief history of the development of Universal Primary Education in this country.

The establishment of the first Primary School in this country in 1843 at Badagry was an act of declaration of war against ignorance and illiteracy in this country. And since then, the war has raged on, sometimes meeting with set-backs and at times meeting with success.

In 1957, the development of primary education saw a turning point in the history of this country. The then, Western Region introduced UPE Scheme. Although the Scheme met with failure, it represented a big effort made by a government to provide its children of primary school age with primary education.

In 1973, during Gowon's Administration, another big effort was made with the introduction of the Universal Primary Education. This was an attempt to provide all children of school age in the country with primary education, but unfortunately, the military regime was not fully committed to executing the Scheme to its logical end. Not enough fund was provided to enable the State Governments and the Local Governments to prosecute the Scheme. As a result, serious problems cropped up and arrested the UPE Scheme.

One of the problems encountered was lack of teachers. Another one was lack of fund and this meant that not enough teachers could be provided to cope with the volume of work which the Scheme entailed. Lack of fund also meant that not enough classrooms could be provided for school children. And that is why up till now most of the classes are held under the trees, and you know how uncomfortable it is to learn just in the open. It means that they would not have black-boards which are very necessary in teaching. Not enough equipments could be provided. Houses could not be provided for teachers. As a result of this, many teachers resigned. They could not go to the remote areas of this country to teach, and because of all these problems, the scheme virtually collapsed. It is very important that the Committee on Education should do its work very thoroughly.

We have talked of developing this country technologically and economically, primary education is the basis of this. If we neglect primary education, then it means the so-called technological take-off, economic independence and all what not which we have so much talked about cannot materialise. I, therefore, call on the Committee on Education to do its work properly, and if this is done, it will be of great service to this Nation.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Ekok Ojogu (Ikom) :** I rise to support this Motion because it is straightforward and it is meant to bring about a situation whereby primary education would be improved.

Primary education in this country faces a lot of problems and of all the problems, the most acute is that of lack of funds. Although the Constitution of the country makes primary education a responsibility of the State Governments, the Federal Government has to come to the aid of the State Governments because the State Governments and the Local Governments on their own would not have enough money to finance primary education.

[MR OJOGU]

In some areas in this country, you still find a situation where children in primary schools stay under the trees to be taught. In some cases, they sit on the floor, and in some areas, they have no blackboards at all. You also have situations where teachers even ask pupils to contribute money to buy chalk which the teachers use in writing on the blackboards. All these things have cropped up as a result of the State and Local Governments not having enough money to finance primary education. Sometimes, teachers in primary schools go for months without salary. You can imagine a worker who is married with so many children, after working for a whole month, two or three months he is not paid his salary ; you can imagine the amount of frustration and this tells on the amount of work he has to put in, in the classroom. This even results in the poor quality of education which we have today, because teachers are not encouraged and they are not paid good salaries. All these have happened because the State Governments and the Local Governments have not got enough funds to implement the UPE Scheme. Unless the Federal Government which is in a good position to help comes in with enough fund to aid the State Governments and the Local Governments, we can never really have that solid foundation required to make it possible for this country to develop technologically.

For this reason, I would like to ask that this honourable House accepts this Motion and pass it on to the Committee on Education to really make recommendations for the Federal Government to be involved financially in the implementation of UPE Scheme, although that scheme is under the State Government's Legislative List. Thank you, very much, Mr Speaker.

**Mr B. A. Chaaha (Katsina Ala) :** I rise to support this Motion for the first time in this House. And in doing so, Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to make a few observations in respect of the UPE administration in Nigeria. On the whole, I think, the aim of the UPE Scheme is golden, and not only that, it is well spelt out. The aim of the UPE Scheme attracts every Nigerian, because it tries to rid this nation of illiteracy. As a matter of fact, the Military régime started very well. The strategies were all spelt out in the hope of trying to do away with illiteracy in Nigeria.

We should not lose sight of what actually happened in Nigeria, because from the word go, we saw that the State Governments set up School Boards. The trouble then started on the UPE Scheme because after setting up School Boards to run the UPE, there was no check on these Boards and that was the time you found that many Nigerian educationists were struggling to become Chief Education Officers in this country in order to control UPE Scheme Programme. I am saying what happened in respect of my State, that is Benue. I understand what actually happened, and is still happening.

Now, the School Board Masters, as we call them, started their own administration in a manner not intended to foster the progress of this scheme, but as a means more or less, of getting whatever they needed in the form of wealth. From the School Boards we discovered that the Chief Educational Officers in our State or in Nigeria started to employ

their own kith-and-kin and their own friends, all of whom became nepotic in their award of contracts. Not only that, we later discovered that in some areas there were contracts even though the contract sum was paid for non-existing projects. So, the Federal Government actually pumped in a lot of money, but every now and then we found out that this money was squandered unnecessarily on non-existing projects. We discovered also that the State Governments were not able to obtain proper records of expenditure because some of these Chief Education Officers or the School Boards were not able to make proper returns. Arising from this inability on the part of the School Boards to make returns, the State Governments, in fact, had no correct records of what was happening with their finances. Not only that, every month in my State, we discovered that they had a certain number of Staff, but this number continued to vary from month to month.

We regard this as fictitious, because every month, you find new teachers on the pay-sheets.

So, when reports of this nature continued up to a stage, the matter was referred to the Federal Government. Later on, the whole thing became a total failure. It became a total failure in the sense, not that we had no money or that the Federal Government did not give out money, but because of the imprudent way the money was spent. Later, the State Governments decided to do away with the School Boards and set up yet another machinery that is now running the UPE Scheme, but unfortunately on the same principles, as the School Boards.

For instance, if you go to State Government Departments, you will find that they will not be able to tell you exactly what is happening. Even if Auditors are sent out to check the accounts of these UPE programmes, they report their findings to the State Government, but no action will be taken. So, these people are also tired and nobody cares now.

To come back to the campaign, Mr Speaker, Sir, from the word go the campaign approach was wrong. It made it clear to our own parents and our own local people that with the introduction of the UPE Scheme no parent was expected to help. They were made to understand that everything would be done free as is happening today. Most of our parents do not contribute anything, because they know that UPE means free education, free books and everything free. They know that.

When you ask them to construct a building as a sort of help, they will tell you that it is UPE and that the money comes from the Federal Government. What do you want again ? I think that the campaign approach was wrong and that same campaign is what we still have now.

Our schools all over the country are not properly cared for ; nobody goes there to see what is happening. No parent is interested in what is happening.

If we are to talk about how to run the UPE Scheme in order to achieve the expected result, we may all say in the end that the Federal Government should come forward to help. But, I feel that we have to specify the areas in which we want the Federal Government to come in.

[MR CHAAHA]

I would like to suggest, Mr Speaker, Sir, that the fund for UPE must be handed over to the State Governments throughout the country. Payment made to our schools or Education Officers in the country must be made through the State Governments with proper records being kept. At the same time, the report of the Auditors should be studied and action taken on their findings so that the State Governments would be in a position to know exactly what is happening with the UPE Scheme in the country.

Mr Speaker, Sir, right now in our State I would tell you that immediately after the inception of the UPE Scheme, we had over four hundred schools scattered all over the State, some of which are completely inaccessible. Now, what is happening in those schools nobody knows. Whether these schools are still existing or not nobody knows. There are no Education Supervisors to report what is happening : there are no returns or reports of progress. The State Governments should see to it that certain people should go round and make physical checks on the Board. One of the problems, Mr Speaker, Sir, is that we do not have correct figures because these officers do not go out to check and so they can only give you a wrong figure. In our State, for example, where there are one thousand children, in a school, the Supervisors will tell you that there are four hundred children. This is what is happening. If we know exactly or if the government knows exactly the number of pupils through the enrolment records there will be no problems in this regard.

Now, the capital fund, as we call it, for buildings, equipment and so on should be utilised properly. Therefore, I would suggest that the running of the UPE Scheme must be the responsibility of the State Government, which must ensure that suitable personnel are assigned to check and report on the progress of the Scheme in the interest of our State.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr I. C. Ibrahim (Jama'a South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion and in supporting the Motion, I have this contribution to make.

Everyone of us here knows that the UPE Scheme is one of the most gigantic programmes ever undertaken by the Federal Government and it is the Scheme which has been evenly distributed for the benefit of all the communities in the Federation. As such, it must be given priority. The financial aspect of the UPE Scheme is very discouraging. The Local Government had been led to a lot of bargaining with the result they do not have sufficient fund to run the administration and some projects under the Local Government.

For instance, in Kaduna State, particularly in my own Constituency and Local Government Area, we have about 70,000 pupils in the primary schools. The cost of running the primary schools, *per capita*, is about ₦100 ; that is, ₦100 is supposed to be spent on every child in the primary school. But the most unfortunate thing is that when an estimate is sent to Kaduna for the grant, only half of the estimate is made available. This is very discouraging. The

result is that a lot of teachers are resigning their appointments from schools thereby leaving the schools without teachers.

Another important thing one should consider in this Scheme is the lack of adequate accommodation. Schools were opened all right, but there is no accommodation to house the pupils. As a result, pupils were being taught under the trees and shades during the rainy season. The pupils suffered a great deal during the last rainy season.

Another important thing we should try to understand, as far as this UPE is concerned, is the local contribution in respect of which parents have been discouraged. UPE Scheme was supposed to take care of the children's education, but unfortunately, parents are being forced to construct classrooms, buy exercise books and text-books. This makes the UPE not to be all that a success. The Federal Government should make available many things regarding the equipment and stationery. Hon. Members, you find that even if you have the money to buy books for your child, you would hardly get the books to buy. Most of the bookshops are empty and because of that the Local Government Authorities cannot buy sufficient books for the pupils.

With regard to the UPE, I would have these recommendations to make for whichever Authority is concerned. By 1981, the first batch of the UPE in-takes would start to graduate. There has not been provision made regarding where these pupils would go to after their primary education. I would, therefore, make the following recommendations :

Firstly, there should be agricultural schools, especially in the Northern parts of the country, for the children who would be passing out of primary schools. Secondly, there must be more secondary schools to cater for the great number of pupils being turned out of the primary schools every year. Thirdly, there must be more technical schools for children who would finish their primary education to be admitted into. Lastly, there must be expansion of higher institutions for those who might have finished their secondary school education.

I, therefore, support this Motion, and hope that every Member of this House would do the same.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr D. A. Zubairu (Jemaia-North) :** Mr Speaker Sir, I rise to support this Motion.

When this Motion was first introduced, some people jumped up and said that it was unconstitutional. But if you look at Section 18 of the Constitution very well, you would find that that Section spells it out that the Federal Government, being the father of all the State Governments, should help in the procurement of education at any level in this country. I shall now come back to the theme of the motion.

I would say that the UPE Scheme failed completely because of lack of proper planning. Before Gowon regime, there was a plan that the UPE Scheme was to start by training teachers. This was still the plan in 1971, 1972 and 1973. Then, the first step of the UPE Scheme was to train all the teachers in the

[MR ZUBAIRU]

Teachers Training Colleges before sending large number of pupils to the primary schools. But the last Military Regime decided to change the whole Scheme at that time. That Regime said that the Scheme should be Universal Primary Education and not Universal Teachers Education. At that material time, they started pouring money into the Scheme because Nigeria had too much money, and the then Government had nothing to do with the money. It was then they decided to say: *You, contractors, take your own money*, and everybody, including nine-year old girls and twelve-year old women, became contractors in Nigeria. People who never dreamt of going into building business suddenly became building contractors. And so, here and there, people started building schools. If you go to the villages, you would find some foundations already covered with grass. These foundations were meant for the building of the Free Primary education. School.

Hon. Members, there is a system of planning in Nigeria whereby some people would come out with a gigantic plan but in the process of its execution, individual powers would come out and change the planned progress of the project. This is why the UPE Scheme has failed. In fact, the UPE problems should have been borne by the last Military Regime. I have no apologies to say that today to that Regime because that Regime actually spoilt the Free Primary Education.

Now, coming to the point, I would advise the Federal Government that this is a gigantic Scheme which has been facing many problems. My first advice is that Teacher Training Colleges and secondary schools should be established in almost every district in Nigeria. If this is done, then, it would take about four to five years before teachers are brought to teach in these primary schools. Then, almost every child of the age of five would be sent to school and these children would have teachers to teach them at that material time. There should not be a situation where a Class 7 certificate holder, who cannot even write his name, is sent to a primary school to teach. What is he going to teach the pupils when he knows nothing? That is why we have the situation now whereby a Class 7 pupil cannot even write his name. This is a shameful thing in Nigeria and something has to be done to rectify the situation.

A section has to be created in the Federal Ministry of Education where the finances of this project should be handled. The Federal Government officers should have an itinerary whereby they would go from one State to another and see things for themselves, and recommend to the Federal Government how much money should be given to every State. We do not want the situation where money is given to the States and some influential people would sit on this money. These influential people would then send their children to privileged schools, whereas the children of the common people would go and sit on the grass for their lessons. These poor children would be beaten by the rain and sun and nobody would care a hoot. These influential people would make use of the Government money, and if you ask them about the money some other day, they would say that they had other gigantic projects in the States and that they had used the money on these projects.

With these few observations, Mr Speaker, I hope every Member here would support this Motion.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Alhaji Sanda Konduga (Konduga)**: If we shall all be fair to ourselves and fair to the nation, this Motion in fact, does not even need to be debated. It needs, just after being mentioned, to be passed straight to the appropriate committee for action. But since we have found ourselves debating it, we have to go ahead with it.

The intention of this UPE Scheme was a very good one from the beginning, but what actually went wrong was that those people who were implementing it became dishonest, and at the time it was introduced there was no democratic government; it was under a Military regime. As such, nobody has cared to check and find out what was going wrong with it. Even though some people cried out that something was going wrong with it, and some Committees were appointed in some Local Governments and some States to investigate the wrongs, after investigating it and passing it to the appropriate authorities for further action, no action was ever taken. They were just thrown into the drawers and locked up.

Now, the time has come when we have democratically elected representatives who are duty bound to check these things and find solutions to them.

In my opinion, what I feel are going wrong with the UPE Scheme, are, firstly, the design of class rooms in these rural areas; secondly, the constructions and locations, and thirdly, subventions and finances from the Federal Government for the UPE Scheme. When you go all over this country, you can find all sorts of designs which are contrary and not conducive to the weather, and to the geographical conditions of our country.

After these designs were approved by some Local Governments, and some States, these physical features were erected, but they would not even withstand one rainy season. Just as the heavy storms of these areas start, you will find these classrooms flat on the ground. The reason for the collapse is firstly because the designs were wrong and secondly the way and manner materials were used were wrong, and thirdly there were no competent supervisors to supervise these projects.

Although we were talking about subvention, enough money was provided for, but what was lacking was handling. There was never a good handling from the appropriate places where this money was supposed to be used, either the Local Governments or the State Governments. In some places under the cover of inflation the classrooms were over-estimated. Contracts were given to, as one Member said in his contribution, brothers and sisters, and there were no qualified supervisory officers to oversee the construction of these classrooms. They would just come up with a report saying that *this has been completed* and payment will be passed. When you go to see what is supposed to have been completed, even on the floor you will find that the grasses were not even cut down for these buildings to be put up.

If you doubt this, let us request the Committee to visit some States to see physically some places where these UPE Schemes were introduced. You would find that money was paid but there were no classrooms and you would find children reading under trees.

At the same time, if we carefully and critically examine this issue, even if the Local Governments plan to foot the cost of these buildings, by the time they plan they do not have the money; the subventions from the Federal Government have not come to the State Governments, and by the time the money from the Federal Government goes to the State Governments for onward transmission to the Local Governments for executing these programmes, you will find in most cases this money will be diverted by the State Governments to other programmes and projects other than the programmes and projects for which the Federal Government has given this money to the States.

As such, you find that the resources of most states going into this UPE scheme are poor. Even then, the scheme has never served any useful purpose, except the selfish ends of some people, and the selfish ends of some state governments who divert the money given to them for UPE to other projects instead of sending such money to the Local Governments.

Hon. Members, as the Motion has said, we have to refer it to the Committee on Education. Let the Committee thoroughly examine this situation and report back to this House without delay.

Thank you, very much.

**Mr Umaru Sadiq (Kumbotso)** : I rise to support the Motion. In fact, UPE was started with good intention, but it later ended up with so many problems. Many schools were built but in the long run, we found that we could not maintain these schools. We just leave the schools without enough text-books and without qualified teachers to run them.

Many Contractors who helped in building these schools, up till now have not been paid a *kobo* out of the funds they have spent in building the schools. More especially in my State, Kano State, even the grant that is being given by the Federal Government to finance the UPE programmes which is ₦4 million, we have not been given. Up till now, nothing has been done about this.

So, Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I think this House has a duty here to request the Committee to do all it could and recommend to this House what we should do to solve this gigantic problem which, if properly arrested, will be to the advantage of everybody in this country.

So, Mr Speaker, with these few words, I beg to support the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Hon. Member for Ilaje/Eseodo (*Chief Olusola Omonira*).

**Chief Olusola Omonira (Ilaje/Eseodo)** : I rise to support this Motion. In doing so, however, I have two reservations and with the permission of

Mr Speaker, I would like to first of all deal with these aspects. We have all along been referring matters to Committees without giving them definite time to report. This particular one is so important that we have to give the Committee definite time to report in view of the fact that our financial year starts from the 1st of April. We are trying to go into the finances of the Federal Government and asking for substantial allocation of money to be made. The Federal Government is just preparing its budget. Unless we can advise or perhaps amend the budget when it is presented to us next month, that is, in March, we will not be able to implement any of these provisions.

It is all right that we have been talking about the UPE not being properly managed, we hope that the present civilian regime will do better, and that the present nineteen Governors will do justice to that. I hope the Committee should be able to report and submit its recommendations in two or three weeks, time. We have heard of reference back to the Committee for investigation into P. and T. because they never submitted accounts for eight years. We have heard reference to the Committee on Customs and Excise, we have had one on missing currency, we have not heard anything back. We have had one on the Ministry of Works, we have not heard anything back. We had one before on Price Control and there is nothing reported back. Please, let us give the Committee on Education definite time to do this because this is a very important Motion.

My second reservation, however, is about the word *investigation* and I hope the Committee will do justice to that. Can you really investigate what you do not have? If the State Governments know that you are investigating, and you are going to give them money, of course, they will allow the investigation. It is just like your wife. If you ask her, *have you got fashionable dresses*, and she knows that you are going to give her money, she will tell you she has not got. She will open her wardrobe for you to see. So, if the Committee is going to make investigation, they should let the States know that they are doing so with a view to assisting them financially. I am very sure, in that respect, since the Mover of the Motion does not want the amendment *financial support*, I think the Committee will be able to do it that way. When you communicate the investigation to the States, you should make them realise that it is with a view of giving them assistance and I am sure that they will be able to give you information which will give us points that we have to insert in the budget when the Federal Government presents it next month.

With this submission, Mr Speaker, I beg to support.

**Mr A. Adeola (Ijero)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion though Members have contributed very well in support of it. I have very little to add. One of the Speakers said that the UPE Scheme has failed. I would not agree with him that it has failed. In some respects, it has succeeded and in some others it might have been failing. In order to forestall the failure of these aspects, I feel it is very important that the Federal Government, through the Federal Ministry of Education, should make thorough investigation, as

[MR ADEOLA]

being recommended to the Committee on Education, to look into the areas of these problems whereby the Federal Government can come to the rescue so as to make this Scheme a buoyant success.

The Scheme was originally launched by the Federal Government. Some Members were trying to point to the Constitution whether it is in order or not for the Federal Government to come in at this stage. I feel it will be a breach of faith or trust on the part of the Federal Government to have launched such a Scheme, and now that we have seen that in some respects the Scheme is failing, to shirk the responsibility of coming to the aid of the State Governments as well as the Local Governments to make the Scheme a final success. It would appear the Federal Government is just watching to see something launched once, and it is now failing, and to look for its failure, if the Federal Government should fail to come to the aid of the State Governments as well as the Local Governments to make the Scheme a success. I will say that it is very important that the Federal Government should, by way of financial support, come to the aid of the UPE Scheme so that all the requirements necessary to make it a success are made available as from now, and so that after April we can see the Scheme succeed in those States where it appears as if it is failing.

This is my simple contribution.

**The Deputy Speaker :** I think we have flogged this topic enough, unless there is anybody with a contrary view, the question will now be put.

**An hon. Member :** I have a suggestion.

**The Deputy Speaker :** There is no suggestion.

**Mr Ingo Mac-Eteli (Brass) :** Hon. Members, I move that the Question be now put.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion?

**Dr Mike Ukpogon (Abak) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to second the Motion.

*Question, that the Question be now put, put and agreed to. Main Question accordingly pull and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That in pursuance of section 18 (1) of the Nigerian Constitution and in view of the serious financial hardship encountered by State and Local Governments in the implementation of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) Scheme, and also in view of the deterioration and imminent collapse of the scheme, this House directs the Committee on Education to investigate and recommend ways and means of boosting the said UPE Scheme in order to make it a success.

#### Self-Help Development Projects

**The Deputy Speaker :** The Motion stands in the name of the hon. Member for Lagos South (*Prince T.O. Olusi*).

**Prince T. O. Olusi (Lagos South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name on the Order Paper :

That in view of the tremendous progress being made all over the country through Self-Help

Community Development Projects, grant aided and supervised by government, this honourable House urges the President to make more grants available both to State Governments and to the Federal Ministry of Social Development to enable them render more aid to the various Communities undertaking Self-Help projects.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr F. A. Akinbisehin (Ifesowopo) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

**Prince Olusi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, this Motion is straight-forward, unambiguous and non-controversial. Mr Speaker, Sir, the main idea is to acknowledge the contribution of our people through self-help development projects all over the country, and to urge the Government to make more money available so that various communities can continue to undertake such projects.

*Members might ask me : Why is self-help community development project necessary ?* And Members would also like to know what is meant by community development projects ? These are projects undertaken by various communities to bridge the gap which either the State Government or the Local Government has not been able to bridge. In other words, communities strive to provide essential or desirable projects in their own local communities. For example, Mr Speaker, there are various communities which, on their own, have constructed roads, and educational institutions. There are some which, on their own, have started small scale industrial projects ; and there are other communities that have built health centres, maternity centres and even court halls.

**Mr Y. A. Amoka (Okene) :** There is a point of order ! My point of order is Order 26 (2). I am raising this because the hon. Member for Lagos South III (*Prince Olusi*) is trying to define community development self-help project. I doubt if there is anybody in this House who does not know what is meant by self-help project. So, he is introducing an irrelevant point, and thereby wasting the time of this House.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Prince Olusi, will you continue ?

**Prince Olusi :** Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir. This is my Motion, and I have a duty to enlighten Members in my own way as to what is meant by community development projects.

What are the aims or the objectives of these projects ? One of the objectives is to raise the economic condition of the various areas, and the other one is purely to render services.

As I have said, community project with regard to the field of education is to assist the government in bringing education to the door steps of everybody. Members would like to ask : Why should the government be involved in self-help projects since they are after all, called self-help ? It is important that the Government should be involved because no government all over the world, however benevolent, can supply its citizens all their needs. Therefore, we,

[PRINCE OLUSI]

as an arm of that Government have the responsibility to educate our people and to direct them so that in their own way, they can supply certain necessities of life to their communities. So, this in itself, is an aspect of educating the people—educating the people to supplement what their Local Governments, their State Governments and the Federal Government can provide for them.

This is very essential, Sir, because of the general belief in our country, particularly because our country is an under-developed country and our people believe that the Government is the source of all wealth and that the Treasury of the Government cannot be exhausted. That being the case, we have a duty to educate them that the source of the finances of the Government is limited, and that they, as citizens or as communities, have to contribute to the development of this country.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to say that community development is accepted all over the world as an important arm of development and because of this, the United Nations, through one of its Agencies, the UNICEF, has made significant contributions all over the world by way of supplying personnel and equipment to various countries. In fact, Nigeria has benefited a lot through the aid of the UNICEF. I would like to say that in the past, America did supply what they called Operation Cross Roaders and Volunteers were recruited in U.S.A. and sent down here to assist in community development work. In fact, the famous untarred road at Maroko which leads to Eti Osa in Lagos State was constructed through the help of the Cross Roaders.

**The Deputy Speaker :** There is a point of order !

**An hon. Member :** My point of order is Order 26 (2). We are not asking for the history of how community development started. He is asking that the Federal Government should give more grants to the various state Governments so that the community work can be projected and not just the history of community development.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Prince Olusi, please confine yourself to the subject matter.

**Prince Olusi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I hope the hon. Members will bear with me. I am only trying to make a case to justify why Members should support this Motion.

The other point, Mr Speaker, Sir, is that this Motion is asking that the President should make money available to the States and to the Federal Ministry of Social Development to aid various communities. It is pertinent to mention or consider what contribution the Federal Government is making at the moment. From all information available to me, Sir, all that the Federal Government does in respect of community development at the moment, is to organise seminars, symposia and lectures to officers all over the country who are involved in Community Development work, and to distribute cross roaders if they do come, so that so far, Sir, Mr Speaker, the Federal Government had not been giving specific grants to the States. This Motion, therefore, is calling on the Government

to make more money available in respect of Community Development works.

Mr Speaker, Sir, as I have said, this Motion is straightforward. It covers all aspects of the policies of the various political parties. Community Development can best be seen in the various rural areas where the Communities have constructed roads, as I have said, and where they have built Community Centres and all sorts of things to develop their Community. Since most Members who are here are from the rural areas, I urge them to support this Motion.

As I have said, if you are talking of Green Revolution, this Motion covers Green Revolution because in some areas people have dug wells, people have constructed artificial lakes in order to aid irrigation. If you are talking of Free Education, we have places where Communities have built Schools. If you are talking of Health, as I have said, we have places where they have built Health Centres.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Sir, one final point which I would like to explain is that in some States the various Governments give what we call matching grants to the various Communities, and the operation is that a Community on its own decides what projects to undertake as per their need, and once a decision has been taken they contribute money and they start the project. At a certain stage, the State Government or the Local Government will come into it and give them grant. Usually they are reimbursed up to 50 per cent of whatever the Community spends in respect of the project. One clear example is in Anambra State in Egbo Etiti Local Government Area where the community on their own started a water project and they also built a Secondary School. The Local Government reimbursed them up to the tune, of ₦18,000.

So, Mr Speaker, you will see that this Motion is simply asking the Government to come to the level of the rural areas to help the rural dwellers to develop various stages according to the need and taste of the people who are occupying these areas.

As I have said, the Motion is not controversial, it is straightforward and simple. Mr Speaker, Sir, I commend the Motion to the House.

**The Deputy Speaker :** Anybody to second the Motion ?

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion. This Motion is based on the principle of three-tier governmental policy. This provides for the Federal Government, the State Government and the Local Government to work hand in hand.

Now, in Communities, the Local Governments are sometimes divided into districts, sometimes divided into Urban Authorities and some into Town Councils. Now, in the Presidential system, the Town Council or Urban district can plan to develop its area with a specific development project. The Federal Government has to help the Urban Council or the District Council or City Council with a specific percentage of the total cost of the development. Now, this specific percentage provided by the Federal Government is what this Motion is

[MR BOB MANUEL]

asking to be increased. Instead of having, say, 15 per cent by the Federal Government, the Motion is calling for the Federal Government to increase the percentage to about 30 or 40 per cent so that the Community will now have less to contribute to develop their areas.

The three-tier system is a system where we try to drive in the Community Development to the grass roots, and this House will, not forget the fact that we are practising the Presidential system where we want development at the grass-roots. Therefore the Motion is calling on the House to pray the President to increase the percentage assistance to the Community in all their development projects in their areas. If we want to improve our areas the President should increase the percentage that would be given to our local government people.

For instance, in certain areas like our place in Degema area, there was a bridge to be built. The Community contributed about ₦50,000 and the State Government helped with about ₦40,000 to build up the bridge. This sort of help is what the Motion is calling the Federal Government to increase its participation in, to increase their part of the amount to the State Government or the Local Government.

So, in certain areas, the Electrical Corporation of Tennessee in America had to develop her Electrical Power Authority. She requested assistance from the State Government. The State Government requested assistance from the Federal Government and it was divided into percentages. And this Local Government area in Tennessee had this Electrical Corporation established with the help of the State and Federal Governments. This is the motive of this Motion and I believe our hon. Members of this House will understand the Motion and pass it through.

I beg to support the Motion with these few points. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is anybody opposing the Motion?

**Alhaji L. N. Daura (Daura West):** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to oppose the Motion. I hope Members will realise that the Mover of this Motion did not make any research on the Motion. It contains no ingredient. The Mover is supposed to find out the real ways and means of getting out grants from the Federal Government by other Local Governments or the State Governments.

I do not think it will be fair for us to interfere in State affairs. It is the practice of the State Governments to pass their claims for grants on community development projects to the Federal Government. We are supposed to know the ways and means of doing so, but not that we should just come here and put up a Motion saying that we should do this and that without thinking or without making any research in order to find out the real ways and means of obtaining this thing.

To my understanding, it is the Local Government Community section that will prepare a claim for any projects to be executed in any Local Government area. Then, this claim will be passed to the State

Government for onward transmission to the Federal Government in order to obtain grants. This is not done through this kind of Motion. I hope that we realise the fact that the Federal Government gives out 50 per cent of the total cost of any project. It is the community in the area and the Local Government Council that would provide the remaining fifty per cent of the total cost of the project. I do not think it would be proper for us to interfere with the State Government's affairs.

With this, Mr Speaker, I beg to oppose the Motion a hundred per cent. Thank you.

**Mr David Akpan Ukpong (Itu):** Mr Speaker, I rise to oppose this Motion.

I am opposing the Motion because it is not nice for us to continue advising the President without being backed by constitutionality. I have gone through the 28 items on the Concurrent List. I do not see the area whereby we can advise the President to go into community development. I believe that since this is not contained in either the Exclusive or the Concurrent List, it is therefore, by our Constitution, the Residual Power of the State Governments.

Therefore, hon. Members, we should, please go through the Constitution before doing anything in this House and then advise the President accordingly. Apart from that, I have also listened to the argument adduced by the Mover of this Motion, and I think it lacks substance. The State Governments are, therefore, in a proper position to go into community development projects of any nature. Even though one of the Speakers has said that we are practising a three-tier system of Government, this does not mean usurpation of functions belonging to the State Governments. If we continue in this approach, we shall be running a Federal system of government which is going to be Federal state subordination. A situation would come whereby State Governments would be left without functions to perform. In other words, we are trying to extract constitutional functions of the State governments which the Constitution does not give us the power to do.

With this, Mr Speaker, I oppose the Motion.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Members, the time now is 12.55 p.m. I shall only allow one Member to speak for three minutes in support of this Motion. Yes, Alhaji Na-Rogo.

**Mr Mohammed Lawal Na-Rogo (Karaye):** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion. The reason for doing so is simply because of the involvement of the people in community development projects. If the Federal Government should supplement the cost of the overall projects of the State Governments as well as those of the Federal Government, there would be some reserve for the State Governments to embark upon certain other projects. In other words, instead of the Government wasting its funds on allocating contracts to our greedy contractors, the Government should reserve these funds for other purposes.

Mr Speaker, Sir, if at all we are to make a little bit of research and see the segment of society that



undertakes this sort of community development projects, our research would simply reveal that it is the lower segment of the society that performs all these dirty jobs in the name of community developments. It is very sad for somebody to know that those people who live in the so-called G.R.A. do not even care to know what is going on outside the periphery of their houses. They do not care about clearing their drainages, or construct culverts, *et cetera* : whereas, these big men are the highest income earners in the society and yet they are very lazy.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Please, round up.

**Mr Na-Rogo** : Mr Speaker, I am only showing that it is the fault of the existing system in the country that is responsible for these low income earners being very active. In the final analysis, I support the Motion and I support that Federal Government should fund more of community development projects, but at least to including these so-called big men in the G.R.A. That is my only bone of contention, but through social, democratic humanism.

Thank you

**Prince A. O. Awa-Ekpo (Eket II)** : Point of explanation.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Yes, what is your point of explanation ?

**Prince Awa Ekpo** : Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of explanation on this Motion is that the subject matter of the Motion does not fall within the functions of the Ministry of Social Development, Youth Sports, and Culture. Therefore, it would be wise to have this Motion withdrawn rather than passing it and yet not having action taken on it.

It is no use passing it to a Committee which has nothing to do with it. It has been stated there that it should go to the Committee on Social Development. There might be a Committee on that, but the function of community Development projects does not fall under the Ministry of Social Development, and so the Motion should be withdrawn and re-considered.

**Mr Yomi Akintola (Ogbomoso. Central)** : I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr A. Yahaya (Ilorin East)** : I move that the Question be now put.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Hon. Members, the Motion standing in the name of Prince T.O. Olusi is :—

That in view of the tremendous progress being made all over the country through Self-Help Community Development Projects, grant aided and supervised by government, this honourable House urges the President to make more grants available both to State Government and to the Federal Ministry of Social Development to enable them render more aid to the various Communities undertaking Self-Help projects.

*Question put and negatived.*

#### Suspension of Motion

**Alhaji Ibrahim Garba Bakwai (Sabon Birni)** : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I now move to suspend my Motion, seeking this honourable House to direct the President to effect reduction of travelling fare of pilgrims by 40 per cent, till further notice. These followers are low income earners, and this House requests the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to reduce the travelling fare of pilgrims by 40 Per cent as their mission is purely for religious purposes. I beg to suspend.

**Mr A. Abdulkadir Ja'e (Rano)** : I rise to second the Motion for the suspension of the Motion standing in my name and the name of Alhaji Ibrahim Bakwai.

**The Deputy Speaker** : Is it the wish of the House that the Motion be suspended.

*Question put and agreed to.*

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr A. Yahaya (Ilorin East)** : I rise to move that this House stand adjourned till 10 o'clock on Monday morning.

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II)** : I beg to second the Motion for adjournment till Monday 10 o'clock.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That this House do stand adjourned till Monday at 10 o'clock.

*The House accordingly adjourned at 1.05 p.m.*

National Assembly Debates (Representatives)

1823

[Announcements]

3 MARCH 1980

[Announcements]

1824

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Monday, 3rd March, 1980

The House met at 10.20 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, I have only very few announcements. The first is to give you a brief account of our visit to the United States.

Members' Visit to U. S. A.

On behalf of my colleagues and myself who recently visited the United States of America, I say that our visit has been fairly fruitful in the sense that we had the opportunity to observe the Presidential System in action.

Our visit was handled by an organisation called the African-American Institute, which also prepared for us a working programme covering the whole period of our stay in the United States.

We had the opportunity to observe the deliberations of the United States House of Representatives and the Standing Committees. We also witnessed the conduct of investigations by the said Committees. We met and discussed with the United States Speaker of the House of Representatives, Mr Tip O'Neil on matters of congressional procedures and related problems. We discussed with some Congressmen, particularly with the Congressional Black Caucus led by Mr William Gray who showed tremendous interest in our visit and did everything possible to ensure that it was a success and we exchanged views with the following people :

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Rep. Clement J. Zablocki | Chairman, House Committee on Foreign Affairs.   |
| Rep. Charles Diggs, Jr.  | Member, House Subcommittee on Africa, Congressional Black Caucus.   |
| Rep. John Conyers, Jr.   | Chairman, Sub-committee on Crime ; Member, House Judiciary Committee, Committee on Government Operations. |
| Rep. Dante B. Fascell    | Member, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Committee on Government Operations.                                 |
| Rep. Stephen J. Solarz   | Chairman, House Subcommittee on Africa ; Member, Committee on the Budget.                                 |

Rep. G. T. (Mickey) Leland

Rep. Julian C. Dixon

Rep. William L. Clay

Rep. Harold Ford

Rep. Augustus F. Hawkins

Member, Congressional Black Caucus, Committee on Inter-state and Foreign Commerce.

Member, Congressional Black Caucus, Appropriations Committee.

Member, Congressional Black Caucus, Committee on Post Office and Civil Service.

Member, Congressional Black Caucus, Committee on Ways and Means.

Member, Congressional Black Caucus, Committee on Education and Labour, Committee on House Administration.

We visited the Library of Congress and particularly the Nigerian section of the Library. We were conducted through the Congressional Research Centre which supplies the congress all information practically on any matter within human knowledge.

We visited the offices of the Congressmen and saw the facilities and equipment provided for them for the efficient performance of their duties.

We also visited the Executive branch of the Government of the United States and had discussions with officials of the State Department, Mr Richard Moose, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs.

We had extensive exchange of views with Dr Andrew Valuchek, a specialist in American National Government.

While in New York, we visited the office of the African-American Institute and the premises of the United Nations.

Our Clerk, Mr B. I. Olinmah, had the opportunity to hold discussions with his counterparts in the Congress on staff and other procedural problems and possibility of Training programmes for our staff.

On our way back to Lagos, I stopped in London and paid a courtesy call on the Speaker of the British House of Commons, Sir George Thomas. I was warmly received by the Speaker and his Deputy and other M.P. including Mr Richard Lusse, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

In the company of the Clerk of this House and the Right Hon. Mr Tom Egbuwoku, the U.P.N. Chief Whip, I attended the deliberations of the House of Commons and visited the Office of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, where we discussed the issue of Nigerian Membership of the Association.

[MR SPEAKER]

In conclusion, I must remark that I enjoyed maximum co-operation from the hon. Members who travelled with me and we all worked together throughout as if we all belong to one political party. I seize this opportunity to thank them for this and the honour they bestowed on the House of Representatives.

I also thank the hon. Members who were here during our absence for the wonderful co-operation they gave to my deputy, Alhaji Idris Ibrahim, during our absence. And also we seize the opportunity to deny the allegation that in no circumstances were we stranded in the United States. We were guests of the American Government. We were absolutely comfortable. We had all that we required and our visit was a tremendous success. (*Applause*)

#### Remunerations

Hon. Members, the other announcement is on the issue of remunerations. I understand the feelings of Members in respect of this matter. I myself feel exactly the same way because I do not see how somebody can be bearing the burden of this nation for nearly six months without any form of remuneration.

I can assure the House that everything possible has now been done, and I have been well informed that our remuneration, that is our salaries including the allowances, are now ready and have been duly inserted in the on-coming Estimates. (*Interruptions*) Hold on, Members. It will not be appropriate, for obvious reasons, to state the figures in this House, but the figures will be made known to Party Leaders who will in turn let the Members know. Secondly, anybody who is familiar with Financial Procedures and also with government functioning will know that the government just cannot pay us any money without the approval of the National Assembly and we can only approve it when it comes in the Estimates, and it is then we can say it is okay or it is not okay. It has to come to us any time from this week for formal approval.

**Some hon. Members :** Good talk.

**Mr Speaker :** Also, hon. Members, I do appreciate that many of you suffer considerable inconveniences for lack of transport. I can assure you that by Friday this week, each and every Member will receive a cheque for his own car loan. (*Applause*) For purposes of our own safety, I will not mention the figure but when you see the cheque, whatever figure you see on it is the appropriate figure.

#### Special Committee on NNPC

Hon. Members, there is something very important and urgent in relation to the Special Committee we appointed on NNPC. I discovered, when I came back, that this Committee has virtually come to a standstill. Nothing really has happened since the appointment of this Committee, and the eyes of the whole country are focussed on this House to know what will be the outcome of this investigation. I was appalled to understand that forces both inside and outside this House were doing everything possible to frustrate the investigation through intimidations and blackmail. So much has happened.

**Several hon. Members :** Shame ! Shame !

**The Speaker :** I will seize this opportunity to inform those agents who are carrying rumours around and trying to blackmail, frustrate and intimidate Members of the Committee from participating in this enquiry that this generation will not succumb to that sort of rubbish. This House must continue with the investigation and I therefore ask all the Members of the special Committee to meet in my office immediately after this sitting, so that those who are no longer interested will be removed and others will be put in place of them.

#### Meeting of Party Leaders

Hon. Members, there will also be a meeting of the Party Leaders in my office to discuss other issues including the invitations we received for visits to various countries. The Party Leaders will meet to discuss it to know when these visits will take place.

#### Procedure

On Motions for adjournment and points of explanation, having observed what obtains in other countries, I think it will be better that these Motions will now be put in writing. That is, if you want to raise a Motion for adjournment, please, put it down in writing and send it to the Deputy Speaker for scrutiny. If you also want to make a point of explanation, put what you are going to say in writing on a piece of paper. You do not have to type it. Send it to the Deputy Speaker for scrutiny before it comes to the Floor of the House.

#### Committee Meetings

Hon. Members, you will see the notices of meetings of Committees on the Order Paper for today. In addition, the Committee on Education will meet today at 1 p.m. in Committee Room 4.

#### ORDER OF THE DAY

#### NOTICES OF MOTION

#### Oil Spillage

**Dr J. T. Sekibo (Boni II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name and in the names of my other Colleagues—

That this House notes the encouraging statement made by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in respect of his plans to deal with the problems of oil spillage and other hazards inherent in oil exploration and further urges the President to take immediate steps to send relief materials—food, medicine, *et cetera*—in aid of the affected areas of Brass, Yenagoa and Degema Local Government Areas of the Rivers State now hit by severe oil spillage and bring pressure to bear on Texaco Oil Company Limited to effect immediate repairs on the affected wells in order to arrest the situation ; and that this House further directs the Committee on Petroleum and Energy Conservation to review the existing laws on oil spillage and other hazards associated with oil exploration and to recommend appropriate amendments to alleviate the problems of society.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

**Mr A. B. Okon** (Ikot Ekpene I) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

**Dr Sekibo** : Before I go on to the substance of this Motion, I would like to make an explanation. As it stands now, the Motion is a bit late in that it was submitted to the Business Committee which, I feel, did not give it the urgent treatment it needed at that time. As a matter of fact, certain events have taken place, like the trip of the Committee on Petroleum and Energy Conservation to the area of the spillage which will make its report to this honourable House with their recommendations, and I think these recommendations will deal with the last part of this Motion which calls on this House to further direct the Committee on Petroleum and Energy Conservation to review the existing laws on Oil spillage and other hazards associated with oil exploration and to recommend appropriate amendment to alleviate the problems to society.

As hon. Members are aware, of recent most of the national dailies have been carrying publications about this oil spillage. This Motion is calling first, on this House to call on the President to take immediate steps to alleviate the sufferings of the people. This may be regarded as a short-term measure. But again, it is calling on the President to take long-term measures which will take care of spillage prevention, programme for rehabilitating affected people, and so on.

The oil spillage in the Rivers State which has really affected Brass, Yenegoa and Degema Local Government Areas would have been prevented if certain measures were taken in time. All of us know that blow-outs are associated risk in oil exploration but measures have to be taken to contain them. Unfortunately, the Company concerned, *Texaco*, did not take such preventive measure, and I say categorically that this Company has acted most unexpectedly under such circumstances.

The spillage occurred on the 17th of January, 1980; no statement was made, natives were not alerted about the spillage, the Government of the State was not informed. It was only on the 2nd of February, a statement was issued by this Company and at that time, the spillage had affected most places.

In the statement, they claimed that the spillage was under control, which was not the case. As a matter of fact, it was at that time, as unprepared as they were, that they asked for the help of other Companies flying in some experts from America to come and check it. Still they could not contain it. So, oil was still gushing out in thousands of barrels. Conservative estimates have it that between three hundred to four hundred thousand barrels were lost by the blow out. Hon. Members know what this means to this country in terms of foreign exchange. If proper steps had been taken, this spillage would have been averted somehow because the well concerned was not a wild cast neither was it appraisal, but a development well, knowledge of which should have been known by the company so as to monitor pressure differences at different stages of the drilling.

Hon. members it may be necessary to inform the House that this is not the only spillage that has taken place, and no proper laws or measures were taken, as a result of which most of these companies get away

without really paying proper compensation. It may be necessary to mention a few. For instance there was this oil spillage at Anieze which was on-shore in Bendel State. Here again the company, Shell BP, was unprepared to contain the situation. The oil was burning for months before experts, as usual, were brought in from America to contain it. There was another on-shore blow out again in Oniku in Imo State. Of course it was the gas that was burning for days. This well belongs to Agip. In another case a whole rig was lost. The rig was known as Ocean Master. It happened at the off-shore of Cross River State.

The next spillage was again in Cross River State and, there was a loss of a rig again and that time the rig was called Meteorite rig. Now we have the Opoi 20 oil well blow out which has affected the Rivers State very badly. Also within that period there was blow out in Bendel State at Delta Oben near Sapele. Hon. Members, it is most appropriate now for us to take steps to ensure that these oil exploring Companies do not misuse the opportunity offered them by this great country.

It may be necessary for us to know that a great area of this country is presently under the use of these companies. For instance, the NNPC is on joint ventures with Shell International over 7,815,000 acres of concessions, while Mobil has 643,000 acres of concession; Gulf 3,239,000 acres of concession; Agip 1,313,000 acres of concession; Texaco 755,000 acres of concession; Elf 755,000 acres of concession and Pan Ocean has 248,000 acres of concession. The NNPC is also having exploration services contracts with Ashland Oil Company for over 325,000 acres of concession; Nigos 208,000 acres of concession; Elf 1,018,000 acres of concession and Agip Africa 5,167,000 acres of concession. Therefore, it is very necessary that we do not allow such great areas of our own land mass to be exploited without proper regulations to check these companies.

In the spillage affected areas, it was common knowledge that because of the attitude of *Texaco*, most natives did not know that there was such a spillage, and there was pollution everywhere along the coast. So, as usual, we all know that these people living in the riverine areas are aquatic. They get their living from the sea, they have their washing, bathing and the rest of them from the sea. So they were taken unawares without information. Some women, as usual, early in the morning went to have their bath, and some of them got into the water and then later on discovered that they had body irritations and so on. Some reported to hospitals with confirmed cases of *dermatitis* others with *Volyitis*, and so on. So, the silence of *Texaco* has not only caused the country financial loss but also avoidable human suffering. It is really very necessary that members of this honourable House should rise up at this time to help their fellow Nigerians who are suffering untold hardships in these areas.

*Texaco* has done nothing virtually. It is the Rivers State Government, as you have heard, that set aside immediately ₦1,000,000 with which they have been supplying the areas with some necessary materials. For instance, they carried down their barges of drinking water which the natives could not get. As a result of the spillage, as some of us saw in the television, life in the sea was virtually destroyed.

[DR SEKIBO]

We saw different types of fish that were dead and the natives cannot go out to fish which is their main source of income. In fact, as a result of the gushing oil and the particles that were carried by the wind, most of the water wells in the area were polluted. So the people are really having untold hardship and they need the help of the hon. Members.

I will also urge this House to please give this Motion all the support it needs. It may seem as though we should wait for the report by the committee that visited the area. As I said earlier on, if this Motion had been given the urgent attention it required at the initial stage it would have been debated before the departure of the Committee to the oil spillage area. Hon. Members, I ask for your support for this Motion. Thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Co-Movers.

**Mr Ingo Mac-Eteli (Brass) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, as my Colleague has rightly said, I appreciate the statement the President has uttered on this issue. But at the same time, I feel the urgency that should be given to the issue is not given to it. At this time, I feel it could have been proper for the Federal Government to have really sent in relief materials. It is barely a month and over now that this spillage started and since then we have been calling for aids. In fact, apart from the Federal Government, we could have expected the Texaco Company and other Oil Companies to give the needed aid, but this is not forthcoming.

This is a state we know has been helping this nation so much, revenue-wise, but now this problem is facing the state. The papers have been carrying it, and television and the rest of them have been carrying it also but it seems nobody is really interested. Some of the people really make it a jest because they have not gone to see what is really happening there.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is really pathetic if you had gone there, especially during the initial days. Now, if you go, you will see the oil spread out ; the thickness initially was about one foot high on the water, and this thing has spread out to the whole of the riverine tidal areas of the Rivers State.

Oil spillage occurs in this country, as we all know and has been well enumerated. This is not the first one. I feel, like the Motion is calling, that this honourable House should urge the Committee on Petroleum and Energy Conservation to look into the laws. This is very vital. It is vital in the sense that we have to find a solution and make possible rigid laws on these companies. So far the Nigerian society has not decided yet to do the exploitation and exploration of the oil we have by our own selves.

We feel that it is only the expatriate companies that can carry out exploration projects in this country. Therefore, to ease these attendant problems, to be safe and not to be affected otherwise by these oil spillages, there is the need for us to have good laws ; laws that will really make these oil companies feel they are working in a country where we know what we are really after. Most of these spillages occur due to carelessness, carelessness in the sense that the oil companies feel whatever happens they can speak to one or two persons in this country and go scot-free.

They give out thousands of naira to one or two persons and the whole thing dies off there. It is just like what is happening here : a Motion is on the Floor calling for 2.8 billion naira misappropriation, and you could see that the whole thing is going into the drain. This is exactly what is happening to this spillage problem in this country. I feel when it is passed over to the Petroleum and Energy Conservation Committee, they will do the best possible to make out laws that will hold these companies responsible for whatever carelessness that might emanate from their exploration processes.

Mr Speaker, as we know, in the Rivers State as earlier mentioned, over 50 per cent of the people there are fishermen. The main occupation is fishing, and especially in the Brass, Yenagoa and Degema Local Government areas, this is the case there. Now, all the fishing nets that people used at the time of this blow up have all been damaged. The Marine baits have all been killed. You know that fish breed just like the mosquitoes, and when you want to eradicate mosquitoes, where there is a pond, you only pour in a few drops of the oil and it will kill the whole larvae. So, it is with this fishing problem. Now, that the oil spills, it gives oil coating on the surface of the water and all these small, small baits and other things that people use in catching fish have all died away. It will take years and in fact you may never get them back.

We talk of scarcity of food in the Rivers State, that we do not have good agricultural soil again, it is just because of this oil and the spillage problems. So, since about 1956 when the first oil well was got in Oloibiri in Brass Local Government Area of Rivers State. In fact, before then, we used to have a lot of cocoyam, plantain and the rest of it. But go there today you cannot grow cocoyam there, no plantain, no yam. This is because of the after effects of oil exploration and spillage. For so many years, from 1956 to the period just before the war, you will see that the whole of the agricultural foodstuffs were deteriorating. We bring in the manure quite all right, but at times we find that the manure does not even work. We have not been able to send in experts to find out exactly what we have to do to alleviate the sufferings of the people.

Mr Speaker, I am calling on this honourable House to have sympathy for these people who are really suffering. They are suffering. People have gone blind. I do not think that this Motion does need much talking. Every average Nigerian today knows that in these areas the oil spillage has really affected the people, and is causing a lot of havoc.

Mr Speaker, I will also use this opportunity to call on the Revenue Allocation Commission that is now in process. I think this is a typical example of what we have been crying for, that revenue should be by derivation, and special agency should be given to these areas where oil production is carried out. Like in agriculture, you have Agricultural Banks and the rest of them. In fact, in the oil producing areas, what we really need now is a special agency, and an amount of money from the total gross revenue of this country should be given

to that body that should be able to take care of this type of spillage and other defects that come from oil spillage. We cannot be coming out crying and requesting for aids and other things from the government every now and then, because as long as oil exploration goes on, you are bound to have these oil spillages every now and then.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, with these few contributions, I plead with the House to give its honest support to the Motion. Thank you.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you, very much, the next co-Mover.

**Dr P. I. Egberipou (Yenagoa) :** Mr Speaker, my co-Movers who have already spoken have dwelt a lot on the problems contained in this Motion. I want to deal specifically with the problems involved in the spillage that has affected a great part of my constituency, what the Oil Company has done, and what we Nigerians have done to alleviate the sufferings of fellow Nigerians. This spillage, you have been told, occurred on the 17th of January, 1980.

The Texaco Oil Company decided, by design, not to report this either to the Rivers State Government or to the Federal Government for as long as 14 days and beyond. The first hint that a disaster of this magnitude was ever occurring in the Rivers State was as a result of one of the chiefs who happened to have visited his domain at that time and saw what the inhabitants were suffering and that was 14 days after the oil spillage had occurred. He ran down to Port Harcourt and reported to the Governor. The Governor of the State went on the air, sent a special team to visit the area, and these people reported back to him. The situation was very deplorable indeed. It was at this time that Texaco ever noticed that a spillage was occurring in one of their oil wells. Then they despatched some of their staff to America to get the equipment to stop this oil spillage.

You can imagine, fellow Nigerians, how Nigerians could be treated by these oil prospecting companies. These hazards occur in very many parts of the world, yet there was no plan made to prevent its occurrence in Nigeria.

When this was reported very profusely especially by the *Tide* newspaper in Port Harcourt, it was then that the Texaco Oil Company sent to the area one Mr Obaseki, a fellow Nigerian, with a paltry sum of ₦140 to Sangana community numbering over fourteen thousand people to dig an alternative well for drinking water, and ₦300 was given to this community to buy *gari* and fish. You can imagine what ₦300 would fetch a community of fourteen thousand people. You can imagine, fellow Nigerians, how we Nigerians can also treat ourselves and help oil companies in treating our own selves.

Now, let us come to the government. First, the Governor of the Rivers State had to report this back to the President. The Minister of Housing and Environment reported this to Lagos. Then a Presidential Relief Team was sent to the Rivers State. All throughout this period, people were suffering and children were getting near blindness. Some had already gone blind. A man from my constituency

had already died as a result of bathing in poisonous water. As if that was not enough, it was then that the Committee on Petroleum and Energy could visit this area of disaster, well over forty days, and it is just now that this same Committee in the Senate is visiting the area. I am forced to ask what will they do now for lives that have already been lost? If this is the way we will continue to protect the lives of fellow Nigerians, I am afraid, we should not call ourselves a country. I am moved to call on this honourable House to tell whoever is in authority to send relief materials immediately to the area. You will be surprised, I would like to emphasize it again, that over forty days ago no Federal relief material has gone to that area.

Secondly, I come to the recommendations that should be made to the Committee on Petroleum and Energy in asking for a proper legislation to be given to these oil prospecting companies.

**Mr Speaker :** Round up.

**Dr Egberipou :** Fellow Nigerians, as a Medical Doctor, I would like to dwell on the medical aspect. If oil gets in contact with the human body, there will be the immediate and long-term effects. The immediate effects are those ones that have already been mentioned to you by my Colleague, such as dermatitis, that is infection of the skin, gastroenteritis that is drinking poisoned water; diarrhoea is the layman's language; and blindness by the oil getting in contact with the conjunctiva of the eyes and other diseases. Other immediate problems are accidents that occur in the prospecting areas. I have had a cause to treat quite a number of people, people who have come with mutilated fingers, and at the end of the treatment, what paltry sums they get from these oil companies is a matter for regret. A man losing a thumb, a very important finger in the body, in civilised places would be given very adequate compensation, but I tell you, in this country, sometimes, they go away with three hundred naira or less.

Then, the long-term effect is causation of carcinoma. Carcinoma is the medical word for cancer, and cancer of this nature that is caused by oil coming in contact with the skin of the body is skin cancer of various sorts, and then cancer of the bladder. You will find that in my area, there is now an increased number of people who find blood in their urine and this has been noticed to be cancer of the bladder. You will find that, if nothing is done to make these companies sit up, set up hospitals in the areas where oil industry is going on and monitor the effects of these on the communities, then your son may be unlucky to marry my daughter who may have carcinoma of the bladder and they would die young and leave your grand-children and my grand-children without any parents. (*Applause*)

So, hon. Members of this august House, I am calling on you to please let the heads of these companies know that Nigerians cannot be taken for a ride. Mr Speaker, thank you very much. I have made my points.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you. The hon. Member for Mbano East (*Mr E. C. Ebo*) will speak on the NPP side.

**Several hon. Members :** There is another co-Mover.

**Mr Speaker :** I am sorry. The hon. Member for Ikwerre/Etche II (*Dr Eze O. A. Nwala*) is to speak. He is a co-Mover, so the hon. Member for Mbano East (*Mr Ebo*) will speak after him.

**Dr Eze O. A. Nwala** (Ikwerre/Etche II) : Thank you, Mr Speaker. Hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** No, it is your Motion, you are not supporting it.

**Dr Nwala :** I rise to speak on the Motion before the honourable House and to strengthen the points made by my co-Movers.

I would like to treat this Motion from another perspective and probably, I may start discussing this Motion by posing a number of questions to this honourable House. One of the questions I would like to ask is, what, in our own terms, can we regard as a natural or artificial disaster? What are those occurrences within our environment which we can identify as natural and artificial disaster that will call for national intervention or national emergency relief?

If we begin to look at some of these events in human nature, one of those that may require urgent action on the part of Government is the occurrence of epidemic like cholera and so on which directly may have some relationship with human life. If we may relate what we are talking about here this morning to other things which occur in contiguous areas or adjacent states or nations in the world, we find similar occurrences.

If we may draw examples from the United States; a few months ago, there was a nuclear radiation leakages and the national awareness of the United States by the sort of danger posed to human lives, the way and manner it was handled, gives us how to take off in handling the problems associated with oil exploration, production, transportation and storage. The problem of oil spillage or environmental pollution associated with oil industry is not only with exploration, production, transportation, but also in exportation of crude oil.

Within all these phases of oil production, you find spillages occurring. But the question is, in the face of this sort of problem, what national measures, what legislative measures, or what control measures have been propounded by the Federal Government of Nigeria, particularly as it relates to some of these hazards associated with petroleum industry?

We find that the Petroleum Decree of 1969, which is the only legislation on the oil industry, is very weak as far as these hazards are concerned. There is no mention in this particular Petroleum Decree of 1969 as to what steps can be taken by the Federal Government of Nigeria when we have such problems as the one we are talking about now.

If you look at that Decree and look at also how the Oil Companies have been handling these problems, you will find that the Federal Government of Nigeria has got no adequate measures as to how to deal with such emergencies, and I think this is very weak. The Federal Government should do something.

This brings me to a Seminar conducted by the Federal Ministry of Housing, Community Development and Environment in association with the Oil Companies some time last year in Port Harcourt. Surprisingly enough, the Company that is affected now the Texaco Company Limited of Nigeria, presented the best paper on how to handle these environmental hazards associated with the Oil Industry; unfortunately little did they know that a few weeks after they were going to be faced with this problem. We find that the best recommendations they have made as a Company involved in this industry was not applied in the case of this Sangana spillage.

What then do we do? The point now is that the Federal Government of Nigeria has left this problem in the hands of the Oil Companies like Shell-BP, Texaco, Agip, and so on. These were the people who proposed recommendations of what can be done in handling this sort of problems, and they are now the generators of such problems. So, you could see that there is some sort of contradiction here in the sense that these Oil Companies are profit-oriented and anything that will whittle down their profit margin is not to their advantage. So, for a very long time, these Companies have not done anything substantially either in the way of installing safety measures to prevent such occurrences, or doing other things which ought to be done, that is, at least to set aside part of their profit or revenue towards events of this nature.

Hon. Members, the point at issue here is not so much of what is on the paper, but what we can do. I want us to look at it in a long-term perspective. I think it is necessary for this nation to develop a sort of emergency relief measure since the hazards associated with the Oil Industry are many. It does not matter how careful an Oil Company may be, these spillages are bound to occur from time to time, either at the time of exploration or during the time of transportation.

So, I will ask hon. Members to view this problem seriously and to recommend to the Committee on Petroleum and Energy that at least, from now onwards, let us say for every crude barrel of oil produced, we should set aside one kobo towards creating an emergency relief fund, and not just an on-the-spot reaction. There should be a continuous fund set out towards handling this. I would like you to treat this problem in the same way that we treat other natural hazards such as desert encroachment and nuclear problems.

The issue here is not so much of the area affected. In fact, during the past few weeks, we found ourselves dealing with oil spillages in three locations in Brass, Yenogoa area of the Rivers State, in the Cross River State and in Bendel State. It is surprising that in spite of the huge problem posed by these spillages to human lives, there was little or no national reaction, apart from the people who are concerned. I do not think this is a very healthy thing for our country. If such a spillage which poses great danger to life occurs, and since the atmosphere is being polluted because of easy transportation of one hazard to the other by air, it should generate a national concern.

So, Mr Speaker, I will call on hon. Member that we should not only handle the problems at hand now, but also set up a continuous programme that will deal with the problem for all time purposes. Thank you very much.

**Mr E. C. Ebo (Mbano East) :** I rise to support this Motion. In supporting it, Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of Members to the clear evidence of environmental pollution in the areas where oil is prospected. Air, water, land, have been disturbed there. The life of the people, physical and social, has been disturbed. There is no doubt about this. Yesterday, we were talking of burning of our gas ; today it is oil spillage. These things raise problems and the Government of this country must show that it is equal to those tasks. The Acts or Decrees affecting minerals and oil in this land require review. The fact, Mr Speaker, is that we have not got the facilities for these reviews and, as an obiter dictum, let me say, Mr Speaker, Sir, that we have to think about how to provide facilities for reviewing these laws. In actual fact, if you go through some of them, you will find that sufficient provision has not been made to protect the citizens, to protect the soil, to protect the property of the people. What shall we do ? We have not got the facilities right now, but in due course, we will have them.

**An hon. Member :** We have.

**Mr Ebo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, a question arises. We talk of insurance ; are these oil companies prospecting without insurance ? If there is insurance, what has been insured ? The lives of the people, their property, their soil, their farmland, the creeks, and the roads have been damaged. You find that the areas where we get this oil are really suffering a great deal. I do not know to what extent the Government of this country has forced these oil companies to insure all these properties of the people as well as their lives. If they have been insured, what prevents us from getting something from those insurance companies in such times as these when there is oil spillage killing fish and destroying the water that the people drink for life ? If there is no insurance, why should we close our eyes over such things and then think of insuring some other petty things, leaving major issues like oil ?

Mr Speaker, Sir, this reminds us of another problem of the oil industry. Right now, we are talking about what is happening where the oil is being prospected but look around where you have the storage system and you will see that the oil is exposed to the bare air. You know that Nigeria is notorious for not being able to maintain facilities, Nigerian cannot maintain these sophisticated facilities and one day you will get explosion and then you will begin to talk of relief again, because these oil companies have not taken the lives of the people into consideration. In case of hostility with any country, you will find out that those storages you have which are exposed to the free air will just be blown off and then you will be in trouble. In other countries, this cannot happen. You know the United States of

America imports oil more than any other country in the world ; you cannot get that type of exposure there. Our storages have no protection whatsoever, and they are even in the heart of our cities.

It is our business in this House to think about the safety of these citizens, who by the grace of God, have beckoned to us now to come and talk and talk about their welfare, and force those who ought to do something about their welfare to do it. This is one of the occasions when this honourable House has to call on its Committee to go further than ordinarily recommending giving relief by calling on the President to give relief. What is relief ? They have to go further than that. If you damage the properties of the people because you are looking for something underneath the soil, you have to pay for the damages. You ought to know that accident might happen, and since it has happened, it has to be paid for. If it occurred as a result of carelessness, then the Government should sit up and make sure that the careless ones are taken off. If it is sabotage, we take note of this and make sure that such companies that are sabotaging our cause are sent packing away from our oil centres.

You know it can be sabotage. People can spill your oil because they know it is your main source of revenue. Now, how much in terms of naira has gone to the drains in this spillage ? The Government ought to know this. The people affected are not begging. We are talking about everybody and laying the foundation now since there is a lot of oil everywhere. Perhaps, if you do not treat this one well, when it comes to your turn, you might not have the people to give you the support.

**The Speaker :** Round up.

**Mr Ebo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am saying that I support this Motion and we have to think of getting the insurance companies to pay. We have to think of stopping the carelessness of oil companies, we have to stop any form of sabotage against us to drain our funds through oil and we have to make sure that environmental pollution in the areas concerned are properly controlled so that the people can enjoy part of the benefits derived from oil which is got from their land. It is not only in the Rivers State, but I am saying that the Committee has to work so that all the areas where oil is being prospected are taken into consideration.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to support the Motion.

**Chief Godwin B. Wodi (Port Harcourt II) :** It is unfortunate that I did not see this Motion earlier on, and it is rather difficult for me now to bring in an Amendment. The only avenue open to me now is to address this House and make my own explanation.

I want to go a little bit further to let this House know what the Rivers State is like. The Rivers State is actually fundamentally riverine. We have the salt water and we have the fresh water. The fresh water is the one that drains right from the upland, that is, the Niger down, and it gets to a point where it joins the salt water.



**The Speaker :** We are talking about oil pollution.

**Chief Wodi :** Yes. I just want to explain the extent of the devastation of this spillage. I quite agree with all that the previous speakers have said. This Motion has excluded three other areas involved in the devastation of this spillage. Yenagoa is affected by the spillage because of the tidal effect. The Chairman of the Committee on Petroleum and Energy Conservation also mentioned in one of our Committee meetings that Iwose which is otherwise known as Rumolumeni is affected by this spillage. Rumolumeni is in Port Harcourt Local Government Area, but it is not here in this Motion.

Secondly, when Degema is affected by any tidal wave, I do not see how Gori, Gokana, Kono and other places could be left out. I would have expected that Bori Local Government Area should have been mentioned in this Motion which is calling for areas to receive government relief. Mr speaker, Sir, this is what I have been saying in this House. All these things are one-sided mainly because the Governor of the State comes from this particular area.

**The Speaker :** Order! Order!

**Chief Wodi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not see why these other areas that have suffered from this tidal effect should be left out.

**The Speaker :** Order! Order! Hon. Member, please, do not make insinuations.

**Chief Wodi :** Hon. Members, please, I started explaining the tidal effect of this pollution because I want you all to understand.

**The Speaker :** Yes, go on.

**Chief Wodi :** Port Harcourt Local Government Area is affected and Bori Local Government Area is also affected.

**Mr Speaker :** Order! Order!

Chief Wodi has the Floor.

**Chief Wodi :** My argument is that—

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Chief Efiom Ita Efiom (Odukpani) :** My point of order is Order 26 (6). And it reads :

*No Member shall impute improper motives to any other Members.*

**Several hon. Members :** No! No!

**Mr Speaker :** The hon. Member from Cross River State, you did not do your home work very well. Yes, Chief Wodi, continue.

**Chief Wodi :** Mr Speaker, the fundamental point I wanted to make is that we are considering this special spillage which started at Akpoi. We want to include all the areas affected by the adverse effect of the pollution. I am, therefore, asking that in this Motion, we need to include Ikwere/Etche Local Government Area because Rumolumeni is part of it. Port Harcourt and Ambori Local Government Areas are also part of it. All of them should be included in the Motion.

**Mr Mohammed Yelwa (Yauri) :** I am looking at this Motion from a layman's point of view. Personally, I sympathize with those who suffer in the Rivers State, whether they are from Degema, Brass or Port Harcourt. But, all other people affected

by this oil spillage should also be sympathized with. Unfortunately, the Motion is overtaken by events. I know very well that hon. Members from the Rivers State have exercised great patience, having to wait for about 40 days before the Motion came up. In fact, if there is a disaster, we have to take it very seriously, no matter which part of the country is affected. The reason why I said that this Motion had been overtaken by event is that I understand that a Committee of this House travelled to the affected areas, and I think that it is important for this House, before taking any decision, to hear from the committee so as to know the exact situation of things they found in these affected areas.

At the same time, I would implore the Committee to report their findings fully to the House. There is no objection to relief being sent to them. The Committee should be in a better position to give us a first-hand information about the situation. They should also tell us the areas really affected and make recommendations as to what relief could be made to them. In addition, they should suggest a sort of long-term solution to the problem. So, in my opinion, the Committee's views should be sought before passing this Motion.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Hamzat Ngadiwa (Biu North) :** I rise to support this Motion. As most of the speakers have said, I would like to extend my sympathy to all these people affected by this pollution. I am sure that many Members could, at best, imagine the situation that is obtainable in the affected areas, but from the able contributions of the Movers of this Motion, I am sure that Members are no longer in doubt as to the real situation in the areas affected by this pollution, the magnitude of which qualifies the place as a national disaster area.

Mr Speaker, Sir, one of the greatest errors that we do make in organizing relief aids of this nature, is that such aids are usually sent late. This is what is happening in the oil spilling areas. It is after forty days of occurrence of the incident that relief is now being organised. The environment has already been polluted; every system has been disastrously affected. The economy of the people has suffered tremendously, and now the health of the people is at stake. These are the things that should have been taken into account early enough so that relief aids could have been sent to these people to relieve them of the effects of this spillage.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to say (as one of the Members from the GNPP has said) that as a Committee has already gone to see these affected areas, it is only pertinent that we should hear from this Committee, quite apart from the recommendations made on the Floor of this House. We should co-ordinate our recommendations with the report of this Committee so that they could look into the possibility of alleviating the sufferings of these people. But, I have one caution to give. We have already seen that the oil spillage has already smeared both water and land. The soil has already been saturated by the oil spillage.

[MR NGADIVA]

Mr Speaker, Sir, in recommending a short-term solution, I would like to sound a note of warning that we should take into account also the subsequent environmental effects of this spillage in the areas affected, and that in their recommendation the Committee should advance concrete solutions that could take into account, not only the short-term effects, but also the long-term effects so that the possible subsequent environmental effects of the pollution in the affected areas, could be contained.

With this, I wish to impress upon the hon. Members that this is a Motion that is non-controversial; it touches on a national issue and we should therefore vote unanimously to have this Motion passed.

**Dr J. S. Muhammed** (Kano West Ward): I rise to support the Motion. Mr Speaker, Sir, in supporting the Motion, I would like to make a few salient points clear. First and foremost, this House must, at all costs, avoid itself being dragged directly or indirectly into local politics. I say this, with due respect to the Mover and co-Movers of this Motion. I would like to make it clear that, if the intention of the Motion is to procure a relief and some sort of alleviation to the massive ecological damage that is being done by oil companies, they will have the support of this House. However, if the aim of the Motion is either to get a score point, one faction against another, or one clan against another, this House should be over and above that.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, Sir, mention has been made about the revenue allocation and revenue allocation formula. As far as I know, the Motion has not asked for that, nor is it the intention of the Movers, judging from what they have said, to get the Revenue Allocation formulae that have been tested in the past or are allowed to be tested, dragged into this Motion. I am sure if that is their intention they will not make any headway.

**Mr O. Oni** (Obafemi/Owode): My point of order is Order 26 (2). The hon. Member for Kano West Ward (*Dr Muhammed*) is speaking irrelevantly, and I would like him to confine himself to the Motion.

**Dr Muhammed**: Mr Speaker, Sir, judging from the previous Revenue Allocation formulae that were tried, a certain percentage of money was supposed to have been kept by the Federal Government, as custodian of the nation's wealth; this amount of money, I think, totalled about three *per cent* of the total DPA, and it was meant specifically for the relief of disaster areas.

One would like to ask what the Federal Government has been doing with this three *per cent* of our total DPA for the past five years in terms of relief. There is money available to the Federal Government, and I think it is only relevant that the Committee should first ask the Government what it has been doing about this and similar disaster areas all over the country.

In talking about the oil spillages, I am aware of the fact and I am sure that this House is, that oil is produced not just in Rivers state or in one or two Local Governments of that State. It is produced in

Cross River, part of Imo State and part of Bendel State. I think it is only logical that when we talk about oil spillages, we should not talk about our own States or our own Local Government areas. We should talk in terms of the total ecological damage that is being done by these oil companies and their activities on the environment, not just to Rivers, but to Bendel, Cross River, Imo and other States.

So, Mr Speaker, Sir, I think one has to be very careful. We are not here to discuss Revenue Allocation, and any attempt to drag the issue of Revenue Allocation to make a case for derivation as a system or as a formula for Revenue Allocation would be fiercely resisted by those of us who do not believe in it, and I see no reason why it should be dragged here. Mr Speaker, Sir, a lot of money has been siphoned in the past to some states both in the North and in oil producing areas for the relief of on-coming disasters, and more often than not, this money has been badly used. I think this House should, from henceforth, serve as a watch dog to make sure that money that is made available to relieve disaster victims actually reaches those people for which it is meant, otherwise the whole exercise would be useless and we are likely to hear another disaster area, be it in Cross River, Bendel, in Imo or in other parts of the country. It is not enough to send money to a certain area, we must make sure that the actual people affected are the beneficiaries, otherwise the whole exercise would be useless. With this remark, Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr Y. Bichi** (Bichi): Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I would like to speak a little about the oil spillage which happened in the Rivers State of Nigeria.

In fact, I was among the members who visited the areas and I am ready to mention or to vomit what I have really seen and what I heard. I thought the Committee should bring a report on the Floor of this House before moving the Motion. Mr Speaker, Sir, we went to a village called Sangana, where we observed the oil spillage. We discussed with the people living in that area, and we have really seen that the people are not farmers, they are only fishermen. All their canoes are lying idle as the oil has spoilt the whole water where they catch the fish. Moreover, the people have not got sufficient water to drink and for other purposes. Mr Speaker, Sir, we observed that the people there are complaining of lack of food about which they are seeking Government Aid.

We had one disappointment from the Texaco Company. They were not able to supply us with sufficient transportation to take the Committee Members to visit places like Brass, Asanga and other places as far as Bonny. Some Members were able to attend only one particular village and such Members do not know what is happening in other places.

For instance, we were four in one helicopter which took us to Sangana village. You see, Mr Speaker, Sir, we shall not be able to mention what is happening in Brass, Bonny and other places. This is due to the inefficiency of the people of

[MR BICHI]

Texaco Company. I am also calling on the Federal Government to look into this.

The Company has agreed to supply the people with aids, like medicine, like food and when we discussed with the people, they mentioned that the Company has given the people only ₦300 for 5,000 people. The people are also complaining that they have no food, and although the company promised to supply them with food nothing has yet been done.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a Point of Order.

**Mr M. J. Akpabio (Uyo II) :** My point of Order is Order 26 (2). What the hon. Member is saying is not relevant because he is trying to give a report of the Committee on Petroleum, the team that visited Port Harcourt to see the spillage. That report is not on the Floor.

**Mr Speaker :** Let him round up.

**Mr Bichi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I think that what I am saying is what we have seen, and it concerns the oil spillage. Mr Speaker, Sir, after we had visited Sangana we went back to Port Harcourt where we slept.

**Mr Speaker :** Round up, please.

**Mr Bichi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, finally, I would like the Chairman of the Committee to table all the information. Thank you, very much.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, UPN.

**Mr Olatinwo Otegbeye (Lagelu North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, it is my candid opinion that the hen that lays the golden egg must be preserved and well cared for. (*Applause*) Oil spillage, or oil streak is a common phenomenon to oil industry. It is the bounding duty of the oil prospecting firms to possess adequate materials to combat oil spillage or other hazards emanating from oil production.

In Nigeria, there is an existing law which we need to enforce to bring the name of the erring firm to book or to penalise the firm that is responsible for the blow up. The case of oil spillage which occurred on 17th January could not be restricted to a particular Local Government along the coastal belt. We have read from the Newspaper's reports that the tidal effect has equally carried the oil spillage to the coastal belt of Bendel area, and also some papers, like the *Tide*, claim that it has equally spread over to Cross River. But the question of this oil spillage is inter-woven and we need to re-X-ray it one by one.

Firstly, we have to examine the question of the damage done to the property of the people in the affected areas. As one hon. Member has rightly said, the people in the areas affected are predominantly fishermen. Their fishing nets were wrecked and their boats are now unable to ply on the creek areas as a result of the spillage. Certainly, when anything destroys your means of livelihood or your property, somebody responsible for that destruction must have to be responsible for the loss sustained and must compensate you for your loss.

The question of relief, which appears to be the main substance of this Motion, is a temporary measure. The people in Bendel, Rivers and Cross River States cannot be living on relief for the remaining part of their lives. The relief is a temporary measure. We have to think of how to compensate them and how to rehabilitate them so that they may resume their normal operations of fishing. Also, the TEXACO company claimed to have dug five wells at seventy naira per well, one of which has crumbled ; the State Government has equally dug four bore holes at ₦130,000 per one. These are the sorts of things that should be done for the people in these areas. People affected should be duly compensated for their losses and they should be rehabilitated so that they will be able to go back to their areas and carry on their normal jobs.

Also, the question of relief and compensation should not be restricted to a particular area. This is because I personally visited Sangana, Brass, *et cetera* ; I saw the patients in the hospitals, and I also saw the harm done to the people at Sangana.

Now, coming to the TEXACO company itself, the managing director of TEXACO in Lagos is not receiving adequate report from his officers on the spot. We do not have to deal directly with the industrialists at the spot, we should deal with the boss. If hon. Members will look at it, they would see that the Federal Government owns sixty *per cent* of the equity shares in TEXACO, which means that the whole burden should be shouldered by the Federal Government.

I equally support the Motion that this matter should be referred to the Committee on Petroleum and Energy and also that we should ask the NNPC to enforce the existing law on oil spillage. Thank you.

**Mr Tom Egbuwoku (Isoko) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I think it is gratifying that on my return from the U.S.A. I met a Motion of this nature. Also, on looking through the newspapers yesterday, I saw, for the first time, a serious effort on the part of the Press to highlight some of the problems facing the oil producing areas of this country, where blind people were shown for the first time suffering from the result of oil pollution.

It is more gratifying, and I wish to congratulate hon. Members of this House, that when this thing happened, this House took immediate steps and sent the Committee on Petroleum and Energy to go and investigate the incident. I think the step this House has taken is satisfactory to many people living in the oil producing areas.

For a long time now, people have been crying about the neglect of these oil producing areas. Many people did not believe this story ; but our brothers who have not been to the South before, but who had the opportunity to go there, have now seen for themselves. They had earlier thought that perhaps, some people were crying wolves and were trying to play politics in order to get something from this nation. I am happy and I am grateful to this House and to the Committee on Petroleum for the prompt steps taken to go there and ascertain things for themselves.

[MR EGBUWOKU]

would like to remind my hon. Colleague from Kano who spoke on the issue of how to solve these problem that, after over thirty years of oil operation, if no serious effort is being made to look at the problems of these areas, then the inescapable conclusion is that we should give these people a little more money so that they could look a bit after their problems. I think hon. Members would know that, apart from asking for relief, people are asking for some money in order that they would be able to attend to some of their problems. If my hon. Colleague from Kano would remember, when we had groundnut pyramids from Kano, it was derivation they used in allocating revenue; but now that groundnut pyramids have been flattened, they are talking of population. If we want to show that we are serious in this House, if any problem arises anywhere, be it in Kano or in Benin or in Ondo, I implore all hon. Members to let us solve that problem as it arises. We should forget about politics and rise above local pettiness.

Now, I have one or two suggestions to make to the Committee on Petroleum and Energy. Before I do that, allow me to say one thing. There are two aspects of oil debacle, one is visible and the other is invisible. I know that many Members here are complaining about the specific mentioning of Degema, Brass, *et cetera*, in the Motion; that is irrelevant. The important thing is that these problems arise from either the rivers or from the burning of gas. If you go there, you would see that in every square mile of these oil producing areas gas is being flamed and the air is being polluted. It is a terrible thing. So, it is a malady that affects the whole of these areas.

So, this Motion is in two parts. Firstly, it seeks to give immediate succour to those who are suffering. Secondly, it seeks to ask the Committee on Petroleum and Energy to draft a legislation with a view to reviewing the existing laws on oil spillage.

Let me tell you what happens in these oil companies. Since 1965, they do pay some compensation if they damage a palm tree which is very costly. They pay about 10k for a damaged palm tree, and in most cases they pay 5k. When they pay this amount, more often than not, the oil companies' agents themselves enjoy most of these booties more than any other person. This position has not been reviewed since 1965. So, what we have now is utter destruction of land, destruction of water, destruction of rivers, destruction of shrines, destruction of trees and destruction of economic crops. In addition, you have what we call invisible destruction which arises from the flaming of gas, from pollution, and from destabilisation of social life. I am sure that when the Members of the Committee on Petroleum and Energy visited these areas, they did not see any of the members of the oil company there. Yes, you will not see these companies there. What happens is that when these companies dig the wells, they go away, and the people living there are left poorer than ever. This is what happens to the people living in the oil producing areas.

Apart from that, we have mass unemployment being perpetuated. I would like to say this, that if

the oil companies want to assure the people living in the oil producing areas that their interests are being taken care of seriously, they should, in their recruitment policy, make sure that some people from these areas are put in top positions in the oil companies. What we discover is that the oil companies move into these areas from the big townships with employed personnel, and they leave these areas without employing a single person from there. We do know that most of these oil companies are being dominated by those people who produce groundnuts. (*Interruptions*)

As I have said before, let us break down this issue into two. Firstly, somebody has mentioned this before and it is very important, that the Committee on Petroleum and Energy should look very seriously into the question of setting up a special development fund for the oil producing areas which should be jointly managed by the States and the Federal Governments. On this score, I would like to say that when we are talking about oil-producing areas, we must not forget the other mineral-producing areas of Plateau and Enugu because these people have their own special problems just as the oil producing areas have peculiar problems and that is why we are hitting on the oil producing areas. Now, a special fund should be set up.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the oil companies themselves should make more efforts aimed at assisting the local communities around their oil wells. In those days, when they first moved into these areas, they built primary schools and one or two secondary schools. Let them be identified with the economies of these areas. Let them build more schools, let them build small hospitals. Let them be identified with community efforts.

**The Speaker:** You are straying away from the terms of the motion.

**Mr Egbuwoku:** Anyway, Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to say that, as far as this Motion is concerned, I feel that the Oil Committee, in reviewing the Oil Legislation, should take into consideration issues like Revenue Allocation, scholarship awards and all the other issues connected with them. I beg to support this Motion and I congratulate hon. Members for supporting the Motion. Thank you.

**Mr I. A. Olaleru (Oyun):** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am concerned about the human aspect of this tragedy that has befallen our brothers and sisters in the riverine areas. The Committee that went there told us that oil spillage is a very serious accident because it has done a lot of damage to food stuff, to fish and to marine lives and because of this, Mr Speaker, Sir, I am advocating that the Federal Government and all other agencies concerned should please speed up efforts so that no single Nigerian loses his life in this tragedy. No single Nigerian life should be lost in this calamity. Besides Mr Speaker, Sir, I think whatever we are going to do should be done in earnest, and the Committee should not drag their feet because the lives of Nigerians are involved and they should do something with jet speed.

[MR OLALERU]

To round up my small observation, Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to say that the question of asking the various oil companies for damages and insurance should be left to a later date because human lives are involved now and people are suffering in hospitals and health clinics. These people should be taken care of as well as people who are starving because of the damages done to their farms and to their main source of livelihood in the rivers, ponds and so on. They should be taken care of as early as possible. So, the Committee should please go into work immediately and solve this great national tragedy to ensure that no single Nigerian life is lost.

**Dr E. J. Sowho** (Ethiope North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I wholeheartedly support this Motion. Particularly, I wish to thank Members of this honourable House who are from non-oil producing areas, and who view this matter sympathetically. I also wish to thank, in particular, the Governor of Rivers State who has highlighted the issue to such an extent that people even forget that Bendel had a similar disaster.

In *Oben* in Bendel State, a life was lost when there was an explosion there, and the man who was by the well has not been found up till now. So, when we talk about compensation to these areas we must also talk of compensation to the families of the deceased where lives have been lost. I feel that we must be specific in making recommendations to the President. Whatever compensations are to be made should be divided into two categories. One is the short-term relief, and the other is the long-term compensation. The short-term compensation should involve supplies of food, medicine and water. The long-term compensation or solution should involve the construction of wells or bore holes so that in future there will be no question of people having no drinking water in these areas. Then there should be hospitals that are properly manned so that adequate and immediate steps could be taken in case of future disasters even though we do not pray for them. We should also think of supplying clothing materials to the affected areas. It is only after these have been considered that we can think of our Committee recommending definite laid down measures. If they come up with such long-term proposal, we shall accept it so that in future there will not be the question of the oil companies supplying goats and chickens to the community. We must have laid down principles of what they must do, otherwise they should be asked to fold up. The insult we have had from TEXACO on this issue is beyond description. We would not want sentiment brought in here, but certainly they have taken us for a ride in their approach to the disaster so far. It is equally correct to say that the Federal Government has 60 per cent of the shares of these companies, and that is why we are calling on the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to use his good offices to effect immediate compensation in the form of relief to these areas.

It is actually a shame that so many days after it has happened and with so much being said in the Press, we are unable to read or learn that anything specific has been done so far. We feel that it should be brought home strongly to the Executive and to the

President so that something should be done immediately. There should be no politics about it. I would not wish to take more of your time, but I think that with these few remarks, the point has been made that compensation should be immediate and long-term.

**Mr I. O. Bob-Manuel** (Degema II) : Mr Speaker, Sir, in contributing to this Motion, I only want to mention a few areas where the Federal Government has refused to prevent oil pollution in the country, and in the oil prospecting areas. Mr Speaker, Sir, I have with me here Decree No. 51 of 1969, and in this decree it is stipulated that the Chief Petroleum Engineer in the NNPC will, in writing, suspend any operations of any oil company where they fail to report incident of pollution. They will suspend their operations. This suspension has not been effected by the NNPC professionals who are their Engineers. They have not done that and the oil company has been prospecting for oil from other wells despite the fact that we are in distress.

Again, TEXACO Oil Company said they have lost 250,000 barrels of crude oil, and no one understands what this means. If that figure is correct, then a total of 100,000 barrels crude has been lost, and at ₦25 per barrel you can imagine how much the Federal Government has lost. Up till now, they have been drilling and the decree says they should not. They should prevent pollution first. In another Section of the decree, it says :

*The Commissioner may make regulations—*

(a) *prescribing anything requiring to be prescribed for the purposes of this Decree ;*

(b) *providing generally for matters relating to licences and leases granted under this Decree and operations carried on thereunder, including—*

(i) *safe working,*

(ii) *the conservation of petroleum resources,*

(iii) *the prevention of pollution of water courses and the atmosphere,*

(iv) *the making of reports and returns (including the reporting of accidents),*

(v) *inquiries into accidents.*

This is what Section 8 of the decree says, and it should come into force within two weeks or immediately the explosion or spillage occurs. It must be reported to the Chief Petroleum Engineers in the NNPC. This has not been done ; the operation has not been suspended yet, and to cap it all, we have lost about ₦150 million in oil revenue. You can now see how much the spillage has cost. Even the smallest fish has been exterminated. The soul fish whose habitat is at the sea-bed has equally been killed. The result is that there is no more fish for the people in the area from Akasa to Escavos to St. Bartholomew to St. Bryro and New Calabar River. The tidal wave has carried the pollution everywhere.

And it is not only restricted to Degema, Abonema, Brass, Yenagoa and so on, but it is even going on to Calabar area now and the spillage is not controlled.

[MR BOB-MANUEL]

The height of this thing is over two thousand feet as it goes up and it scatters all over the whole place. I will disclose to the whole House that the spillage is still going on. We thank the President for having done the little that he could do, but there are more things to be done in controlling environmental pollution next time. The Companies should be asked to use safeguards around the oil prospecting areas so that in the near future if there is any pollution it would be corrected immediately before it spreads all over the whole area. This is actually the only area we earn our revenue. It is black gold and the black gold should be protected so that the economy of the nation will advance further.

With these few remarks I support the Motion and beg the honourable House to vote in favour of the Motion in order to get a more sophisticated Nigeria with black gold. Thank you.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi** (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I think the Motion has been exhaustively discussed. May I, with respect, move that the Question be now put.

*Question that the Question be put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That this House notes the encouraging statement made by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in respect of his plans to deal with the problems of oil spillage and other hazards inherent in oil exploration and further urges the President to take immediate steps to send relief materials—food, medicine, *et cetera*—in aid of the affected areas of Brass, Yenagoa and Degema Local Government Areas of the Rivers State now hit by severe oil spillage and bring pressure to bear on Texaco Oil Company Limited to effect immediate repairs on the affected wells in order to arrest the situation ; and that this House further directs the Committee on Petroleum and Energy conservation to review the existing laws on oil spillage and other hazards associated with oil exploration and to recommend appropriate amendments to alleviate the problems to society.

#### Declaration of Rights to Economic Activities

**Mr Speaker** : This is a motion standing in the name of Mr E. D. N. Uwandu and his co-Mover Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel.

**Mr E. D. N. Uwandu** (Mbaitoli) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to move the Motion that stands in my name—

That in pursuance of Section 16 (1) (c) of the Constitution and in view of the need to protect the rights of citizens to participate in the economic activities of the nation and aware of the insistence of the generality of the public that the Federal Government and its Agencies should limit their participation primarily to the major sectors of the economy, this House, in furtherance of Section 16 (4) (c) of the Constitution directs the Committee on Commerce to investigate and recommend what

economic activities including those pertaining to transport (i.e. Railway, Air, Roads and Water Transport and Haulage), importation, production, and distribution (i.e. sale of rice, stock fish, tomato puree, cement, sardines, milk, madras, textiles and beans) should be declared as pertaining to the minor sectors of the economy and therefore open to participation by all citizens of this country without restrictions or discrimination.

I beg to move.

**Mr H. M. J. Wachuku** (Ukwa) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam** (Oron II) : Constitutional Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker** : There is a Point of Order.

**Mr Etienam** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Colleagues, I am raising a Constitutional point of order against this Motion. Section 16 (1) (c) and Section 16 (4) (c) of the Constitution which have been quoted in this Motion would help me in my Point of Order. With your permission, Sir, I like to read Section 16 (1) (c)—

(1) *The State shall, within the context of the ideals and objectives for which provisions are made in this Constitution—*

(c) *without prejudice to the right of any person to participate in areas of the economy within the major sector of the economy, protect the right of every citizen to engage in any economic activities outside the major sectors of the economy.*

(4) *For the purposes of Subsection (1) of this section—*

(c) *“participate” includes the rendering of services and supplying of goods.*

The Movers of the Motion, Sir, are calling on this House to investigate and recommend what economic activities, including those pertaining to transport, that is Railway, Air, Roads and Water Transport, and Haulage should be declared as pertaining to the minor sectors of the economy. The point of order I want to make, Sir, is that this Motion is contradictory in terms, frivolous, and it is an abuse of the Parliamentary process of this honourable House. The Institutions mentioned in the Motion, Sir, were not established by mere resolutions of any government. They were established by either an Act of Parliament or the Decree of the last Administration and so we cannot alter any Section of this Constitution in pursuance of the Section quoted in the Constitution, Sir, without a formal Bill by this honourable House. It is not by mere resolution. So, what I am saying, Sir, is that if the Movers of this Motion want us to alter the existing structure in our economy they should come with a formal Bill. That is my point of order, Sir.

**An hon. Member** : Point.

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, I have gone through the objection of the hon. Member and I do not see anything in the Motion actually contravening the

[MR SPEAKER]

Sections cited by the hon. Member for Oron II (*Mr E. B. Etienam*) since the Motion, if it succeeds, will go to the Committee and the Committee may probably come up with a legislation. I think that will satisfy the hon. Member's objection.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi** : Point of Order.

**Mr Speaker** : There is another Point of Order.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi** : Mr Speaker, the point which I want to make here is that I do not know whether the Movers would seriously consider re-drafting the Motion because, on one note it is directing this House that the Committee on Commerce should go into activities which are concerned with Railway, Air, Water Transport and Haulage. I am sure that with due respect, Sir, there are quite a lot of other Committees which are involved in the various subjects which the movers have raised here. So, I was wondering that perhaps with this observation they might consider re-drafting the Motion and at least hold on for the time being. This is my observation.

**Mr Speaker** : I really thought that was the point the hon. Member for Oron II (*Mr E. B. Etienam*) wanted to make. In my view, the Motion is so much complicated. The drafting of the Motion is contradictory and I would suggest that the hon. Members who are responsible for this Motion should go back and consult with the Business Committee, so that a proper draft of this Motion would be made. It is rather very complicated. Even I cannot understand it myself.

*Motion by leave withdrawn.*

**Mr Speaker** : Motion No. 3. Import Licences—stands in the names of Mr J. Ikpatt and Amos Sunday. I understand they are not here, well, the Motion lapses.

I have three applications here approved for Motion on Adjournment and Explanation. Point of explanation on the welfare of the hon. Members by Mr T. M. Ochiama. He is not here and so that lapses. Point of explanation by Dr M. B. Ukpong. He, also is not here. So, it lapses. Motion on Adjournment by Dr Junaid Muhammed lapses because he is not here.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr Olusola Afolabi** (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the House do adjourn till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

**Mr Olugbolahan Ijaola** (Lagos North-East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to second the Motion.

#### Parliamentary Immunity

**Mr Speaker** : There is a very short matter, hon. Members, on the statement made by the Nigerian Bar Association on the question of Parliamentary Immunity. I was really shocked and I know that my Learned Friends who are here would express

the same shock on the statement made by Members of the Bar Association, Lagos Branch. I think it is most unfortunate that a body of legal professionals could make that type of statement which is very incorrect as far as the law is concerned. I am sure the hon. Member for Ifesowapo (*Mr Akinbisehin*) will bear me out, and if the Member for Ibadan North (*Mr Debo Akande*) and the Member for Bende (*Mr Ogwe Kalu Ogwe*) are here, they will agree that the point they raised is absolutely incorrect. The legal position is that Members are absolutely entitled in any civilised Parliament all over the world to Parliamentary Immunity. Otherwise, how can we perform our functions if we are not immuned from legal proceedings? That is the position of the law and that is the position in any civilised jurisprudence.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi** (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker Sir, I think I want to share your views and the sentiments which you expressed. I think this House must take cognisance that there are some people who do not want us to work. I would not know whether we should attribute it to envy, but I must implore that this House should try as much as possible to be on the watch out. We all agree that it is the convention and it is the normal practice that Parliamentary privileges are given to all Parliaments in the world. I do not see why Nigerian situation should be an exception. I am sure that all Members would agree with me that this is certainly not fair. Mr Speaker, Sir, I am sure you would convey to the appropriate quarters the feelings of this House.

Thank you, very much.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, Mr Akinbisehin.

**Mr Bayo Akinbisehin** (Ifesowapo) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you this morning for what you have said and I wish to support your statement. I feel that it is becoming a sad day when members of our profession will not look into matters before they take a decision. I believe that there are mistakes made from other sources. I do not share the view that Members of this honourable Assembly are not privileged. They are entitled to have laws passed to protect them while carrying out their duties, and, as a lawyer one must wait and see the text of a Bill or an Act before one rushes to criticise whatever it is.

I share your view and I take this opportunity to welcome you back and to say that we missed you while you were away. Thank you.

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, that is all on the Motion for Adjournment.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That this House do now adjourn till tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 12.27 p.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Tuesday, 4th March, 1980

The House met at 10.10 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Speaker in the Chair)

Suspension of Standing Orders

**The Speaker :** Hon. Members, you will notice that something very disastrous happened to this country yesterday as it was announced over the network news and we saw in the papers again this morning that 47 prisoners died—

**Several hon. Members :** Suspects.

**The Speaker :** I beg your pardon, 47 suspects died in the Black Maria. Everybody was alarmed at that sort of event and I will suggest straightaway that the Leader of the House should move a Motion to suspend the Standing Orders and another Motion for us to debate the incident and take necessary action. (*Applause*).

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the Standing Orders of the House be set aside.

**Several Hon. Members :** Suspended.

**Alhaji Kaltungo :** Set aside and suspended are the same thing. All right, hon. Members, I move that the Standing Orders of this honourable House be suspended.

**The Speaker :** Hon. Members, anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, I beg to second.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Resolved :** That the Standing Orders of the honourable House be suspended.

Black Maria Suspects Fatality

**The Speaker :** Yes, another Motion.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the House now resolve into a Committee of the whole House to discuss yesterday's disaster where 47 lives of Nigerians were lost.

**The Speaker :** This is how the Motion should read :

That this House views with the greatest concern the incident of yesterday which took the lives of 47 suspects in the Black Maria and orders the Committee on Internal Affairs to investigate as a matter of urgency the circumstances surrounding that incident, and report to this honourable House

within a fortnight to enable this honourable House take necessary action.

Hon. Gentlemen, anybody in support of the Motion ?

**Mr Wara Agwana Apagu (Askira Uba) :** I rise to second the Motion.

**The Speaker :** The hon. Member for Idemili (*Mr J. C. Ojukwu*) you can now speak.

**Mr J. C. Ojukwu (Idemili) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to speak in support of the Motion. As we all heard over the network news last night, and as we have also read in the papers this morning, 47 precious lives were terminated yesterday in a metal compartment otherwise known as Black Maria. It is a very sad commentary on this nation, and it is a very poor and terrible reflection on our values for the human person and our values for human life. That was not the first time as far as I know that sort of thing has happened. It is only the first time, perhaps, that sort of thing was happening in the capital metropolies, and that is why it has received this wide and shocking attention.

Indeed there have been numerous occasions when suspects, Nigerians, some of them, as a matter of fact all of them, are law abiding Nigerians because until a man is proved guilty he remains innocent. There have been several times when people have been carted away from various places, bundled into this vehicle, this virtually air-tight van called the black maria, taken to court, abandoned in the vehicle, and after about an hour or so they are dragged back to the prisons with the comment on their warrants that they have seen the magistrate whereas they have not seen the magistrate and subsequently remanded into custody.

Mr Speaker, Sir, one hopes and one trusts that the honourable Committee on Internal Affairs will look into this matter expeditiously and report back to the House because this matter raises a number of questions. It raises the question of the administration of justice in this country. We all know the old adage—justice delayed is justice denied. Until one takes a peep into our prison yards, one cannot fully appreciate what is happening in this country, and we point accusing fingers at others. There was absolutely no cause for us to have lost the 47 lives yesterday. It should never have happened. These people were abandoned. Perhaps, the person keeping watch over them went to do his private business at some other place.

For how else can one explain to the whole world that if there was a waiter, if there was a warder, if there was a police official standing by a van, he did not hear the screaming of innocent people because that is all that has happened ? They must have been screaming, crying for somebody to come and help them, those who had the last energy.

They had been denied God's freest gift—oxygen. We rationed it to them by keeping them in that metal compartment ; from rationing we finally denied it to them.

One of the seven sins crying up to heaven for vengeance is the murder of innocent people and this, to my mind, is murder. Those who are responsi-



[MR OJUKWU]

ble must be brought to book and we must not allow beauracracry to hold sway. Justice must have its way. One hopes that this is the very last time this type of thing will be happening. I have seen people killed in prisons. We have known of people carried dead to the hospitals only to be certified dead by doctors who have been pressurized to say that these people died in hospitals. What I am saying is a fact and there are people to collaborate this story. Yesterday has finally brought this to the glare, to the public scrutiny.

Mr Speaker; Sir, I humbly suggest that after this honourable House must have done its work and if we are not satisfied, we shall ask for the immediate resignation of the officials responsible in the various Ministries—the Justice Minister, the Police Minister and the Minister of Internal Affairs. If they do not satisfy us, and if anybody thinks that passing the buck will be a solution, we ask them the way out, because this is the only way. (*Applause*)

I think, Mr Speaker, Sir, I am speaking the minds of Nigerians when I say that we must bow our heads in shame to send our condolences to the families. I feel very sad, it is a terrible pity, it is a disaster, it is murder, it is atrocity, and must not be allowed to go unpunished. Mr Speaker, Sir, I support the Motion.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Anka South (*Alhaji Abubakar Abutu*) to speak.

**Alhaji A. D. O. Abutu** (Anka South) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, as the first speaker has said, this is not the first time of inefficiency, inability, maladministration, corruption and inhumanity. (*Interruptions*)

**Some Members:** Fire ! Fire !

**Alhaji Abutu:** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am not trying to amend the Motion. I think, in my own opinion, a fortnight is too far. It is a job to be done in one week. The Inspector-General of Police and the Minister-in-charge should be invited by the Committee. Everybody connected with the security of this country should be invited by this Committee.

As a former unionist, I know that all over this country such incidents have happened in my presence more than twenty times. When the Police decides to raid a town in the night, even if you are a Minister, if you do not have identity, you can be arrested. I am quite sure that probably the sixty eight people arrested may be innocent citizens, but simply because they went to the club in the night and they were coming home, and at the time they started the raid they would not know anybody. They would just bring some notorious Policemen and they would arrest anybody at that time. If you are not in a car or motor cycle, you will be called a suspect. We have Lawyers here, a suspect is not a criminal yet, and you do not know whether these people are innocent people. Some of us here may have brothers there.

This matter should be taken seriously. Recently, the Minister-in-charge of Police said they are going

to increase Police salary, and we have been fighting for their welfare. Are we going to give them better conditions of service to kill our people—the people who elected us here ? It can happen to any of us here. If you go to a night club or some other places and may be your car breaks down and you are walking on the road around 1 o'clock or 12.30, they can arrest you and call you a suspect, especially when they hate you or they have been bribed to do so.

The Black Maria is just of the same size as Mercedes 911 10 tons which can carry about 27 people. They bundled 68 innocent Nigerian citizens there and they died of suffocation. I am sure of this, although I am not a doctor. This is unacceptable to us and it is unacceptable to any godly citizen of this country.

So, Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not like to take the time of the House and therefore, I am supporting the Motion *intoto*. Intensive investigation should be done within a week, and if the people are found guilty, from the Inspector-General down, they should be taken to court and be hanged in the public places for atrocities committed to innocent Nigerians.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr T. N. Ochiama** (Ikeduru) : Mr Speaker, hon. Colleagues, I am supporting this Motion in its totality. For 48 people to lose their lives in very unjustified way is an act of brutality. Mr Speaker, Sir, it is not only that these people died, as some of us are viewing it as suffocation, possibly also there could be evidence of hunger, because if these people were well-fed, maybe they could have resisted further. Undoubtedly, they were not fed, they were starved—starvation coupled with suffocation.

So, this particular issue does not necessarily require lengthy words because I could observe that the entire Members of this august House are against the way the whole incident took place. So Mr Speaker, I support my hon. Colleague from Anka South (*Alhaji Abutu*) who said that the period of two weeks for the report to be brought back to us is too long. It should be reduced to one week. If we say two weeks, they could manipulate the whole issue and start finding their ways out. So, one week is sufficient for all the authorities concerned to report back to us here and tell us why 68 people should be sandwiched into a vehicle whose tonnage is meant to convey 25 or 26 people.

Mr Speaker, hon. Colleagues of mine, this is extremely an unfortunate incident. I do not think anybody would ever rise up to say that it is good, and looking at the faces of everybody here, it is really condemned already. Since it has been condemned in the way it has happened, then what do we do to prevent it from recurring in the future, and at the same time to mete out justice to the people who participated or through whose act of omission these lives were lost ?

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these contributions of mine, I beg to take my seat, though I have some other things to say later.

**Alhaji Hamman Dikko** (Maiha) : This Motion is a very important one. Although these people are suspects, but in my own opinion I would like to oppose the Motion. These people had been in the hotel till three o'clock in the morning. How can somebody stay in the hotel up till three a.m. if he is not a criminal? (*Interruptions*). They are the highway robbers in this country. (*Interruptions*) The Police are doing their work efficiently. If it were not for the Police you would not be able to live in Lagos.

**Several Members** : No ! No ! (*Prolonged Interruptions*).

**Mr Michael Akpabio** (Uyo II) : Mr Speaker, thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Motion right now on the Floor of the House.

Mr Speaker, if I were to do anybody wrong in the circumstances, I think I would do the Police wrong. I would similarly do the Prison authorities some wrong. If newspaper reports are anything to go by, it seems to me without any degree of equivocation, Sir, that these suspects who were alleged to have been arrested on Friday, kept in the custody till yesterday when they were taken to court, were not given any food. They suffered from starvation and on top of that, they were once again put in a Black Maria to be conveyed back to custody, and in the Black Maria all of them died as a result of suffocation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is most unfortunate that in recent weeks, the Nigeria Police has taken it upon itself to violate certain provisions of our Constitution. We have heard stories of Police shooting people at check points. One person was shot in Bendel State, another one was reported shot around Lagos here and yesterday, forty-seven suspects died in Black Maria. I begin to wonder what the duties of the Police are now in this country. Suspects are not criminals and if we are also to believe or rest on the newspapers' reports, the suspects were alleged to have been arrested on allegation of wandering which, in law, would amount to a mere misdemeanour, not even a simple offence.

One begins to wonder again why it became necessary even for the Court to have refused granting these people bail, at least given conditions for bails, but the Court only went further to make an order for these people to be remanded in the Police custody. Mr Speaker, speaking from experience, I have been on the Bench for some time and I know very well that offences of misdemeanour are bailable offences. Furthermore, Sir, I will say, Sir, that it is important at this stage, as my hon. Colleague has said before, that this House not even a Committee should invite the Inspector-General of Police, the Commissioner of Police, Lagos State, and the Director of Prisons to this honourable House for questioning because we cannot afford to be losing the lives of Nigerians. The question of whether they remained in the hotel till 2 a.m. or 5 a.m. just does not arise.

**The Speaker** : Please, round up.

**Mr Akpabio** : Thank you, very much, Mr Speaker, Sir. The Constitution allows freedom of movement. So, Mr Speaker, Sir, I very sincerely support the

Motion and I wish the Committee charged with this responsibility will really put a lot of searching questions to the officials who will be invited for this particular purpose. It is most regrettable, Mr Speaker.

**The Speaker** : PRP. Hon. Member for Dawakin-Kudu (*Alhaji Adamu*).

**Alhaji Sarki Adamu** (Dawakin-Kudu) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of the House of Representatives, what happened yesterday is not only a disappointment to all of us here, but a disgrace to the nation. Mr Speaker, in addition to what happened yesterday, we are already worried here by seeing several dead bodies everyday on our way from our Badagry road residence to the National Assembly. Even yesterday, I saw a dead body which was crushed like that of a dog. That dead body has been lying there for complete two days. I think it is only in Nigeria that you can get such evil practices happening everyday without being efficiently checked by the Government. This has direct reflection on the Government of the day and it must be checked properly otherwise our name will be spoilt in the eyes of the world.

Mr Speaker, although the Commissioner of Police has been working very hard and he deserves some credit, but yet, he should be called to answer all these allegations as soon as practicable. He should be called and advised to strengthen the security. He should be called and advised to give the reasons for all these incidences in writing. He should be directly answerable despite all the credits we have been giving him. With this, Mr Speaker, I beg to support this Motion.

**The Speaker** : PRP.

**Alhaji Aliyu Isa** (Makarfi) : Thank you, Mr Speaker. The event of yesterday is not only a disgrace to this country, but a crime on the part of the Police. It is definitely impossible for a right thinking person to stack sixty-eight people in a vehicle of six feet by seven feet with no windows, no seats, and you expect them to be healthy. Secondly, if you look carefully at our policing system, you will wonder whether our Policemen know what they are doing in the Police or not because the actions of the Nigeria Police has shown clearly even before this incident that they do not know what they are doing in their job. Most of these Policemen either act as servants of our country's big dogs, or when they come to investigate things I do not know whether they have certain powers to brand anybody as a suspect whether that person has a knowledge of what has been going on or not. They have no sense or knowledge of investigation. This incident should be condemned and the erring people should be punished for this. This is all I want to say, Mr Speaker. Thank you.

**The Speaker** : The UPN Member for Okpebho (*Mr Iyayi*).

**Mr F. O. Iyayi** (Okpebho) : I wish to speak in favour of this Motion. In doing so, I shall be very brief and confine my remarks to a few salient points. As the last hon. Member has remarked rightly, it

would appear to me that the Police are not aware of, or perhaps, they are ignorant of their duties and responsibilities to this society. As everyone of us knows, it is the duty of the Police, not only to detect and punish crimes, but also to protect the lives and properties of the citizens of this country. Only last week, I think, a Motion was passed on the Floor of this House recommending that the lot of the Policemen should be improved. Everyone spoke in favour of that Motion. Everyone believed that the Police deserves a pat on the back for the work they had done in the past.

During the Civil War, I am aware that the Police did a nice job, but it would appear that, either out of over-enthusiasm or out of power-drunkenness, the Police, at least some of them, over-stepped their bounds. Now, it is not just the killing of these people that is really at stake, it is the general attitude to society. Are the Police human beings? Are they Members of the Nigerian Society? Have they blood in them like every one of us? Are they godly, are they Christians? If the answer to these questions is yes, then, the Police must be condemned in no uncertain terms for the atrocities that occurred yesterday.

Now, if you remember a few months ago, it was widely reported that certain innocent persons were killed by some of our Policemen, the road block Policemen. A student of Auchu Polytechnic who had come home to spend his holiday, and also undergo some industrial experience was shot dead by the Police. Earlier on, another undergraduate in Benin City was shot by the Police. And earlier on still, an innocent girl was shot dead and the other one lost one of her eyes. This girl who lost one of her eyes is one of the greatest artists we have in Bendel State. All these actions do not portray, to me, a sense of duty, a sense of decency and a sense of respect for human life on the part of the Police.

I think the time has come when the Police themselves should re-examine their role in the society, whether they are in fact carrying out the duties and responsibilities imposed on them under the Constitution.

At this point, Mr Speaker, I would like to draw the attention of Members to Section 30 Subsection 1 and Section 31 Subsection 1 (a) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Mr Speaker, with your permission, I would like to read them. Section 30 Subsection 1 says :

*Every person has a right to life, and no one shall be deprived intentionally of his life, save in execution of the sentence of a court in respect of a criminal offence of which he has been found guilty in Nigeria.*

Section 31 (1) :

*Every individual is entitled to respect for the dignity of his person, and accordingly—*

*(a) no person shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment ;*

In investigating this matter therefore I hope that the Committee involved will try to find out the size of the *Black Maria*, the space provided for them, whether it was hygienic for human beings to stay in. We would also like to know the identity of those dead suspects. This is very important because it may well be that some of our important

personalities in this country who had been suspected of one crime or the other may be involved. So, we would like to have the identity of all people affected. The loss to the families concerned, no doubt, is irreparable. No amount of words of sympathy will revive the lives of those people. Nevertheless, I would like to associate myself with the views expressed earlier on by other Members that are condolences should be extended to the bereaved families.

One other area which the Committee should examine is the issue of adequate compensation to the families of the deceased.

With this, Mr Speaker, I beg to support.

**Mr Roland Owie (Orhionmwon) :** In supporting what other speakers have said, I would like to draw a few guide-lines. I am not particularly happy that some of our Committees are not really finding their feet. I would advise that the hon. Speaker direct the Committee on Internal Affairs to start meeting this afternoon. If you leave it to them, you may find that they would not meet until sometime next week. Our Committees have to stand firm and do their work.

Besides that, I would recommend that all officers from the grade of Chief Superintendent of Police and above in the Lagos State Police Command should go on compulsory leave during this one week inquiry. This is necessary in view of the fact that the Police men are known to be great mutilators. They will be able to mutilate the records. You will be surprised that the list of those people who are now dead may not be with the Police at all, and they are going to end up not finding their names or putting in fictitious names as names of those who are dead.

So, Mr Speaker, Sir, I strongly recommend (although it is unfortunate that this is happening in a Police Command where somebody like Alhaji Gambo is working very hard, but he has to take liabilities for everything that happens in his own Police Command) that officers from the grade of Chief Superintendent of Police and above should go on compulsory leave immediately and the Committee on Internal Affairs should start work this afternoon.

**Mr Damisa Jimoh (Okehi Adavbi) :** Since yesterday when I learnt of this news, I personally have been ashamed as a Nigerian and sad over the news. But at the same time, I would like us to treat this matter with caution. In the first place, there are so many Agencies involved in this matter—the Prisons, the Police and the Court. We do not know what really happened. Some time last week, we praised the Policemen, and again today we are accusing them. We have to be careful because *Black Maria* is the same thing all over the World. The question is why should the Prisons Authority decide to pack 68 people into one small vehicle ?

**Several hon. Members :** It is the Police.

**Mr Damisa Jimoh :** The Police or whoever is responsible. It is inhuman to pack 68 people into one small vehicle. That vehicle could have been allowed to go on two or three trips at least to save the lives of human beings. We should have regard for human lives.

Mr Speaker, we should be mindful of what we do. We should not at the same time blow hot and cold in our problems.

**Chief P. A. Gbinije** (Ethiopo South) : This news is a shocker to the whole country, the circumstances under which people who were alleged to be suspect could be bundled into one *Black Maria*. And allowing the *Black Maria* to accommodate 68 persons is the alarming story which calls for an immediate investigation. These people were alleged to have been arrested since last Friday. Between last Friday and the time of the incident yesterday it was possible that they had no meals. And with empty stomachs they were all bundled into one single vehicle. At least, the authorities in this country have prescribed the number of persons to be accommodated in one single vehicle at any one time. Why were all these people locked up in this metal compartment which conveyed them to the court and subsequently they were further asked to be taken back. The Committee to which this Motion is being referred should look into the circumstances which led to the arrest of these persons. As some Member have said, it may well be that not all these people are men of unknown calibre. They may be those who are well known and some opponents who want to capitalise on certain situations might have induced their arrest.

I am calling on the Police to submit the list of the persons arrested—the suspects. Up to time of the publication yesterday, the names of the people involved in this tragedy were not known. It is a very sorry situation that in the twentieth century, in Nigeria, we are still having a repetition of what we used to know in the past history of the British Empire the incident referred to as the Black Hole of Calcutta. That it should happen in Nigeria today in spite of all our claim to civilisation is a shame and a shocker to the whole world. I appeal to the Committee to whom this case has been referred to speed up action and I associate myself with those who have said that the Committee should set to work immediately and submit a report within a week instead of the fourteen days being given to them. Thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, hon. Member for Tangale-Waja North. (*Mr Poloma*)

**Mr Nuhu Poloma** (Tangale-Waja North) Mr Speaker, Sir, fellow Colleagues, I rise to support this Motion, and in supporting it, I have to quote a famous writer who said—*The man died* and that was Mr Wole Shoyinka. He was referring to a man in detention. Now, *the men died*.

Hon. Colleagues, when Steve Biko died in detention in South Africa the whole world cried. Today, we have 47 people dead in our corridors. What are we going to do? We should hang our heads in shame. *Shame! Shame!*

Honourable Colleagues, it is really sad if we have to call the Director of Prisons and dress him down on this. He should quit before we even invite him (*Applause*).

For quite some time now, lives have been lost in this country in various circumstances. Enquiries take place and nothing happens thereafter. We, in our days and time are not going to allow this type of situation to continue any longer. (*Applause*)

There was loss of lives in the Stadium in Lagos; enquiry was set up and that was the last we heard of that. We are to set up an enquiry and we are going to insist that something is done and something must be seen done.

Now, hon. Members, I would finally say that whatever is going to be done to the officials who are responsible for this, we must also see that compensation is given to the families and relations of those who have lost their lives in this situation. With these few words, I beg to support this Motion.

**The Speaker** : Yes, hon. Member for Njikoka South. (*Mr Echatabu*)

**Mr E. O. Echatabu** (Njikoka South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, Members, I would pray the indulgence of the House to say that the situation is grave. It is a tragedy, that is a wilful murder. People must answer for it. Forty-seven lives, not forty-seven dogs, not forty-seven pieces of yams but human beings. The sanctity of lives and human beings has been desecrated.

Under the Constitution, there is a time limit within which a man should be arraigned or presented before the court. And we assume also that these people who have died during this transportation from the Magistrates' Court to Ikoyi Prison Yard would not have died of asphyxiation if necessary precautions were taken.

The members of the public criticise us for immunities and privileges. Should the Executive now have immunities and privileges. I said we are criticized for immunities and privileges. Should the Police now have immunities and privileges to kill ordinary citizens of this country who are deemed innocent until they are tried? These are innocent citizens and the section under which they were charged was wandering. We would like to see the Police indents to ascertain whether the names of these people were given, perhaps their addresses, for them to prove that these people were not of gainful employment in order even to raise the charge. You just do not run amok and just catch any citizens anywhere and accuse them of wandering.

At least within the previous months there must have been convicted people, without any means of livelihood. And assuming they have no means of livelihood, is it not a paramount concern of the Government to make sure that citizens of this country have adequate employment? And are citizens of this country not free to walk and re-walk and pass the alley-ways, the lanes and the double carriageways at will? At least there is no martial law; at least there is no Act of State.

I think the Legislature will be failing in its duty if we have to wait for the Executive's action at the inquest, that is the doomsday. That is just killing it and sweeping the dead under the carpet. While the Executive is going on with their inquest, we in the Legislature, since we have parallel Executive functions as well as Legislative rights, should also in this Honourable House propose what we intend to do. And I do say, if the Members of this Honourable House agree, that by Thursday, at 11 a.m. the Commissioner for Internal Affairs, the Commissioner for Police Duties, the Police Command-in-charge of St. Anna Area to the Prison Yard, should all come here and then we should decide whether they will be tried for murder or not, no inquest.

[MR ECHETABU]

So, in order to effect this, I do not think that we should sit down. I would ask this House and urge that we rise up for only one minute silence to show the common man that we feel for them, that lives have been lost. I would ask, Mr Speaker, Sir, if he would allow hon. Members to stand up just for one minute to show our disapproval of what has happened. The people responsible must be really punished.

**Mr Speaker :** No, we will not do that.

Hon. Member for Aniocha. (Mr Uwechue)

**Mr G. N. Uwechue (Aniocha) :** Hon. Members, most of you have spoken basing your facts on what you read on the pages of the newspapers this morning or what you heard on the television or radio yesterday.

I speak from my own eye witness account of what happened. Yesterday, incidentally, at about 3.20 p.m. or 3.15 p.m., on my way from the House, I stopped by the General Hospital. I saw people rushing. I then went there and saw human beings being brought out of the *Black Maria*. There were so many of them, we could not count the bodies. I ran about trying to see if there was anything I could do. The Police men who were bringing out these bodies climbed on the bodies of some others because they just pulled them out of the *Black Maria* and went back to pull them out again. There was a heap of them. They climbed on them to bring out other people. I tried to make my own private investigations there.

I noticed that some of them were so lean ; I noticed one particularly who appeared not to have any stomach at all. He was so lean that I thought he must not have been fed for at least three days. I have no doubt in my mind that the bodies would still be in the mortuary. Anybody who thinks that what I am saying is not true should go and see for himself. These people died, not so much, from my point of view, of suffocation but of starvation. All of them were stiff dead of starvation.

Yesterday, I was informed that as the *Black Maria* moved from the Court premises, they were caught in traffic jam, and in the course of the traffic jam, the Police escort could not open the door. If he did, they would run away, since he was not armed. Because of the traffic jam, they died before they got to the Police Station. There is no place anyone can be caught in any traffic between Saint Anna Court at Tinubu Square and Ikoyi Prisons. Those who know Lagos very well would bear me out. So, my conviction is that the *Black Maria* used was not suitable. There were too many people there, 68 in number. I was happy to learn that some people survived, because when I got there, they were merely pulling out the bodies, and I could not see how anybody could have survived. One of the people I saw there informed me that by the time the *Black Maria* arrived, if anybody touched its body, that person would get his finger burnt. Yet, human beings were put in it and locked up there.

As soon as I left the scene of the incident, I made an attempt to contact the Speaker. I went to Mr Agbamuche's office and informed him. Then, I

went straight on to the Lion Building Police Command and lodge this report. There, I was told that the report of the incident was just received and that they, the Police, were going to the spot.

This is a very serious situation. This is not a matter of just losing 47 Nigerians. Not if the *Black Maria* went into the Lagoon and we lost these lives then we would say it was an act of God. But this is something which we could have avoided.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I was going to move an Amendment that, pending the determination of the issue before this House, the authorities concerned should restrict the use of the *Black Maria*, or limit, by law, the number of persons allowed to be put in the *Black Maria*. Though I know that the *Black Maria* is used in other parts of the world, anybody who has seen it would know that it is designed for cold weather. It is used in Britain where, in fact, one needs a heater in the *Black Maria* to keep people warm. It is not meant for our own weather. It cannot even take up to thirty people ; but, alas ! sixty-eight Nigerians were forced into the *Black Maria* and locked up.

Hon. Members, I do not intend to take any more of your time. I assure you that I support the Motion. Thank you, very much.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale Waja-South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, having discussed this matter properly, I now move that the Question be put.

**An hon. Member :** I beg to second.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Resolved :** That this House views with the greatest concern the incidence of yesterday which resulted in the death of forty-seven suspects, and order the Committee on Internal Affairs to investigate the circumstances of this death, and report to this honourable House within fourteen days.

**The Speaker :** May I know if the Chairman of the Committee on Internal Affairs is here?

**Several hon. Members :** No, he is not here.

**The Speaker :** Please, let all the Members of the Committee on Internal Affairs come to my office immediately after today's sitting so that another Chairman could be appointed. (Applause)

## NOTICES OF MOTIONS

### The Nigeria Airways

**The Speaker :** Hon. Members, we have on today's Order Paper a Motion on Nigeria Airways, and it stands in the names of Mr A. B. Yahaya, Dr O. O. Oreh and Mr I. D. Hassan. Yes, Mr A. B. Yahaya.

**Mr A. B. Yahaya (Ilorin East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name and two others, and it reads as follows :

That this House views with grave concern the incessant and (seemingly incurable) inefficient operations of the Nigeria Airways and directs the Committee on Aviation to investigate the causes of such inefficiency with a view to recommending to the House a remedial cure for the operations of the Nigeria Airways as Nigeria's National Airline and to recommend also an effective and purposeful policy on air transportation that will alleviate the inconvenience and aggravating experience of air travellers in Nigeria.

I beg to move.

**The Speaker :** Is there anybody seconding the Motion ? Yes, Mr Inuwa Ali.

**Mr Inuwa Ali (Jos North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Yahaya :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I have chosen to speak about the ills of Nigeria Airways today not because it is any different from the NPA, the P and T or any of our corporations, but because it has the singular position of being the mirror of this country and, therefore, whatever the Nigeria Airways does as an Airline is not seen as just an operation of another local Corporation but as an image of the country as a whole.

I would like to start by first taking you back to the early days of the precursor of the Nigeria Airways which is the West African Airways Corporation. Those of you who are familiar with flying or who had the opportunity to fly at the time when the West African Airways Corporation was operating, would have noticed that there was little or nothing to complain about. This was perhaps, so, because at that time the Airline was, if not particularly efficient, at least, managed to perform its normal services. Just before Independence, the idea that the Nigeria Airways should be born came when Ghana decided to pull out of the West African Airways Corporation, and today, the Nigeria Airways inherited whatever was left of the West African Airways Corporation.

However, the Nigeria Airways did not take along with it the efficiency that the West African Airways Corporation had ; instead the Corporation, today, has become a disgrace to the country.

I would first like to start with the operations of the Airways. Right from the first moment you attempt to get a ticket, your first experience would probably be that you would spend two to three hours trying to get a booking for any flight within or outside the country. Having got the booking, there is no way by which the Airline can confirm your booking if you happen to do the booking outside the main air-booking centre ; which means that if you book, for instance, in Apapa, you do not stand the chance of getting the confirmation until, perhaps, a day or two later, because the Airline does not operate any computer system. Now, let us assume that you succeed in getting a booking, you then have the problem of getting your ticket. Assuming that you get the ticket and you are able to get on to the Airport, you then have the problem of trying to get a seat on the aircraft because being booked on the aircraft is no guarantee that you would get a seat on the aircraft.

Now, assuming that you are able to get a seat on the Aircraft, you then have the problem that it may not even take off. On a number of occasions, we have had flights cancelled. In the case of local flights, you could have, out of five flights going out of Lagos on any given day, perhaps only two or three operating for the day. All the five flights are naturally fully booked but only two flights are taking off and the result, of course, is that there is always a scramble to get the seats on the aircraft, and in an attempt to do that, what tends to happen is that some passengers are sent off from the aircraft even where they have confirmed reservations on that particular flight. I am sure that most hon. Members who have had to travel by the Nigeria Airways have had to share this experience at one time or the other.

Now, let us assume that you are able to fight your way to get a seat on the aircraft, you are then subjected to the worst service that you can ever think of as a passenger. First, you do not get served any refreshments on the flight, and if you do, it is thrown at you as if you have literally begged to get on the aircraft. If you do not even get the courtesy of the Air stewardesses, you will get the abuses of some of these Air stewards.

There is also the possibility that you might even end up exchanging blows. I will give you an example of what happened recently. There was a flight from Kaduna which was supposed to come into Lagos, and after several flights had been cancelled, two flights eventually managed to leave Kaduna for Lagos. Of course, there were about three hundred passengers trying to get on the aircraft.

We eventually got into the aircraft, and the few sixty odd passengers who got into the aircraft literally went into blows in the plane just because someone was being paid to get some of the passengers on the flight. Others who had been booked on that particular flight demanded, as of right, to be seated on the plane and of course, there was the usual fracas and the police had to be called in. A few of the passengers were taken away and the result, of course, none of us ever got to know because those of us who eventually got on the flight came to Lagos. This is talking about the Local Flights.

Now, when you imagine that similar things happen on the international flights, the matter becomes more serious. In a place like London, if the aircraft is scheduled to leave at a certain time and there is going to be a delay, nobody bothers to inform the passengers that the flight is not leaving on time. Eventually, the flight gets cancelled and nothing is done to take care of all the passengers. All they are told is, *sorry the flight is cancelled*. This is a very common occurrence in the Nigeria Airways operations ; in fact, it is the rule rather than the exception.

What worries the average Nigerian airline passenger is that one cannot talk about patronising one's own country's National Airline because we do not have the right kind of people to run the Nigeria Airways.

Recently, the government stepped in and appointed the KLM, to run the country's national Airline. I believe we are close to the sixth months of that

[MA YAHAYA]

operation, but we do not seem to have seen any difference in the operation itself because, as I speak now, a lot of people still complain about the Airline and people have of course muted that *why the KLM*? Some have complained that the KLM itself is not an efficient Airline to run such an operation. Some have even said that the KLM Management has just been re-organised by an American Management Consultant. Why then would you want to engage such an Airline to run your national airline?

Well, I would say here that, if I remember rightly a similar attempt was made some three or four years ago, to engage the Transworld Airlines. When the Transworld Airlines came into the country, they tried and studied the operations of the Nigeria Airways, found what they thought was exactly wrong with it and, based on the recommendations which they made, they offered to come and run the Airline. No one ever told us what happened to that negotiation until one day we just found the KLM being appointed as the official Manager of the Nigeria Airways.

Hon. Members, I think the Nigeria Airways is an important institution to this country. As I have said, it is not just another corporation; it is the mirror of this country, because what happens to the Nigeria Airways is what Nigeria as a country would be judged by. The Embassies you set up do not invariably get around as the Airways which is not just to carry passengers from one country abroad to this country but it is also there to project the image of the country. Hon. Members, this is one of the reasons why I think that we should not just sit back and look at the activities of the Nigeria Airways as just another ailing corporation but we must see it as a corporation that has to project our image.

Having said all this, I would like to ask the Committee on Aviation to look into certain recommendations made by various people in order to improve the Nigeria Airways. One of those recommendations is about the Management. A lot of people have complained that one of the reasons why the Nigeria Airways does not seem to be doing well is that when the West African Airways Corporation was broken up, most of the good Manager then were Ghananians. These Managers were taken away and the few Nigerians who were left eventually got frustrated and today you do have these capable Nigerians serving in other countries' Airlines. I know of a Nigerian, for instance, who is the Deputy Director of Operations in the British Airways. People like these would have been able to help the Nigeria Airways, but somehow, the more junior fellows who were then in the Nigeria Airways managed to use whatever influence they had to frustrate the efforts of the few Managerial staff of Nigerian origin that then existed in the West African Airways Corporation.

It is, therefore, important that the Airways must, as of priority, organise a re-training programme for all its Managers, because it is only when you have properly trained Managers you can run an airline

There is also the case of pilferage which goes on incessantly in our Airports. The Nigeria Airways has the monopoly of the air cargo transportation into this country. It is not that I object to their having a monopoly, but I do object to the idea of having just one shed which is operated by the Nigeria Airways for all cargoes that come through all the Airlines.

I would, therefore, suggest that the Committee should look into this with a view to, perhaps, recommending that each Airline that operates in this country must have its own cargo shed so that when cargo comes into this country, the Airline that brings in the cargo should be responsible for whatever cargo it brings into the country. That is one way, I think, by which we can stop the pilferage that is going on at present at the Airport.

The other issue is whether or not the Nigeria Airways should continue to use the services of KLM. My opinion is that we need the services of experts in this field. As at now, this country does not seem to have the experts, and if we have them, they are not operating or serving in this country. I would, therefore, advocate that we continue to use the services of foreign Airlines to assist in developing our Airline until such a time when we can run an Airline efficiently of our own.

Finally, I would like to mention two points about the operations of the Airline generally. Although the Airline complains that it has insufficient number of aircraft, I do not believe that this is the real reason why it is inefficient. I think that with a fleet of over twenty-six aircraft, it has enough aircraft to run the service of the Airline. There are other countries that carry as many passengers if not more passengers than we carry, but do have more efficient services. I think what is really wrong is that the aircraft they have are under-utilized and not properly maintained and, therefore, do cause a lot of problems for the Airways. I would suggest that the Management should organise a proper maintenance service and increase the number of flights in the utilization of the aircraft. I know that even in a place like Ghana that have much fewer aircraft, they run a much more efficient Airline than we do, and I must say that in a number of cases where one has a choice between having to fly Nigeria Airways and other Airlines sometimes they do tend to even fly the Airline of some other African countries. Our pilots, for instance are under-utilized or perhaps have become little tin-gods in the Airline, because they are the only pilots that the Airline can use. They use the guise of being Nigerians and as such they maintain that the Nigeria Airways must use Nigerian pilots. This State of affairs tend literally to frustrate the efforts of the Nigeria Airways. There is, for instance, the talk of the average Nigerian pilot lobbying no more than 400 hours, and there is even the talk of a pilot that lobs no more than 36 hours. I know that in more advanced countries the average number of hours that the pilot is expected to lobs is as much as 1,000 to 1,200 hours. So, if a Nigerian pilot does only 400 hours which he thinks is about the maximum, then you must agree with me that the number is rather below the mark.

So Mr Speaker, hon. Members, what I am seeking is that the Committee on Aviation should look into ways and means of improving the Nigeria Airways as the National Airline and consider, as a matter of priority, the possibility of maybe setting up other private Airlines to give competition to the Nigeria Airways. So, hon. Members, I do hope that you will support my Motion.

I beg to move.

**Dr O. O. Oreh (Arochukwu)**: I rise to move the Motion in my name on the Nigeria Airways. Now, I have four basic criticisms of the Nigeria Airways. The first is that it delays or quite often, totally cancels flights for which passengers have been okayed. The second is that it over-books an aircraft, and the third is that there is large-scale bribery, corruption and fraud. The fourth is that there is nepotism in the Nigeria Airways.

Mr Speaker, Sir, you know that some time ago one Group-Captain Bello was appointed Sole Administrator of the Nigeria Airways to clean it up, and he did a magnificent job. Some people who were engaged in corruption, that is, those who were accepting ten to fifteen naira before you could get a boarding pass, were dismissed from the Airline. I know for certain that some of these people have now found their ways back to the Airways and they are back at their old game. That is even a very very small matter when it is compared with the large-scale fraud that goes into the Airline's operation because of nepotism. What I mean is that some people manipulate the contracts of the Nigeria Airways. They also make sure that the Nigeria Airways properties are not developed, and hire private properties instead because of the interest that will accrue to them from the rent.

Now, because of inefficiency in the Nigeria Airways, the KLM Management was invited and it inherited the good work that Group-Captain Bello did. Unfortunately, KLM is now endangering whatever good results that had accrued from the service of Group-Captain Bello. You will recall that last December, the Nigeria Airways said it would no longer honour okayed ticket, but would operate on the basis of *first come first served* and you know that, that re-introduced having to tip the booking clerks to get a boarding pass. I know a High Court Judge in this country who was man-handled because he was trying to get into a plane for which he had been properly booked.

Now, the story of why KLM is managing Nigeria Airways is interesting. This was one of the cases where civil servants negotiated contracts and then the Army was blamed for being in power when it was done. I would like the Committee on Aviation to investigate the reasons why KLM which does not run a domestic service at home in the Netherlands, and which had no manpower to man its own Airways, had to win the contract to run Nigeria Airways and thereafter advertised for manpower. I would also like the Committee on Aviation to investigate why ₦3.8 million is being paid to KLM and ₦19,000 paid to the accounts of the so-called experts they have brought here in their home countries and

₦1,500 paid to them every month in this country while Peugeot 504 cars are provided with drivers and accommodation. Why, in fact, are we paying these so-called experts in a month what we would normally pay to Nigerians who are Directors in the Nigeria Airways?

I would also like the Committee on Aviation to investigate why KLM, the Netherlands Airline, which is in competition with Nigeria Airways was hired to run the Nigeria Airways. Is it not obvious that it will do only those things which will minimise or abolish the competition of the Nigeria Airways with the Netherlands Airways which is KLM? I would also like to know why KLM is here when Lufthansa is Consultant to Nigeria Airways for passenger handling. Why is there this duplication and wastage of Nigeria's money? What about the danger of KLM introducing South Africans into the Nigeria Airways Services? Do we not know that the Netherlands are kith and kin of the South Africans, and if you were to bring the Dutch people from the Netherlands to run the Airways you are, in fact, handing over intelligence information to the South Africans through the Dutch without their having to pay for it. I would also like the Committee on Aviation to investigate why only the people of a certain ethnic group dominate the Nigeria Airways.

In fact 95 per cent of the staff is made up of one ethnic group leaving only 5 per cent to the rest of the country. The Aviation Committee should also investigate why computer services of the Nigeria Airways is being dismantled when, in fact, we know that the computer service would eradicate some of the ills of the Airways like over-booking, and therefore cut down on corruption and tipping for boarding pass. Why we are paying KLM for packaging, when in fact those things could be done here, only shows that some unpatriotic Nigerians are getting their kick-backs.

The Nigerian Government spent huge sums of money to develop airports in Nigeria, yet we shy away from buying large aircraft which would move passengers to avoid congestion, while we continue to buy very minor aircraft like the Fokker 28.

I would also like to know (in fact that is an old one, two of them are going to be received this year) why we continue to buy DC 10 when they are known to be faulty. In fact, I have it on good authority that the Nigerians who advised against the purchase of these DC 10 aircraft were summarily dismissed from the Airways services. One of them had the misfortune of having to crash-land one of these DC 10 aircraft he had opposed its purchase.

I come to the area of nepotism or tribalism. I think that this has led to many corrupt practices, organised fraud cover-ups and discrimination in the hiring of staff in the Airline. I do not believe that only one ethnic group can produce people with the expertise to run the Nigeria Airways and yet that is what the Authorities would like us to believe. I would like the Aviation Committee to investigate this and to investigate why 28 million Naira is at present owed to the Nigeria Airways and no attempt is being made to recover it. The Committee should



[DR OREH]  
also try to find out why, when these agencies which owe money send in cheques in payment of the debts, the cheques instead of being paid into the bank are put away in files. I would like to know why the Stores of the Nigeria Airways which deal with purchasing and distribution are being over-priced and are being concentrated in a very favoured contracting firms of erstwhile officials of the Nigeria Airways.

Mr Speaker, Sir, there is so much wrong, so much corruption going on in the Nigeria Airways that it would be impossible to enumerate all of them here without depriving others of the chance to speak today, but I would make available the result of my investigations into the Nigeria Airways in print to Members of the Committee on Aviation.

Thank you, very much.

Mr Speaker: Yes, the other co-Mover, hon. I. D. Hassan.

Mr I. D. Hassan (Tafawa Balewa): Mr Speaker, Sir, Members of this honourable House, it would be recalled that just a few years ago, the Nigeria Airways suffered from a social disease which seriously shook its administrative machinery. This was a form of power which female members of the staff of the Airways exercised by virtue of their association with the top members of the administrative hierarchy. They could threaten their very superior officers with outright dismissal if they crossed their paths in the course of executing their lawful duties. Eventually, however, the Corporation was rid of this problem. But it was just like casting away one devil and allowing seven more to come in.

Today, therefore, the Nigeria Airways is best remembered for its inefficiency which has been manifested in three ways.

- (i) flight cancellation ;
- (ii) flight delay ; and
- (iii) bribery and corruption.

In respect of the first two, that is, flight delay and flight cancellation, I do not need to elaborate because previous speakers have spoken extensively on them. Each one of us here must have at one time or the other been a victim of either flight cancellation or delay. We know how much inconvenience that causes intending air travellers.

With regard to bribery and corruption, I have a case in mind which I am going to cite to buttress my claim. Just a few weeks ago, a Member of this honourable House went to the airport to buy a flight ticket to Maiduguri. On getting to the airport he was able to buy the flight ticket, and after he has bought it, he went to the checking counter to get the boarding pass. On the air ticket again was written *request*, and that was purposely done. When he went to the checking counter, he was told that there was no more vacant seats in the aircraft. So, that hon. Member went to take a seat to wait. While he was waiting for another flight, another Airways staff came round and asked him how much he was ready to offer so that he might help him to get the boarding pass. The hon. Member replied that he had nothing to offer.

So, the Airways staff went back. After a long delay and after realising that the hon. Member would offer nothing, he was called and given the boarding pass.

Mr Speaker, Sir, this simple explanation reveals how intending air travellers have always been at the mercy of unscrupulous and unpatriotic elements in the name of the Nigeria Airways Staff.

In my opinion also, the reason why the Nigeria Airways has been inefficient is because of the monopoly of air service which they enjoy in this country. Because of this monopoly they enjoy, they see no reason why they should improve their services at all. Whatever you do, if you want to travel by air, you must come to them and submit yourself. Because of this, I would recommend to the Committee on Aviation that they recommend that private organisations be allowed to set up air services in this country to compete with the Nigeria Airways. This will minimise their inefficiency.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these points, I beg to move.

Mr Hamza Nganjiwa (Biu North): Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion. Mr Speaker, Sir, much as we would crucify the Nigeria Airways for its inefficiency we should at the same time take into account the merits which go with the Nigeria Airways. First, in the past ten years the Nigeria Airways has succeeded in improving its services especially its record by the increase of flights both internationally and at the local level.

Secondly, we should also praise the Nigeria Airways, as it has been known all over the world, for its low record of accidents in air traffic. But, all these are not to absolve the Nigeria Airways from the ills of that monstrous organisation. Mr Speaker, Sir, we are all familiar with scenes at the Nigeria Airways flight areas. You are all familiar with scrambling and scufflings at the check-in points, and the hacklings before getting into the aircraft. You are all familiar with cases of delayed flights and cancellation of flights with no apology to customers.

But, Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to say that this alone would not have made the Nigeria Airways inefficient but for the other factors on which I am going to make suggestions to our Committee on Aviation for consideration.

In the first place, the Nigeria Airways exists as an appendage of the Civil Service. They must be detached forthwith if we want improvement from the Nigeria Airways.

Secondly, countries all over the world run airlines, Nigeria can never be an exception, but all over the world these national Airlines exist in competition with privately organised airlines. I would, therefore, advocate that Nigerians be allowed to organise Air Corporations in competition with the Nigeria Airways. I would like to cite an example. Very recently, I was at one of the Nigeria Airways check-in points. I was approached by a Research Officer who was asking some customers to fill some forms. One of the questions says, *if the Nigeria Airways should increase its passenger flight fares will you still go by the Nigeria Airways?* Hon. Members, what would you have answered to that question? My answer was

yes, because unless you answer yes, what other means of transport would you have used if you do not use the Nigeria Airways? You have no choice. So, I had to answer yes. If there are other Airways Corporation in the country, I would have said *no* because I have another choice.

Mr Speaker, there are certain other anomalies, one of which is the connection of the Nigeria Airways with the KLM. It is alleged that this is to the disadvantage of the Nigeria Airways especially in the number of international flights. The KLM is more or less serving its own interest in its relationship with the Nigeria Airways. I think that our Committee should investigate this and come out with the truth about the connection between the Nigeria Airways and the KLM.

Another point is the use of large aircraft in local flights in order to decongest the Nigeria Airports. Yet again is the phasing out of the 27 and 28 model of aircraft so that we have a better and more efficient world standard aircraft that would be able to cope with the demands of air flights in this country.

With this, Mr Speaker, I wish to ask Members to support the Motion. Thank you.

**Mr A. S. Harith (Kiru)** : Hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion whole-heartedly and I hope my hon. Colleagues would join me in supporting the Motion. I am sure this Motion is not a controversial one, because everybody knows of the inefficiency of the Nigeria Airways.

Mr Speaker, during our last recess, I was at the Murtala Mohammed Airport at about 2.30 p.m. I was there with my ticket. I was on the line in order to get the boarding pass. Before I got the boarding pass, the man issuing the pass deliberately closed the door and said that passes had finished. So we were scattered there. At last, I found some people who might have got the boarding passes from the back door went inside and joined the plane. So we had to wait for the evening flight. In the evening flight again, we got the boarding pass but we were told that there was no economic class. So, we had to add some money, at least ₦23, in order to get into the first class apartment. At last we ended up in the third class that is the economic class.

So, Mr Speaker, with these few points I have contributed, we should look into the Nigeria Airways.

**Mr Debo Akande (Ibadan North)** : Mr Speaker, I would like to join in supporting this Motion and in fact, to express surprise that my name is not there. I also put in a Motion on this subject, and I even went further in my own request, as mentioned by an hon. Member, to call, for the Agreement made by the Nigeria Airways with the KLM to be made available to us, so that our Committee on Aviation can consider the appropriateness of this Agreement and whether the contents are in the interest of our country. Surprisingly, my name is not there but I support the motion as drafted.

I think, Mr Speaker, Sir, that this Motion is non-controversial because every Member here has had one opportunity or the other of travelling on our airline and the story is unanimously that of a sorry

sight. Mr Speaker, Sir, I like to recall and bring to this House that on the 21st of December, 1979 an announcement was put up by the Nigeria Airways that all bookings, purchases of tickets, giving particular dates were cancelled, that all citizens should go to the Airport and they would just board the plane. It was one of the greatest chaos I have ever seen in my life. I went to the Airport on the 22nd of December at 6 a.m. to go to Benin. Mr Speaker, Sir, I met not less than eight hon. Members at the Airport that day, I could not board the plane till 4.15 p.m., and that was the Christmas period. Whoever advised the Airways to bring up such an idea without having a proper arrangement, that if people got there they could get on the plane, I do not know.

So, Mr Speaker, Sir, the Nigeria Airways is very sick, and it needs a lot of overhauling. As a matter of fact, the Motion I put in also included a call that, we invite here the head of the domestic flight in the Airways to come and tell us what are his difficulties in running the domestic airline. I would like to focus, Mr Speaker, Sir, on the route to Benin. It is one of the worst operated routes, and the most congested as well. I think that the Nigeria Airways ought to have realised that a better and more suitable arrangements ought to have been made for Benin route which serves the whole of Bendel State. It also serves part of Port Harcourt, Imo and Anambra States. So, it is one of the most congested routes. It is one of the most used, and I think the Nigeria Airways ought to bear this in mind in planning their flights.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, Sir, I have been on flight from Lagos to Maiduguri which is about the farthest route one can travel on the Airline. I must say, Mr Speaker, Sir, that two or three years ago when you travelled on Nigeria Airways to go to Enugu or Kano early in the morning, we used to get breakfast served—boiled eggs and proper coffee—but I have experienced in the last six months that nothing is served on Nigeria Airways. What they now serve is a packet of three biscuits as if I was going to a nursery school. They serve biscuits and when asked for coffee they would say : *we have no water to make coffee*. On another occasion they said there were no cups on the plane to make coffee, and they wanted to give us some rotten orange.

I remember last week, I was travelling all the way to Maiduguri. The plane left Lagos for Maiduguri at 7.30 a.m. Mr Speaker, this means that you have to leave your house between the hours of six o'clock in the morning and half past six. You naturally would expect that if you get on board for the flight that will take you one hour ten minutes before getting to Kano which is the first stop, you will at least be served a cup of tea or coffee. There was nothing served, and if you asked the Airways' girl, she would say : *I am sorry, there is no water on board*. These are the attitudes we see in the Nigeria Airways. I had to call the head steward on the plane last week and said : *look here, you are not doing me a favour. I paid almost ₦200 to make this flight early in the morning, you think you are doing me a favour*. He said : *Do not worry me, Oga*. I mean these are the attitudes and

[MR AKANDE]

I believe, Sir, that we must charge our Committee to really go deep into the services that the Nigeria Airways are rendering. I think if they want to run an Airline they should give good services to the people.

Secondly, Sir, if they want Nigerians to travel on Nigeria Airways when going out of Nigeria, they ought to provide comparable services which all the other airlines give.

I have given the picture on the domestic flight. I am sure, Mr Speaker, Sir, if you had travelled on Nigeria Airways back on this your American trip, I do not know if you did, you would have found that your experience would have been terrible because I travelled back on Nigeria Airways from England about a month ago. First of all, it was an overnight flight where you are expected to get an overnight toilet bag so that when you wake up you could wash your mouth and wash your face. There was nothing given to us. There was no tooth brush in the bathroom. There was nothing and that was even first class.

So, Mr Speaker, Sir, I think there is no doubt that the services being provided by the Nigeria Airways are substandard and these stand condemned. I would like to recommend to the appropriate Committee, Sir, that they should invite the heads of both the domestic and international flight and go to the roots of this matter. They should call for the agreement with the KLM and let them realise that they have to give services equivalent to the high cost at which they are running the Airline. I also believe, Sir, that in consonance with the Motion passed here about a week ago, I heard it mentioned by an hon. Member this morning, let us have the airways detached from all ambits of the Civil Service. Coincidentally, there is an editorial in the *Daily Times* even on this aspect today. I read this in the car on the way here today. We should not be in a hurry to start granting licences to individuals to run the airways. I also believe, and very strongly, that the Nigeria Airways, with proper management and without the Civil Service bureaucracy, can run well if they are given free hand, and if the right personnel are appointed not on the Federal character type that is being advocated by some hon. Members. I want the Airways to be given the correct personnel whether they are from the Rivers State, from the home town of my hon. Friend, Mr Bob-Manuel, or from Bauchi State from the home of the Leader of the House. I think it does not matter; let us give the Nigeria Airways a free hand. If they employ the right and skillful personnel to man the organisation, I believe they will run well.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these few remarks and the emphasis to cut away all the Civil Service connections from the Airways, the Airways should be able to run well and provide adequate services. Thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker:** Thank you. The hon. Member for Ibadan South (*Mr L. O. Adesina*) is to speak.

**Mr Lam Adesina** (Ibadan South): I think like all other Public Corporations and Utilities in this country, the Nigeria Airways is playing true to type. We have discussed at length here the activities of Corporation like NEPA, P and T and so on.

The verdict is that they have not been serving the good people of this country. I want to return the verdict again today that the Nigeria Airways is not only sick but it is ridden with ineptitude and complete inefficiency.

I will start with the domestic flights. I have had the misfortune of travelling some time ago in the Nigeria Airways Flight to Enugu, and what I saw there was very horrible. Before I started from Ibadan and came down to Lagos, it was a tug of war for me. I got a confirmed ticket and then I had to struggle to get this ticket still confirmed and not unconfirmed, and when we got to Lagos and heading towards Enugu, the same thing repeated itself. On our way from Enugu back to Lagos, we had to beg and beg before they could say *come in, we shall take you to Lagos*.

Apart from this, you will discover that the services of the Nigeria Airways are very deplorable when you travel from either Ibadan to Enugu or Enugu to Lagos and other places. The hostesses are completely mannerless and you will just find an atmosphere of rudeness here and there. There was an incident. Mr Speaker, it is not a funny matter because it actually showed that these people are rude. It was not by accident, I think it was merely an act of arrogance.

The hostess was passing by me and she poured hot tea on me completely inside the aircraft (*Laughter*). It is not a funny incident. Instead of the lady to apologise for her bad act she just passed by, looked at me and went away. I had to call her back and draw her attention to what had happened, before she managed to say *Sorry, Sir*. That is that.

When you come to international flight, hon. Member from Ibadan East (*Mr Debo Akande*) was asking whether the Speaker flew in in Nigeria Airways Flight. No. But those of us who came from New York down to Lagos witnessed a lot of things.

In the first instance, I sent a questionnaire round that very evening when we were coming from New York, to the crew in the aircraft, to help me get some information because I looked round and I saw vacant seats here and there. I was surprised and I asked for the reason why this should be so. Then the information came to me and on the information sheet I learnt that there should be 365 passengers in the aircraft, but only 95 passengers were there, comprising 20 white people and 75 black people. I started to ask for the reasons why and some of my Colleagues started to say, *well, with the bad air services here how can you expect people to come in?*

What is more, there was a doctor friend in that particular aircraft. We flew together from New York. This doctor friend was telling me that *look at this aircraft with vacant seats here and there. It carries only two tons cargo*. This doctor friend went to New York on behalf of the Federal Government to buy some medical equipment, and yet they would not allow this man to put in this medical equipment. According to them, there was no space, but there was space. The aircraft could carry about five-ton load but it carried only two. I asked the question further, why? They said they were waiting to be bribed or something like that before they could even allow the Federal Government equipment to come into this country. This is really very serious.

Another matter which I discovered at New York is that the Nigeria Airways is sharing an office with the British Airways there, so that you do not know which is which. On top you will find the British Airways symbol, and below you will find the Nigeria Airways symbol. This is really very shameful.

Furthermore, Mr Speaker, I would also like to draw attention to the fact that even in New York you will find the leader of the crew openly addressing us very rudely. You asked him a question and he would say *no, no, no*. I told him, *I am a Nigerian and a Member of the National Assembly and I want to be briefed on certain things*. He would not cooperate. Eventually, I had to leave this man alone to his fate, but these were the sort of things we witnessed.

When I was coming down again, we got to a certain place and they were able to serve us some kind of food. What I found inside the food was human hair and I could not eat it. I drew their attention to it. The reply they gave was that it was prepared like that.

Mr Speaker, several people have spoken about the ills of the Nigeria Airways. What I just want to add is that the Committee should really go into the root of these problems and find lasting solutions. We cannot continue to take responsibilities in this country for bad services being provided for our people. I think a stop must be put to it today and not tomorrow.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Dr M. B. Ukpogon (Abak)**: I rise to support this Motion and to make some suggestions so that the good intention of moving this motion may not be diverted to something else.

Mr Speaker, Sir, those who are just from the United States by PANAM have a very good reason to say that Nigeria Airways is very poor in terms of management, in terms of public relations and in all aspects of its service.

Mr Speaker, Sir, there are a number of things we should take into consideration which would help the Committee on Aviation to handle the job. This is very comparative. Between 1964 and 1979, very many people will agree that the services of the Nigeria Airways were poorer than they are now. This is a fact which everybody must accept. But about six months ago with the contract with the KLM, there appears to have been some sort of improvement.

I remember that two years ago we had been getting agents to get our boarding passes for us, and in fact the Lagos Airways was just a dumping ground for criminals. When we travelled to Kano with some University Dons, even though our own air tickets were okayed, it was not possible for the four of us to get boarding passes. At Calabar we had no flight whatever.

I want to be objective in saying that the present Administration is a little better than what it was. What I am trying to say here is that this Motion should not be an attempt to revert the management of the Airways to the Nigerians as of now, because

this will be very bad, and it is going to take us back into the old bad days of the Nigeria Airways. All we have to do is to make sure that we carefully review the agreement between the Nigerian Authorities and the KLM. If there are areas to be disagreed with and to be modified, they should be modified. If we want to reject it, we should reject it and substitute it with another more competent company.

As a matter of fact, there are a number of allegations about the KLM and I am sure very many Members have received these handouts about the KLM on fraud, mismanagement and being interested in its own affairs than that of Nigeria.

We are told that they are only used to international flights and not to domestic flights. We should not allow any foreign air company to hold Nigeria to ransom.

Mr Speaker, my specific suggestions, not to deal with the history of the KLM and the Nigeria Airways are as follows—

Firstly, Mr Speaker, the Committee on Aviation should make a comparative review of the administration, that is the one of Nigerians running the Nigeria Airways and the one of the KLM. Secondly, there should be a very careful review of the contractual agreement between the KLM and the Nigeria Airways. Thirdly, the allegation of fraud and financial mismanagement against the KLM and finally, Mr Speaker, possible remedies.

With these, Mr Speaker, I support the Motion.

**The Speaker**: Yes, NPN.

**Mr David Afaityo (Gboko East)**: I rise to associate myself with the Motion and I support it fifty *per cent*. Three issues have been raised in the Motion and one of them is the poor treatment of passengers which I agree with. I actually accept that passengers do get bad treatment from the Airways. The second one is bribery and corruption. This is true. Before you board a plane in Nigeria, you have to pay some money to the small boys who are around there. I do not know whether the higher authorities know this. I agree with this one also. The third one is delay and the cancellation of flights.

On the 8th of February, I was at the Airport in Lagos here intending to go to Makurdi. The officials first of all cancelled the flight going to Kaduna, and again they cancelled another one to Sokoto. Later on they cancelled another flight to Makurdi. I asked what was happening. Later on, they cancelled another flight to Enugu, but this time it was temporary, just for only one hour. When it was getting too late, I decided to go to Enugu and from there I would go to Makurdi. I went to beg the officials to help me get a flight to Enugu. The officials said that the weather was bad but we insisted and begged that they should help us go to Enugu. At last, they agreed around 8.30 in the night. We boarded the plane and arrived at Enugu, but it was a hell for us to land because the weather was actually bad. I was so afraid that I went to the toilet two or three times. I wondered what was happening.

[MR AFAITIO]

So, as far as I am concerned, when the Committee is dealing with the matter of the cancellation of flights and delay of flights, they should be very lenient because if we push the officials of the Airways too much, the end might be disastrous. This is my stand. Thank you.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : I move that the question be now put.

*Question, That the question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That this House views with grave concern the incessant and (seemingly incurable) inefficient operations of the Nigeria Airways and directs the Committee on Aviation to investigate the causes of such inefficiency with a view to recommending to the House a remedial cure for the operations of the Nigeria Airways as Nigeria's National Airline and to recommend also an effective and purposeful policy on air transportation that will alleviate the inconvenience and aggravating experience of air travellers in Nigeria.

**The Speaker** : Hon. Members, this is to remind the Members of the Committee on Internal Affairs that they should, please meet immediately after adjournment in my office. Also, if it is the wish of the House, the Committee can co-opt some hon. Members who are Medical Practitioners to witness the *post mortem* examination on these dead bodies. This is very important. So, Dr Sowho, Dr Mohammed, Mr Emekekwe and Dr Olukoya should, please, join in the meeting, this afternoon.

#### Construction of Planned Federal Roads

**The Speaker** : The next Motion is the Construction of Planned Federal Roads. There are very many supporters of this Motion. It is virtually the Motion of the whole House.

Does it require any moving and supporting ?

**Several hon. Members** : No.

**The Speaker** : Does it require any debate ?

**Several hon. Members** : No.

**The Speaker** : We still have to comply with the rules. Let somebody move the Motion.

**Mr Agwana Apagu Waba** (Askira Uba) : The Motion standing in my name and the names of many other hon. Members reads :

That in view of the economic importance of road development, this House urges the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to expedite action on the construction of all Federal roads whose designs have been commissioned as contained both in the 1975-80 Third National Development Plan and the Second Report on the said Plan.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker** : Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Ekok Ojogu** (Ikrom) : I beg to second the Motion.

**The Speaker** : Hon. Member for Askira Uba. (*Mr Waba*)

**Mr Waba** : Mr Speaker, Sir, thank you very much for the sentiments you shared about this Motion, and besides, from the list of the Movers of this Motion, as you have rightly pointed out, it does not need much debate, because almost everybody supports the Motion. Well, the fact of the matter is this. We are so many moving this Motion and I feel that every Member would like to contribute. Therefore, I am going to lay the background information, perhaps introductory one and then hon. Colleagues will expatiate on it.

Mr Speaker, Sir, this Motion is directed at the remaining Federal Roads that have been earmarked for the 1975-80 Third National Development Plan but which, at the moment of our debate, have not taken off the ground. The progress on these roads so far is that the roads have been surveyed, their designs have been commissioned, some have been completed and some are in progress. In this light, I would like to mention a few of such roads. This is very important because some of these roads, have been on the Second Development Plan and yet they continue to be passed over.

Now, in the Second Progress Report which we have on the Third National Development Plan, you can see the list of these roads. I can only cite a few examples and my hon. Colleagues, the co-Movers will continue citing others. These roads have their serial numbers and I am going to name them also. Serial number 262 the Benishe-Danguwa-Askira Uba Road, Serial Number 242 Nassarawa-Loko-Uturkpo-Ore Road.

Serial number 156, the Auch/Idah/Nsukka Road. Serial number 181, the Wudel/Fashin Hausa/Katagum Road. Serial number 159, the Kabba/Okene Road. Serial number 191, Ondo/Ile-Ife Road. Serial number 147, Onitsha/Umoaka/Amaido/Okigwe Road.

**Mr Speaker** : There is a point of order.

**Mr Fola Omidiji** (Egba Alake) : My point of order is Order 26 (2). What the hon. Member is saying is irrelevant because we have all got copies of the book he is reading from. There is no need to come here and waste our time, we all support this Motion.

**Mr Waba** : My hon. Colleague, what I am saying is—

**Mr Speaker** : No, No, speak to me.

**Mr Waba** : If I may continue, these roads are the ones that have been designed. Serial number 52, you have the road leading to Shinkafia/Shekima/Ukomo. On Serial Number 23 you have the Jos/Makurdi Road and many others which will be cited in due course. These roads, as I have said, have been designed and the designs are there in the cupboard. They continue to be shelved over. So, what the Motion seeks to do is, therefore, to remind and to urge the Federal Government not to pass over again these roads that have been designed. These roads have been passed over several times in the past Development Plans. So, they should be taken care of in the next Development Plan.

The argument people have been advancing before was that they were using the priority list. We all know the value and importance of roads. I believe that where we had priority list used before, this had been abused. Several roads earmarked in the past Development plans had been shelved over simply because there were no people in the corridors of power who could speak for those areas. We feel that there is no better argument we can bring than to build these roads whose designs had been commissioned and had been completed and yet some people tucked them there in the cupboard only to bring in new roads and continue constructing them. We feel that is very unfair, and it is our duty, as the Legislators, to remind the Government to expedite action on these roads in the Fourth National Development Plan, at least starting from the next financial year. Even if there are no other roads that should be constructed, at least, these roads should be constructed. The Federal Government should expedite action. It is not a question of using priority list simply because there are people who are in the corridors of power.

I do not have to emphasise the importance of road development. You know that in our economic development the roads are very important; even for political development the roads are very important and socially, the roads are also very important.

With these few remarks on these roads, I beg to move.

**Mr A. E. Ejiga (Oturkpo):** I am one of the co-Movers of this Motion. As the first speaker has said, we all know the importance of this Motion, and the importance is reflected by the number of people who are co-sponsoring this Motion. Mr Speaker, Sir, some Members have said that since everybody supports this Motion, there is no need to debate it. I think, I will disagree with that. The purpose of debating here is not only to arrive at yes or no, but to say what we want to say for the purpose of records and for the benefit of the people who are not in this House to read it and see how we arrive at our decisions.

**Mr Speaker:** Thank you.

**Mr Ejiga:** We all know the importance of roads I would say that everything we have been talking about, especially with regard to agriculture, if all our roads are good, we will find that half of our job is done. Most of these roads pass through agricultural areas. In fact, there are so many parts of Nigeria where people produce food and cannot consume all, but they have no roads to take them to the markets, and there are some other people in other places who have no food to eat.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would talk briefly on Nassarawa/Loko/Oturkpo/Oju/Anyase Road. Sir, this road, if constructed, will directly link Calabar port with the new Federal Capital. We all have heard how Calabar port is being under-utilised. I know that if this road is constructed it will directly link this port with our new Federal Capital. The tragedy of this road is that it was a State road but the Federal Government came and took it over saying that it is a priority road. When it came to the Federal level, it became no more priority. All the less important

roads in the then Benue-Plateau State in those days had been constructed and yet this particular road is left unattended to.

Mr Speaker, Sir, what I want is that if the Federal Government feels it cannot construct this road, it should return it to Benue State, and we will do it ourselves. But what is the purpose of taking a burden from somebody when you know you cannot help him. For instance, you want to help somebody who is carrying a heavy load, you just carry the load half way, and then drop it by the road side and go away. I think it is very bad. So, I would implore the Federal Government to do something about this road. Since so many people would like to speak on this Motion, I would stop so far.

**Mr Hassan Gambo (Mayo-Balwa):** I rise to support this Motion. In supporting this Motion, I wish to state that we understand the contract on these roads was given in 1975. Work started somewhere and stopped half way. That is why we are asking the Federal Government to help and continue the construction of these roads. We know the importance of roads. The advantages of the roads are so many. One of the advantages of these roads is that they link some areas from state to state and from village to village. For instance, the road from Calabar to Maiduguri links many States. It links the Cross River, Bornu and Gongola States. During the rainy season many of these States are cut away from the rest of the country, that is, communication wise due to absence of these roads. And without these road we cannot transport anything and we cannot travel from one place to another. We found out that the construction on these roads were stopped abruptly and the reason is best known to them. For instance, if you travel from Kaduna, Kano or Jos to get to Gongola State in the rainy season, is always a hell and a tug of war. Prizes of commodities rise during the rainy season. Something bought in Kaduna for 10k, if it gets to Gongola State would cost 40k simply because there is no road to transport these commodities to the States.

I am sure this House will support this Motion as it is a Motion of national interest and it is not sectional in any way. I think the Government started the work on these roads so as to help the common man and for no reason at all the job was stopped. We are now asking the Federal Government to sympathise with the people who live in these areas, and appreciate the importance of these roads in linking States, the constituencies and other villages around. Without these roads we would not survive.

Mr Speaker, with these few points I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr David Agi (Oju):** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, the Motion is a common one. All that can be said have already been said or are within common knowledge. The importance of roads in any society does not need to be over-emphasised. Through the development of good road networks, we can have

[MR AGI]

economic progress, we can have social contacts, we can have fertilization of ideas between various ethnic groups. In fact some of these roads that we have been talking about which are already in the books but have never taken off are roads that cut across states, and if they can be constructed a lot will be gained. In fact the oneness and unity that we always preach about can be brought about by infrastructural standards of this nature. For instance, the one that is most familiar to me among the roads we have been talking about is the Yahe/Oju Oturkpo Loko/Nassarawa which is of common interest to Cross River, Benue, Niger and Plateau States and in fact it is a road that is likely to go on until it ends at the new Federal Capital, Abuja.

I think, all along, the people who would have shared the benefits of these roads have been deprived their commercial contacts and trading that have been existing before these roads broke down.

Another element about the roads that we are talking about is that they had been constructed at one time, and they were motorable and usable for some span of time. The trouble now is that they have fallen into disuse and nobody is bothering to rehabilitate them again. The day that they are rehabilitated, not only will the economic and social life of the people be revamped, they will also contribute to the normal economic activities of the nation and thereby the country will be gaining in two scores.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is only fair that since some of these roads have been on the Plans right from the 1962 Second Development Plan or the First Development Plan, priority should be given to these roads so that they are actually finished with and then room can be made for new roads that have not yet been planned or surveyed or commissioned to come on to the Plans. It is only fair that what has already been planned and decided upon is executed rather than bringing in new elements which people do not see as any means of airness.

Mr Speaker, Sir, since there are so many of us and since the issue on this Motion are very well-known to everybody, I beg to stop and urge that it should be given the support it deserves.

**Mr Speaker :** The NPP will speak now. Let the Chairman of the Business Committee speak.

**Mr S. M. C. Ihekweazu (Nkwerre) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I think this is a very serious Motion, serious in the sense that it really affords us an opportunity to retrospect and probably review the progress so far made in a number of roads which we have commissioned and which are supposed to be in progress. With your very kind permission, Mr Speaker, I would like to read out some statistics, some reports on the roads which we have already commissioned within 1975 to 80 Development Year Programme.

The reports is as follows—

*In the first place it is a very sad thing that out of about 274 roads which the Federal Government set out to construct, only 10 out of that number have been 100 per cent or fully completed. It is not a very good thing. Then going to the States, the percentage of success in the construction of roads has also not been very encouraging. In fact*

*in a place like Anambra, we only have 15 per cent completed projects, Bauchi 13 per cent, Bendel 39 per cent, Benue the figures are not available, Borno 6 per cent, Cross River 18 per cent, Gongola the figures are not available, Imo 11 per cent, Kaduna 19.2 per cent, Kano the figures are not available, Kwara 10.1 per cent, Lagos 9 per cent, Ogun, Ondo the figures are not available, Oyo 9.9 per cent, Plateau 3.7 per cent, Rivers 11.4 per cent and Sokoto 13.6 per cent.*

This is what I think should really disturb the hon. Members because it is not enough to plan, it is not enough to marshal out a lot of things to be done and yet within a period we find that these things are not being done. The funny thing is that, the report on these roads from the Federal Government, some of the reasons why they have not been constructed are as follows : On some, they say the design is in progress, on another one, you hear in tender stage, then you hear fifteen per cent design you hear about consultancy works and services in progress, then you hear no appropriation in Capital Estimates, then you hear about designs yet to be commissioned, you hear another one just started, you have memo in preparation, tenders received, feasibility studies commissioned, and things like that.

Gentlemen, these things are not good. They cannot make anybody happy. By the Federal Government as a whole, we have only about 19 per cent achieved. Out of the nineteen per cent achieved by the Federal Government, they have paid out about 33.4 per cent in terms of money which means for 19 per cent or work done, 33.4 per cent has been paid out in terms of physical cash, which is just about double the amount. We know that most of these projects have been abandoned. Most of them are not being carried on again. This is not what we want.

I am so pleased that the President, in his 100 days of service to the nation, address he specifically committed himself to building for this nation a network of roads. That is a total commitment, and I am sure all hon. Members here are equally and totally committed to building a network of roads for this country. We need them for communication, we need them for purposes of evacuating produce, for purposes of promoting inter-state trade, even for luxury, even for comfort. We have every reason to demand that these things should be done. But when the returns of performances and services are so far below what is expected within the State levels and even at the Federal level, hon. Members, I feel very distressed.

There is the most pathetic aspect of it. Let me talk about the war-affected areas within the Eastern States of Nigeria. For instance, the bridges on Onitsha to Enugu road are only ninety per cent completed ; the bridges on Aba to Oron road are fifty-nine per cent completed ; the bridges on Enugu to Abakaliki road are eighty-six per cent completed ; the bridges on Umuahia to Okigwe road are ninety-nine per cent completed. This is ten years after the civil war. We have not been able to bring back the bridges to their pre-war standard. These things are no good to a nation as big as ours. I hope it would be improved in no time.

Finally, I do not think the anxiety is to get a particular lane, or footpath, or road by one's house to the village, in the scheme at this level. We should be more concerned with getting the proper roads in and when they are in, we should make sure that, within a given period, they are really executed.

Hon. Members, I very much support this Motion and I appeal to the Committee to make sure that not only are we resolving that this thing should be done, we do not want a return of nineteen or twenty *per cent*. We really want a hundred *per cent* return by the time we talk about this thing in the next reasonable period.

Mr Speaker, Sir, Hon. Members, I support the Motion. I have not talked about my own constituency because it is not even in the scheme, but that would be a bit parochial. Let us get done what we have envisaged; if that much is done, I am sure that I would also benefit either directly or indirectly. I hope by that time, you would not forget my own constituency.

Thank you very much.

**Mr Abdulkadir Zakari (Wase)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I am pleased to have a chance to speak on this Motion today.

This Motion, on road construction, is a very vital issue in the whole country. In fact, we could see that we have about 278, in serial numbers, bridges and roads from the Ministry of Works ; but yet, very few of them have been mentioned by previous speakers as having been completed. Now, the fact is that most of these areas still suffer a lot. The farmers, the State Governments and the Federal Government still lose a lot due to lack of construction of these roads. You would observe that in most of these areas, because of lack of construction of roads, we are unable to evacuate most of our produce. In most of these areas, once the produce gets to the Produce Board, you would find that up till the middle of the rainy season, the produce would still be lying down in the buying stations. If you ask the transporters to convey the produce they would refuse to go because of the amount of money charged on transportation which renders them unable to make any profit. The exorbitant transport charge is due to the bad condition of the roads.

I hope this House would give a serious consideration to road construction in this coming 5-year Development Plan. Again, I would like to point out that in this country today, you would still find that there are some areas, like the Local Government Council Headquarters, which have not got tarred roads to link the Local Government Council Headquarters with their State Headquarters. For example, in my own constituency, up till now, the road linking the LGC Headquarters with the State Headquarters is not tarred. That road had been surveyed as far back as 1938. The proposal then was that that road would be a rail road linking Lafia with Borno. At a stage, we were told that this road was a Federal motor road and not a rail road. When my people asked about this linking road (the one linking the LGC Headquarters with the State Headquarters) they were told that that road was a Federal road.

I hope this House would stand firmly and see that those proposed roads in the previous 5-year Development Plan would be executed within this coming 5-year Development Plan.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I support this Motion. Thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, anybody from GNPP ?

**Mr David H. Gbaaondo (Takum)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, it is very disgraceful that our roads are not good for economic and social activities in this country, especially in the northern parts of this country. I believe that on every Federal issue, we of the Northern States used to be very unfortunate.

The so-called existing and projected Trunk 'A' roads, under the Federal Ministry of Works, are never handled with serious concern. Some of the so-called existing ones have not been tarred ; trees have not even been removed from some of them. Yet, these roads are called Trunk 'A' roads. I would mention some roads, for example. The road from Gboko to Katsina Ala, Takum, Bali, Mai Fula and Jalingo, has not been constructed. Another one is from Takum to Bissaula planned to link with Nkambe and Wum in the Cameroun Republic but nothing has been done about this, too. The projected ones have either not been completed or have not been done at all. For example, the one from Ikom-Adikpo-Katsina Ala-Zaki Beam-Wukari-Mutum Biu-Jalingo-Numan-Biu and then to Maiduguri has not been constructed as well. The same thing goes for the one from Gembu-Ngoroji, Mayo Selbe, Serti, Gange, Mayo Belwa, and Yola. Another one is the one from Okene-Lokoja-Abuja and Kaduna.

Some of these roads are highly important for cattle transportation from the North to the South. Mr Speaker, another one is with the Serial No. 32, that is, Jikoro South ; the other one is with the Serial No. 263, which is Sawa to Mubi and Bukus. We are not only asking the Federal Government to ask those concerned to do these roads with immediate effect, but we want to see that within this one year, these roads are done, especially that they were planned as far back as 1975. It is now too long for these roads to be completed.

If the said Federal roads are completed, I believe that we shall boost our economic activities in this country, especially at a place like Baisa, where we have timber industry, *et cetera*.

With these few comments, Mr Speaker, I appeal to this House to support this Motion and urge His Excellency, the President of this country, to order the completion of these Federal roads which were designed in the 1975-80 Development Plan without further delay.

Thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, the time is getting to one o'clock. This Motion is not controversial ; there is no point coming back to it tomorrow to resume the debate on it. However, if you like, we would leave it till tomorrow in order to continue our debate on it. Already, the time is one o'clock, we would come back to it so that if anybody wants to speak on the Motion, he would be able to do so. (*Interruptions*)



[MR SPEAKER]

All right, Alhaji Kaltungo, you may wish to put the Question.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I move that the Question be now put.

**An hon. Member** : I beg to second.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question put and agreed to.*

**Resolved** : That in view of the economic importance of road development, this House urges the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to expedite action on the construction of all Federal roads whose designs have been commissioned as contained both in the 1975-80 Third Development Plan and the Second Report on the said Plan.

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, we are having a problem with our Chief Accountant. Yesterday, he directed that tax should be deducted as from the 1st of October, 1979, from the little bit we have been given for the past few months. I called him and warned him before some hon. Members in my office that tax deductions must not be made. I warned him. I have been informed again that because of that warning he has refused to prepare the voucher for the payment of whatever we now receive. (*Interruptions*) I understand (I have not really made the investigation) that even whatever we are paid for February has not been fully paid to Members. I am asking the Party Leaders to please meet in my Office. I have sent for him so that he will come and explain to us. This is an independent establishment. We do not depend on the Executive. If he does not want to work with us let him go back to the Civil Service.

*The House adjourned at 1 p.m. without Question put pursuant to Standing Order 5 (7).*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Wednesday, 5th March, 1980

The House met at 10.30 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**The Speaker :** Hon. Members, let us hear the leader of the House.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo** (Tangale Waja South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to move that the Standing Order 19 be suspended so as to enable a Motion on Zimbabwe to be tabled this morning.

**The Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Olusola Afolabi** (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to second.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That the Standing Order 19 (b) be suspended to enable this House debate the development in Zimbabwe.

**The Speaker :** The Chairman of the Committee on External Affairs.

ZIMBABWE—CONGRATS MR MUGABE

**Alhaji Sani Abubakar** (Roni) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to move the Motion congratulating Mr Mugabe as a victorious winner of Zimbabwe's election which was held last week. I beg to move that this House notes with great pleasure the result of the recent election in Zimbabwe and to congratulate Mr Robert Mugabe on his landslide victory and further request the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to take all necessary steps to ensure a peaceful formation of an effective Government in Zimbabwe without delay.

I beg to move.

**The Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Prince J. S. Sangha** (Bori I) : I rise to second the Motion.

**Alhaji Sani Abubakar :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, this is a great victory for all African States. Mr Mugabe's election as the Prime Minister of Zimbabwe indicates that there is, and there will be, very soon a total liberation of the African Continent. This indicates that there is no doubt about this, and we must stand on our feet. I am also appealing to the Federal Government and all the five African front line states to support Mr Mugabe, and also support the black Africans to liberate Namibia and South Africa by all means—financially, morally, militarily, and anything possible we can do. I hope we shall continue with this type of support for our brothers and sisters of the African Continent.

Hon. Members, it is high time for us to realise this type of axe to grind attitudes of the whites—discrimination—and we must fight, whether we like it or not, to liberate our sisters and brothers of African continent more especially in South Africa and Namibia. We have to support them with everything at our command to liberate them.

With this small contribution, I beg to move.

**The Speaker :** Thank you.

**Prince J. S. Sangha** (Bori I) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Colleagues I see the victory in Zimbabwe as a means to the total emancipation of all black Africa. I am pleased with the victory because we thought that Mr Mugabe had no chance under the Soam's administration of coming close to victory, except that the good people of Zimbabwe, after a very bloody war, knew that their salvation lay in their hands and they did exactly what was expected of them. I think, apart from congratulating Mr Mugabe himself, we should also extend our hearty congratulations to the good people of Zimbabwe.

A signal has been sent to Britain and all their colonial mentors that the question of the total liberation of Africa is a matter of time, and there could not have been any other clear vindication than what has taken place in Zimbabwe at the door-step of South Africa. The people of South Africa may hasten to learn their lesson that solutions arrived at around a mahogany table is better than any further shooting. This should impel them to move out, along with their shades of imperialism, from Namibia and South Africa before it is too late. The victory of Zimbabwe is a victory for Africa, but I regret that Dr Nkrumah is not alive to see this victory, but all the same I thank all the African States that have thrown their support behind the liberation fighters. I thank all other foreign powers that gave support for this noble cause.

With this, Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to support this Motion.

**The Speaker :** Let us hear from NPN member.

**Mr D. A. Ukpong** (Itu) : I am particularly happy because the principle of self-determination is exemplified in Mugabe's victory in the elections. For a long time, we know how the rascists regime in Zimbabwe had dehumanised and demoralised the Africans in Zimbabwe. The result was that they were driven into guerilla war-fares, they had fought and many lives were lost. Lord Soames and the British Government never believed that the people of Zimbabwe could be liberated in this way. Today, I believe, we have every cause to rejoice because the OAU is now going to have the 49th Member State. With this, I believe that Africa is moving in the right perspective. I believe, as a Colleague has said, the victory is a real warning to the government in South Africa because there is a limit whereby you can oppress a people : once they come to the awareness of self determination, no matter how you try to frustrate them you cannot quench this determination.

So, I want to join my Colleagues in saying that this Nation is proud, is happy and will ever remain to jubilate over the results of the elections in Zimbabwe. Thank you.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, I have just been informed that the co-Movers of the Motion would like to say something. I made a mistake in overlooking them.

**Mr M. A. Olukoya (Ijebu-Ode) :** Sir, I rise to support the Motion congratulating the Prime Minister-elect and sending a message to the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to do all within his power to ensure that the new government of Mugabe in Zimbabwe takes off, without a hitch.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the issue of the results of the elections in Zimbabwe could be traced to the Zambian declaration of 1975 which, in effect, enjoined the Front Line States to ensure the liberation of that country. Mr Speaker, Sir, it is my view that we should, first of all, send our congratulatory messages to the Front Line States because without them, the results of the elections or what we have now would not have been possible.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I also say that the Nigerian Government, from 1975, through its dynamic foreign policy has shouldered a lot of responsibility in respect of the liberation struggles in Zimbabwe, both financially and morally. The results of the elections within the past few days, culminated in this achievement for the African States and for all lovers of democracy throughout the world. And I would say, Sir, that it is also a defeat for racism and reactionary forces in Africa. Mr Speaker, Sir, the results also reveal to everyone of us, especially the black Africans, that Abel Muzorewa was imposed on the people of Zimbabwe in the June elections of 1978. This is evident from the fact that, of the 80 seats reserved for black Africans, he could only capture 3, and the co-nationalist Joshua Nkomo scored 20 seats while our man, the devoted nationalist and one of the Front Line nationalists that we have in Africa, Robert Mugabe, scored 57 seats.

Mr Speaker, Sir, in rounding up, I would again call on the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to do all within his power to support the new government of the nationalist Mugabe. Thank you.

**Mr David Atta (Okpokwu East) :** I rise to support the Motion requesting that we do congratulate the people of Zimbabwe for the historic victory they have just recorded in the recently concluded elections there. I very much want us to congratulate ourselves too for our concern. This honourable House had earlier on, mandated its Committee on Foreign Relations to seek ways and means to ensure that the elections in Zimbabwe were held under a free and fair atmosphere. And this has just happened. So, our dream has come through.

I very much like to congratulate the heroic people of Zimbabwe for their resilience and for their determination without which the pleasant development which we are witnessing in Zimbabwe today would not have been a possibility.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to remind ourselves that we should not forget ourselves in this moment of joy because of the many problems attendant to the newly found freedom in Zimbabwe. I have in mind, the possible passive resistance by the anti-democratic

forces that have been referred to. So, I am calling on the Nigerian Government to be on the alert. The struggle has just begun, South Africa is there on the lurk witnessing development in Zimbabwe because the victory there is a drum signal to the inevitability of change even in South Africa, Namibia and other places that are still under colonial bondage.

On this note, Mr Speaker, I would very much like to congratulate all of us, particularly the Front Line States as some of my Colleagues have said. Without their consciousness of their responsibility, the victory would not have been a possibility.

Thank you, very much.

**Mr Hamza M. Ngadiwa (Biu North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, despite international politics of blackmail, victimization and gimmickery, democracy took a natural course in the last elections in Zimbabwe. The victory of Robert Mugabe of the Patriotic Front followed by that of Nkomo is a victory for black men all over the world. It is a victory against colonialism in Africa. It is the beginning of an end of the situation now obtainable in Namibia and Azania.

We should therefore join countries all over the world in congratulating, first and foremost, the Patriotic Front Leaders, secondly, the Front Line States, who steadfastly stood by the side of the Patriotic Front Leaders morally and otherwise, and also all well-meaning African States who, by all means, stood by the side of the Patriotic Front Leaders to see that victory was unanimous in the last elections in Zimbabwe.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to say that the government of Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe is a threat to South Africa. It is a threat to those people who are engaged in ideological conflict in Africa. Africa is the threshold of ideological conflict between the East and the West.

Mr Speaker, Sir, this is a warning to the African countries : that the survival of Robert Mugabe's Government in Zimbabwe should be a must. We should rally round Mugabe to make sure that his government survives the threat of international gangsterism.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to say that the House Foreign Committee should recommend to our President ways and means whereby Nigeria could participate fully, including if possible sending military aid, to make sure that the government of Robert Mugabe survives in that part of Africa.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to appeal to Members that we should not only give moral support to Robert Mugabe but should, if possible, include financial sacrifice to make sure that his government survives the threat of subversion from outside world. Thank you, Mr Speaker. (*Applause*)

**Mr Sule Lamido (Birnin Kudu) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, in associating myself with the submissions of all the speakers, I would like to pinpoint one salient aspect of these past elections. This is the role Nigeria played in the liberation of Zimbabwe. We are lucky that we have been able to establish that Nigeria is now a force to reckon with in Africa.

If you go back to 1975, and see the stand that our late General Muhammed took on MPLA in Angola, this stand alone tilted the balance of imperialism in Africa. This time we are in Rhodesia where the latest, the newest born baby of Africa, which is Zimbabwe, is born with Nigeria's moral, military and financial support.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, with this our new-born status, I want our country to be very careful. We have now emerged as a force in Africa. Where we talk the imperialist will normally shake. We must continue with this our stand progressively so that we do not get deceived or influenced by the reactionary forces of the Imperialist West. I am saying this because of the last development.

I saw a paper where Nigeria accorded recognition to South Korea. We took a stand on that. We have at all times been believing and accepting that any country has the right to settle her own internal problems. We have been according recognition to North Korea. But to my surprise, Nigeria, because of the superficial trade deal on rice and other commodities, is now trying to accord recognition to South Korea. We must take a stand. Our giant foot is now going around all over the globe. If we step people normally react.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, I am only asking the Nigerian government and this House, to make sure that on such issues, because of our latest new found status in international politics, we should learn to be very careful and put the dignity and respect of the black man first and foremost before we do anything.

Thank you, very much.

**Professor O. Ola** (Ekiti West): Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Ladies and Gentlemen, I rise to support, along with my hon. Friends, the Motion on the Floor sending congratulatory messages to Premier Mugabe of Zimbabwe. I think, Ladies and Gentlemen, this is a fruit that is worthy of all the labours of the Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe. We notice that in the last few years the people of Zimbabwe led by Mugabe and Nkomo have been fighting for the freedom of Zimbabwe and it is just right and meet that they should deserve this great harvest of fighting for freedom.

I would like to note, as my hon. Friend over there said, that no condition of slavery or colonialism is permanent. When the imperialists and the overlords assume that they have perpetual and eternal right over the lives of others, they are mistaken. And this is a lesson to all those who are still interested in holding down the black people: that they are just day-dreaming and deceiving themselves, that the right of all human beings and the right of the black people is freedom like the other races of mankind.

Having said that, Sir, I would like us to note, and to send this lesson of morals to the people of Zimbabwe, that this is not just the moment for rejoicing, it is not just the day dawn of the new glory but really it is a dawn of the new opportunity, the dawn of a new era for progress and transformation, and this is what it should be.

Mr Mugabe should not forget himself that he has got a mission of giving true freedom to all the people of Zimbabwe, not just the aristocrats and the elites of the ZANU people, but to everybody so that the socialism and the humanism that he has fought for on the battle field are truly realised in Zimbabwe. I also think that he will take this opportunity to truly develop the economy, the education and the unity of the Zimbabwe people so that the freedom and the independence that he has fought for may be brought to the doorsteps of everybody.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like us also to note, as independent African people, and as hon. Mr Atta has suggested, that in the moment of joy, in this honey-moon of self congratulations, we should not forget the lessons of independence; that as Zimbabwe people today are free, they should not let the honey-moon turn into a sour country of disunity and oppression. We have to note here, Sir, that the last two decades of independence in Africa have not been truly meaningful to all the common people of Africa. In some countries, and in fact in many, freedom has become trouble-dom and it has meant oppression and lack of opportunity for the common man. In Zimbabwe, this should not be so.

Finally, Mr Speaker, Sir, having given me the chance and not to discourage you, I have to say that the independence of Zimbabwe is only the beginning of the total liberation of the black people and of black Africa. We should use Zimbabwe as the stepping stone to the liberation of the black people of South Africa. I know that Zimbabwe, Nigeria, and all the radical progressive African countries, will now rally round, not only in creating a high command of the OAU, but in forming a new radical liberation movement that will utilise the same tactics that Mugabe has used in order to free the people of South Africa. We should not forget that the last bastion of oppression in the whole world are the people of South Africa; and we should not rest. Neither we here in Nigeria nor Mugabe's Zimbabwe should rest until all the Black people in South Africa are free. If we can do this, Sir, then the freedom of Zimbabwe, as well as the freedom of Nigeria, will be meaningful, and we will be acting in the true lesson and principle that have been left to us by the late Kwame Nkrumah that the freedom of no country is meaningful and ultimate until all Black peoples are free.

Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam** (Oron II): Mr Speaker, Sir, speaking in support of this Motion, I want to congratulate the hon. Members of this august House for the patriotic and anti-imperialist posture they have taken on the question of national liberation movement in Africa. I think it was as a result of the Motion which was adopted in this august House, that the awareness of the Nigerian people on the question of Zimbabwe had increased.

I am very happy about the victory of Comrade Mugabe in the struggle to liberate his people the depressed people of Zimbabwe. Mugabe that I used to know in the former Ideological Institute in Ghana, is a product of that great African Revolutionary, that great patriot Osagyefo, Dr Kwame

[MR ETIENAM]

Nkurumah, of blessed memory whose efforts, whose sacrifices had helped to stem the course of liberation movement in the continent of Africa.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Zimbabwe victory marks the dawn of a new era in the course of African Revolution. The victory of the Patriots of Zimbabwe is a victory of the African people. It is not enough to rejoice with Comrade Mugabe and his other colleagues. I think that vigilance is very necessary at this moment, because the imperialist forces are unhappy about the happy development in Zimbabwe.

It is not enough for us, for our government, for our Head of State, to send a message of congratulation to the people of Zimbabwe. I want to submit, Sir, with the greatest respect, that in order to demonstrate our position as a Black Power nation, we should donate a battalion of the Nigerian Army to the liberating forces of Zimbabwe to serve as a nucleus of the African High Command. When the enemies of Zimbabwe freedom are aware that Nigeria is committed militarily to sustain the independence of Zimbabwe, I think they will think twice before attempting any intervention.

Mr Speaker, Sir, let us not deceive ourselves by believing that South Africa will take the victory of the Patriotic Front the way we have taken it. Let us not rule out the possibility of a *coup* engineered either in White Hall, or somewhere in Western Europe, against the progressive forces in Zimbabwe.

We should realise that all the armed forces of Zimbabwe are dominated by White elements in that country. If there is an attempt to overthrow the Patriotic Front Government of Comrade Mugabe, what is going to be the position of Nigeria? Let us forget about the OAU for a moment in this matter. I feel Nigeria should give a Leadership. In conjunction with the Front Line States, Nigeria should think of military support for Mugabe. There should be no delay about this, because the true independence of Zimbabwe means the eventual independence of Namibia and South Africa itself.

We should send a team immediately to provide material and military support to Mugabe and his Group. Nigerian Government should send a high-powered delegation to Zimbabwe so that we can witness the installation of Comrade Mugabe as the first President of that great Africa Nation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to say that the Constitution of Nigeria on foreign policy is well in support of the submissions I have made. Whatever contribution the Nigerian Government will make in this regard will be in direct pursuance of the foreign policy objectives of our Constitution which are contained in Section 19 of the Constitution.

There is no time for anybody to sit on the fence on this situation. I think the time has now come for us to demonstrate that we cannot only bark but we can also bite. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**Dr E. C. Emekekwe** (Onitsha South): Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion.

Barely twenty-four hours ago, we of this House were shedding tears for our own country men who

were done to death by our own people. Is it not ironical that we are now jubilating on behalf of members of our own race who are about to be liberated from the forces of imperialism, a liberation that was achieved in the face of insurmountable odds, in the face of the full gravity of the wealth, knowledge, might and superiority, in many other respects, of both British and American imperialism, in the face of the hypocrisy of the British who, on the one hand and at one stage, approved sanctions against Rhodesia but made sure that under no circumstances could those sanctions ever bite, in the face of American indecision, American inability to back African nationalism. It is unbelievable that a handful of poorly armed and poorly trained Africans, whose sole weapon was their determination to fight and to be free, were able to defeat such formidable odds.

We salute Premier-elect Robert Mugabe; we salute Joshua Nkomo; we even have to salute Bishop Muzorewa. (*Interruptions*)

Bishop Muzorewa has epitomised what the poet John Milton had said that *They also served who only stand and wait*. He played his own part by holding the line while he waited for his own brothers to advance and to rout the enemies. These are our own nationalists and we are proud of them.

But let us, in congratulating Mugabe, send him a note of warning because I see him about to sign his own death warrant. It is very good to be magnanimous at the time of victory but that can be very easily over-done. We must advise him to find ways and means of liquidating those forces of imperialism that are now surrounding him. I have to be specific; General Peter Walls has got to be put away one way or the other. He can never serve the best interest of Zimbabwe, and there are people like that he is now about to bring into his own government. It is good to be magnanimous but it can be done very wisely.

With these remarks, Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I beg to support the Motion.

**Dr Junaidu Muhammed** (West Ward): Mr Speaker, Sir, first and foremost, I would like to associate myself with the sentiments expressed by both the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of this House, his co-sponsors of this Motion and the House for congratulating Mr Robert Mugabe, the leader of the Zanu (PF) for overwhelmingly winning the last elections in Zimbabwe. I am sure Mr Mugabe does appreciate that he has won these elections with the support of a number of countries in Africa, whose material, moral and diplomatic support have been indispensable in making his victory in the last elections a possibility.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, Sir, in winning this overwhelming victory, Mr Robert Mugabe does realise, and I think this House must appreciate the fact that, winning Zimbabwe is not the end of the story; it is not the end of imperialism or apartheid in South Africa. It is merely the beginning of the struggle. We are all aware of the fact that up to this moment, there are South African, New Zealand, Australian and Canadian mercenaries

on the territory of Zimbabwe and Mr Robert Mugabe did express concern about this. In a press statement in Mozambique he said he would like some of the Commonwealth Observer Troops to remain until he is able to establish a new law and a new society on the manifesto of which his party went into the elections.

Mr Speaker, Sir, some time in the past in this House, my hon. Colleagues, Alhaji Abubakar Tuggar, and myself had occasion to raise the issue of South Africa becoming a nuclear power. Unfortunately to date, neither the Federal Government nor the President has seen it fit to come out with a statement stating clearly how Nigeria is going to re-act to this outrage. Mr Speaker, Sir, as I said then and I would like to repeat now, no country in Africa can feel safe with South Africa having a massive nuclear arsenal that has the weaponry and the rocket capability that can throw rocket from Cape Town to Cairo or from Senegal to somewhere on the horn of Africa. Mr Speaker, Sir, the example of Isreal, another country as I said then, whose global interests are in direct and diametrical opposition to ours, has helped tremendously in making sure that South Africa is a world power. We are well informed that a lot of the tactics South Africa is using in crushing some of the Liberation Movements within South Africa have been borrowed from Isreal. I think we must address ourselves seriously to this blackmail and find how adequately we can react to it.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am utterly convinced that Nigeria has the men, the materials, the economic and the industrial base to become a nuclear power. The task before the black man is for Nigeria, a truly African State, to expand whatever resources she has available, whatever she can, to make sure that she repels this blackmail in adequate terms. In the words of international strategists, the only reply to nuclear blackmail is what we call MAD, Mutual Assured Destruction, on the attainment of nuclear parity. So long as another country that is at war with us covertly or overtly has a nuclear arsenal, we cannot feel safe and I am sure our field for manoeuvre, diplomatic or governmental, is certainly limited.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to address myself to one vital issue that has plagued many African Countries. It is one thing to win independence, to condemn colonialism, imperialism, foreign interventions, apartheid and what-not, it is another thing to establish a good government that is worthy of the name. I do hope Mr Robert Mugabe, while trying to consolidate his power and his newly won victory, will also address himself to the serious issue of re-directing the economy instead of creating a small elitist bourgeois class that will dominate the economy of Zimbabwe. It is a very rich country with chrome, coffee and all what have you, but the riches would have come to nought if the ordinary people of Zimbabwe are not given the opportunity to enjoy these riches.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to support the Motion. Thank you.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East)** : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, before moving that the Question be now put, I also wish to extend my congratulations to Mr Robert Mugabe and all the people of Zimbabwe.

With your permission, I now move that the Question be formally put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That this House notes with great pleasure the results of the recent elections in Zimbabwe and congratulates Mr Robert Mugabe on his landslide victory and further requests the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to take all necessary steps to ensure a peaceful formation of an effective government in Zimbabwe without delay.

### Car Loan

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, before we go on with today's Order Paper, I would like to announce that I have just heard from the Office of the Vice-President that our car loan is now ready and the money will be available from Thursday the 6th of March, 1980, that is tomorrow. So, the Party Leaders should please meet in my office so that I would let you know the details.

### MOTICES OF MOTIONS

#### Rail Services Linking All State Capitals

**Mr Speaker** : The Motion stands in the name of hon. Mr Patrick E. Ogida and four others.

**Mr Patrick E. Ogida (Oredo)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I had earlier on intended to defer this Motion but my co-Movers are itching for action, so I have to take it up. Mr Speaker, Sir, the Motion reads as follows :

That in pursuance of Sections 15 (3) (a) and 16 (2) (a) of the Nigerian Constitution, this House directs the Committee on Transportation to seek ways and means of extending rail services to link up all the Capitals of the States of the Federation within the next development plan period.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker** : Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Alhaji Isa Rilwanu (Isa)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : The hon. Member for Oredo (*Mr P. Eguaseki Ogida*), you can now speak on your Motion.

**Mr Ogida** : Mr Speaker, Sir, a resurgent nation like Nigeria, when she thinks of a sound economy, it has to be accompanied with a sound transport system, efficient transport system. This is quite known to the present Administration ; hence the introduction of a programme which will bring about the linking up of all the State capitals by rail system before the end of this century. It is a five Plan-period programme, but Mr Speaker, I am of the opinion that if effort is made, it is a programme that could be given a crash approach.

[MR OGIDA]

To start with, Mr Speaker, I would like to refer to a press statement by the hon. Minister, Alhaji Umaru Dikko, on the 14th of last month. This is a portion of it :

*Plans are currently under review to develop new lines that will open up the country and integrate the National economy on a web of steel. Before long, I shall present to Government a comprehensive master-plan to link all ports, all state capitals, and the New Federal Capital, Abuja, with a modern railway network on the standard gauge. This is an ambitious project which, if accepted, will have to be phased over five plan periods.*

Mr Speaker, Sir, what should concern the present Administration mainly, as I see it, is the first phase of the programme, that is between the period 1979-83. As also directed by the Constitution, distribution of national wealth is so clearly stated. At the moment, on the two existing lines, we have thirteen State capitals. With the first phase, we are going to have additional three State capitals, making sixteen. Three will be left out and these three State capitals are Yola of Gongola State, Owerri of Imo State, and Benin-City of Bendel State.

I am of the opinion that if effort is made, a system, which I would describe, with development sequence, can surely bring up the other three State capitals to be involved in the first phase project. Mr Speaker, Sir, at the moment, we all know the importance of rail system in the country. I have it on good authority, that since the takeover of our rail system by the RITES of India, there has been a bit of progress. We always look at rail system as only a means of transportation. If it is taken as an industry, just as it is done in India, much importance will surely be attached to it. In India today, the rail system which actually started to be in full swing as from 1951, has a working staff of 1.7 million. Ours came up in 1955 by the Railway Act of 1955. Today, we have between 30,000 and 35,000 working staff.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the other three States which I talked of, Gongola State, Imo State and Bendel State especially Gongola State and Bendel State, are treated with disregard on the ground that maybe there are no traffic freight which would warrant the use of rail transport system. Nevertheless, there are human beings in these areas. In these areas you have ramshackle buses and the killer-lorries are still in use. If you see these killer lorries on the road, you may find one which ought to take a load of passengers of about fifty carrying on hundred. In a nation like ours where we talk of civilization, I believe it is necessary that the rail system should be given a pattern as soon as possible. As I have said earlier, with the aid of the RITES of India, we can achieve much. Maybe the five Plan-period programme can be squeezed into two Plan-period programme.

Mr Speaker, Sir, thank you very much.

Mr Speaker : Yes, the next co-Mover.

Mr M. Femi Okun (Owan) : Mr Speaker, Sir, in making my own contribution, I wish to say that this Motion has become very necessary in

view of the rapid development which is going on now in the country under the dynamic Government and which has brought to light the need for the extension of rail services to all the State capitals of the Federation. Whereas the present Railway system serves only a very few States thus providing very few cross-country facilities, there will also be the need for this honourable House to consider the essence in extending rail services to all the State capitals of the Federation. In the new Railway network standard gauge project, as at now only sixteen State capitals have been linked up leaving out Owerri, Yola and Benin. This Motion is, therefore, requesting this honourable House to ensure that Railway services are extended to all State capitals including Benin, Yola and Owerri.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the need to connect capitals of all the States in the Federation is important because other lines in other State capitals to which the Railway services have been extended correspond to the major economic and political development of the future and as of now.

Mr Speaker, Sir, if you may permit me, I will read, So far the proposed lines are, as you will see in annexure 20 of the map being distributed, you have first, Oturkpo—Ajaokuta line ; second, Ajaokuta—Ibadan line ; third, Minna—Federal Capital—Lafia line ; fourth, Gusau—Sokoto line ; and fifth, Umuahia—Calabar line.

There are also political, social and economic benefits to be derived from the extension of railway services to all the State Capitals in the Federation.

Politically, you will agree with me that the people themselves desire to have railway services, and it will no doubt be a mark of political wisdom on the part of the government to endear these people to the first Government that would meet the desired need of these people by providing them with rail services.

Socially, you will also agree with me that it is not going to be a humour if one says that one of the benefits to be derived from the extension of rail services is that it will make our children see in reality what they had hitherto seen as diagrams of rail services. They can now see them physically and really know how rail services are being conducted in the country.

Economically, for example, Bendel State is an oil-producing State which together with the new Steel plant about to start functioning will both require railway services for the distribution of the products throughout the Country.

I refer you to Annexure 21 of the standard gauge network which I had mentioned earlier on as the extension of rail services to sixteen State Capitals, excepting three which are : Imo, Gongola, and Bendel States. When you look at the key, you will see the existing lines and the proposed new lines of the standard gauge network. The proposed lines are being submitted to this honourable House in Annexure 21. You will find that from Akure, you can link Benin and even the important port of Warri up to Port Harcourt. In Imo State, you can, from Enugu, connect Awka, Orlu and Owerri ; and then from Gongola, you can connect Gombe Numa and Yola.

If you look at Annexure 20, you will find these three State Capitals were omitted. That being so, I want to say that the Government has just announced its intention to expand the port in Warri in order to reduce the heavy loads in Lagos port, and to be able to evacuate the savannah and forest products of both the interior and the riverine areas.

So, there is the need for you to see the practicability in this Motion requesting this honourable House to urge the Government or the N.R.C. to effect the extension of rail services to all the State Capitals in this country.

The next railway standard gauge project was carried out by a foreign firm known as Societe Francaise and Etudes et Realisations Ferroviaires (Sofreail). They recommended buses and container services for these other three States. I would regard this as a mistake as a result of both administrative and professional blunders, although this might be regarded as an excusable ignorance because in the exercise, they were on the voyage of discovery, not really knowing the consequences, political, social, and economic it would have on the people of this nation.

All the same, I will conclude that the non extension of rail services to all State Capitals in the Federation cannot politically be defended and socially, to me it looks discriminatory and economically, crippling and devastating.

With these few points, Mr Speaker, I would want this honourable House to give a massive support to this Motion which requests for the extension of rail services to every State Capital of the Federation.

**Mr E. C. Ebo** (Mbano East) : As a Mover of this Motion, Sir, I want to draw the attention of this honourable House to the fact that the rate of development of our railway since 1898 when it started its journey in Lagos, has not shown much improvement in spite of the fantastic amount of naira pumped into the Nigerian Railways.

I would like to draw the attention of hon. Members to page 528 of the approved Estimates of 1979/80, where you will discover that the sum of ₦987,272,500 was approved under the capital estimates for improvement of Nigerian Railways. This approved amount, Sir, you will discover, covers a very small portion of Nigeria. It covers Ajaokuta/Oturkpo railway line of which had ₦108 million ; the standard gauge construction—₦665,500,000 ; loans for projects on existing railway lines—₦199,676,000 ; subsidy to cover deficits on pension funds—₦1,193,300 ; containerisation—₦2,400,000 ; extension of North-East railway lines to Ashaka—₦10 million ; and sand filling of marshy grounds, Ebute-Metta railway station—₦1 million. This has given a total of ₦987,272,500.

It looks funny, Mr Speaker, when you look at the Plan implementation. How far was the plan implemented? If we read the Second Progress Report on the Third National Development Plan 1975-80, pages 79-80, you will discover that ₦37.9 million in respect of these projects has been disbursed.

This gives a financial performance ratio of 3.8. per cent, in visible terms 4 per cent. Mr speaker, Sir, that is why I say that it looks funny that Nigeria makes fantastic propositions when they have not got the capacity to implement their plans. What then shall we do ? We are really in trouble.

This type of material we are gathering now for the next plan period should not be a mere paper work. We want it implemented. If you look at this plan and the proposed lines of the standard gauge network which has been distributed to Members, I would like to draw your attention to the line from Calabar to Umuahia, and you will see that if you look at the plan, there is an empty space from Umuahia up to Akure. The planners of this new network of railways did not see that the most judicious line you have, that which goes from Lagos through Benin to Onitsha and to Owerri, carries the heaviest traffic in this country. Yet it did not occur to them that they should do something there. This is discrimination, Mr Speaker, and it should stop. Those who are discriminating against Nigeria should now stop it. People should not deceive others by paper work. They have to do something now because there is no corner in this country where you do not have people who know how to read and write.

So, Mr Speaker, Sir, in moving this motion, we want Nigeria to take note that we are out for the economic development of this country. We are not running away from it, and in doing so, there is no place that should be left out.

I am so pleased with the co-Movers of this Motion because they have remembered the three State Capitals that were omitted originally—Owerri, Yola and Benin. The new line I am proposing, Sir, is that which goes from Calabar to Umuahia, cutting through Onitsha to Ore and down to Lagos. This line will serve these two States that have been left out. Then a new line should be proposed to join Yola, In fact, I would not say that it should join Yola with Gombe, but I would say it should join Yola with Lafia because I do not know whether the Yola line will be going up or down, but if they go up that way, then a new line will have to join Gombe again with Kano, so that you get a straight line from Kano to Yola.

The people planning now should plan properly before they pump in Nigerian money into it. Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like us to remember that from 1898 when the railway started, in fact, the railway system started before 1914 which we regard as the year Nigeria started, but when you check up the area covered, you will only discover that you have only the North/South lines and you have not got the Cross lines which will join the East with the West. This is not good planning.

Secondly, Sir, the heavy industries we are siting like the cement, iron and other heavy industries we are establishing in those areas must be linked by a network of good railways to save our roads and to decongest them considerably. This time our emphasis will be on connecting States by railways and then the roads will connect the Federal Constituencies.



[Mr EBO]

The Federal Highways will now give up the connection of States. We have over-grown that one and what we want now is connecting Federal Constituencies with Federal roads, and then the States will be connected by railways. As soon as we connect the States with rail network, we will also be connecting all the States with Air Services.

That is my contribution, Mr Speaker, Sir, and I beg to support the Motion.

**Alhaji A. H. Enagi (Lavun)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to contribute to the Motion standing in my name and the names of other honourable Members. My contribution is that the importance of the railway transport system has already been enunciated by my co-Movers who spoke before me, and what I have to add is that it is my earnest desire, and I would like Members of this honourable House to join me in emphasising the need, for the construction of rail lines from Mokwa to the Federal Capital Territory. This line would pass through the most thickly populated area of Kwara State where a gigantic agricultural project is now taking place.

Well over ₦40 million is being spent there and I am sure that more money would be spent thereafter.

This call for the construction of the railway line, I would urge this House to support because, if constructed, it would be the shortest rail route to link the Federal Capital Territory with the Western part of the country.

With these few remarks, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr S. D. Kalgo (Bunza-Kalgo)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion, and in doing so I would like to say that in considering the railway system of transport one should address his mind to the following. First, easy transportation which is one of the major functions of a railway transport and secondly the carriage of foodstuff from the South to the North and from the North to the South in large quantities.

As at now, most of our foodstuffs brought from the North to the South or from the South to the North are carried in large trailers and turn-tables. With a rail line net-work linking all parts of the Federation, movement of persons and goods will be much easier and also, more importantly, it will help the transportation of food in large quantities and at cheaper cost from one part of the country to the other. Two, my own suggestion to the Committee concerned is the following places in the far north of the country. The Committees should start another line from Maiduguri to Kano, from Kano to Katsina in Kaduna, from Katsina to Kaura Namoda in Sokoto State through Dibia from Kaura Namoda to Sokoto, the capital of Sokoto State ; from Sokoto to Argungu to Birnin Kebbi to Jega through Kalgo ; from Jega to Yauri through Koko ; from Yauri to Kontagora from Kontagora to Minna and from Minna to Abuja, the Federal Capital.

The reason why I have mentioned these places is that, before the oil boom, we were getting our revenues from cocoa, cotton, groundnuts, hides

and skins. Most of these things are produced from the areas which I just mentioned above. It is only now that we have oil that we start neglecting the places from where we were formerly getting our revenue for the whole nation. I will remind you once more that the area which I have mentioned is one of the most important areas where we can get our cash and food crops from in the far north of this Federation. So, you should take this into consideration.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these remarks, I beg to take my seat. I hope that all hon. Members will support the Motion. Thank you.

**The Speaker** : Let us start with the NPN.

**Mr Ekok Ojogu (Ikom)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion. In supporting the Motion, I have to say that we must not just insist that the railway lines should link up only the new State Capitals, but we should also consider some other areas in this country that are of importance to the economic development of our country. There are some areas which are rich agriculturally but are completely left out. If you look at the map which was sent to us, you will discover that in future, the only two lines running from the north to the south will be over-loaded because all the produce from the north will come to the south only through these lines. For that reason, there should be another line running from the north to the south to make it possible for the produce to be evacuated easily through the ports in the south. I am, therefore, going to suggest that those who are responsible for planning the new railway system in the country should think of having a new line running from Maiduguri through Yola, through the whole stretch of Gongola State down to the Benue, then into the Cross River State through Ogoja, Ikom and then into the Calabar Port. If this is done, then, it will be possible to connect the agricultural areas of Gongola State to Cross River State and Benue.

So, the point which I am making here is that we should, by all means, not only focus our attention on the State Capitals, but also on the agriculturally rich areas of this country. We must also increase the number of lines running from the north to the south otherwise, the few ones we have now will be congested in the future.

Thank you, very much.

**The Speaker** : Thank you. Let us hear Dr Egberipou.

**Dr P. I. Egberipou (Yenegoa)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support this important Motion on the Floor of this honourable House. In supporting the Motion, I would like to make one salient suggestion. We should not, as my hon. Friend who has just spoken said, only concentrate on the State Capitals. We should build railway lines to connect very many important areas that have heavy traffic in the country. One of such areas is the railway line that has already been suggested, that is, from Akure to Benin, Warri and Port Harcourt. As you know, Warri and Port Harcourt are oil cities and there is a lot of traffic going on between these two cities. The country as a whole is losing

[Mr Egberipou]

a lot of revenue to the oil companies who do shuttle service by using helicopters and small aeroplanes. If there was a standard gauge system connecting Warri to Port Harcourt, we would have had the opportunity of getting these oil tycoons to use these lines and this would have brought a lot of revenue to the country.

Also, it is very important that this country should give thought to opening up the Niger Delta. A railway line connecting Warri to Port Harcourt will go a long way to opening up the Niger Delta. If no conscious effort is made to open up the Delta by any means possible, the development of Nigeria will not be complete.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these few remarks, I beg to support the Motion. Thank you.

**The Speaker :** NPP.

**Mr J. Yamu Mallo (Akwanga) :** I wish to oppose this very Motion. From the information available to me, the Movers of this Motion have not actually satisfied this House on any profit motive ; instead, they are trying to use the State Capitals as the major criterion for building railway lines. It is very unfortunate that this should be so. The major reason for building railway lines in any place throughout the world is never based on its being the State Capital.

Railways carry very large and bulky commodities, and the building of railway lines saves the Government from investing huge amount of money on road construction. This factor must be taken into consideration. You take the case when the Europeans first came into this country. The consideration was to build the lines from Lagos to Kano because, at that time, Kano was producing a lot of groundnuts and cotton. For instance, take the case of people now asking for more states. Some people are asking for 30 states. Do we have to wait until more states are created before we begin to link up the state capitals? How can we build a road from Bauchi to Yola just because Yola is a state capital. Suppose by tomorrow Akwanga becomes a state capital, then we have to build another railway line from Kafanchan to Akwanga. I do not think that is fair.

I think the Movers of this Motion have not actually shown us whether the present system is profitable or not ; they simply say, it will help the people to move about. I think the majority of the people in this country hardly go by train. What we need in this country, if we want the mobility of people is to have the cheapest means of transport for the people.

We passed a Motion yesterday on the need to construct more roads in this country. Most of the people in this country use bicycles, motorcycles, cars and so on. So, what we need in this country actually are good roads instead of investing billions of Naira in the construction of more railway lines. We should actually invest the billions of Naira on road construction. We can also invest our money on inland waterways transportation. The people of the Rivers State will bear me out that they do not need railway lines there. What they need is massive investment on the improvement of inland waterways. (Applause)

Mr Speaker, Sir, building new railway line is not just a question of asking any engineer to go and build them. It takes about from two to five years for the feasibility study to be done. I think we will not be fair to ourselves and actually we are not going to do this country any good if we sit down here to discuss that more railway lines should be built.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Mr Inoh.

**Mr Mallo :** No, I have not finished.

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order ! I thought you have finished. Please, round up.

**Mr Mallo :** Mr Speaker, the Movers of this Motion seem to emphasize single gauge system. There is nowhere in the world now where we have that type of system. Mr Speaker, Sir, I implore the Movers of this Motion to withdraw it because we have other important issues to discuss. Thank you, very much.

**Mr A. A. Inoh (Ikot Abasi II) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion with reservation, in that the railway lines should be extended beyond state capitals. For instance, most of the state capitals cannot produce food which is the mainstay in this country. If the extension is to be carried out, I would strongly support that areas which are food producing should have railway links. For instance, if one goes to some parts of the Cross River and Imo States, it would be very difficult to find cows from the North. If the railway lines are extended to these States we can easily have meat from the North. It is also true that in the North you can hardly have fish in some areas, whereas in some parts of the Cross River State—

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Mr M. G. Alo Nwokeocha (Abakaliki East Central) :** My point of Order is Order 26 (2). The Motion is saying that this House directs the Committee on Transport to seek ways and means of extending the railway services to link up all the capitals of the States in the Federation, and not the food producing areas of the Federation.

**Mr Speaker :** Please restrict yourself to the terms of the Motion.

**Mr Inoh :** As I said, the links should be made beyond the state capitals, so that it will serve the nation well. In the Cross River State, we would like it to be extended to Okoro Ete and beyond to the Rivers State and then from there link the West.

I only support this Motion provided it links other areas, otherwise I do not support it.

**Mr Mohammed Lawal Na-Rogo (Karaye) :** I rise to oppose the Motion. Mr Speaker, Sir, if at all I am to do justice to it I would only support the views expressed by my humble Colleague of the NPP from the Plateau State in the person of hon. Mallo by opposing the Motion because of the enormity of funds that would be involved in this project.

[Mr NA-ROGO]

Mr Speaker, Sir, as I see it, the problem of the cocoa farmer in Oyo State, that of the palm kernel farmer in Anambra State and that of the groundnut farmer in Kano State is not the only problem that we have in this country. We have other priority projects to look at rather than carrying out prestigious projects which involve large sums of money.

Mr Speaker, Sir, we should try to get our priorities right. That is to say that, there are a lot of people who are suffering from starvation, diseases, infant mortality and what have you. We should think of these people instead of thinking of these prestigious projects simply because Mr X has this in his state and Mr Y does not have that in his State.

Mr Speaker, what I am saying is that we have to provide adequate drinking water to the generality of Nigerians, and medical facilities have to be in abundance. We also have to provide other basic necessities of life to our people.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Mr Z. Momodu (Etsako) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of order is Order 26 (2). We are not discussing about Water Resources here and how we are going to provide water to the people of this country. What we are here for is about the railway construction to all the State Capitals of this country. Already a map has been shown and additional Amendments made by most speakers. I am, therefore, calling on the hon. Member to confine himself to issues relevant to the subject matter.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes hon. Member, please confine yourself to the Motion.

**Mr Na-Rogo :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. It may be that my hon. Friend from Etsako area did not realise my stand. I rose first of all to oppose the Motion. I am just saying that the construction of railway lines to link the Federal Capital or Capitals of States is uncalled for at the moment. Let us look at other areas beneficial to all Nigerians in all walks of life, because this kind of project involves a lot of money and a lot of expenditure. This is my stand. Mr Speaker, Sir, let us concentrate on other basic necessities of life to our constituents. This is what I am saying, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, UPN hon. Member for Egba Alake. (*Mr Omidiji*)

**Mr Fola Omidiji (Egba Alake) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to oppose this Motion, and in doing so I am opposing it with every sense of responsibility to this country.

The Motion is asking for railway construction in this country. The Movers of the Motion have failed to tell this House the cost involved. They have not taken into consideration the manpower requirements and the time needed to complete it. It could have been a different thing if the Iron and Steel Project which the Federal Government has already committed itself to is in operation. Furthermore, the present railway system is being managed by Indians. I do not know whether the Movers of this Motion want this country to get Indians to manage perpetually the railway system of this country.

I am also of the opinion that this is one of the irrelevant Motions being brought to this House, that do not take into account what effect their implementation will have on the economy of this country; the repercussion on the balance of payment position. After the 1974 oil boom characterised by huge expenditures which the military government committed this country to, they went further to encourage what was popularly known as deficit financing. I would have thought that the Movers of this Motion should first of all think of the effect on our economy, particularly the Naira, if this type of expensive project is embarked upon. I think that the primary concern of the people of this country is to move from one place to the other. By this, I have road networks in mind.

We should encourage road networks so that our people would not continue to die in thousands on our roads. How many of us have been travelling by rail?

Finally, before I rose up on this Motion, I had the opportunity to get hold of one of the ex-officials of the railways, and he told me quite frankly that he considered this Motion as irrelevant because of the huge investment involved and I had to believe him. I, personally, think that it is an irrelevant Motion, and I beg the Speaker to put the Question.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I formally move that the question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question put and negatived.*

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order ! (Prolonged Interruptions)

### Lifting the Restriction on the Importation of Cars

**Mr Salisu Muazu Kanya (Babura) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name.

That in furtherance of the new policy of the Federal and State Governments in granting car loans to workers and considering the fact that cars assembled in Nigeria are limited in supply, this House calls on the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to lift the restriction on the importation of small and medium sized cars in the interest of Nigerian workers.

I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**An hon. Member :** I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Kanya :** Mr Speaker, Sir, the need for the supply of small cars in Nigeria is very great. If at all we are here to work for the interest of the common people in Nigeria, we should allow the importation of cars into Nigeria. All the States of Nigeria—

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Mr Kemte Giadom (Bori II) :** There is an Amendment on the Motion, and I think the Amendment should be disposed of first.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, I have seen that ; let him argue this Motion and then we listen to his Amendment.

**Mr Kanya** : All the States in Nigeria now are granting car loans to their workers, and the Members of all the States Assemblies in Nigeria are also receiving their own car loans. If we depend on the supply of peugeot cars which are assembled locally in Nigeria, the cost of one peugeot car will rise from ₦8,000 to even ₦13,000, because people do not buy these cars directly from the company assembling them. They go through middlemen who stock them and inflate the price.

I could remember that when the idea of assembling peugeot cars in Nigeria was first mooted, we were made to understand that there would be enough supply in Nigeria at the cheapest possible price. But to my surprise, peugeot cars that used to sell at ₦5,000 three years ago, has now risen to ₦8,500.

If I may digress to volkswagen cars which are also assembled locally, in the first place, that brand of car is very unacceptable to many people in this country. It is literally meant for two people ; it is not a family car. But, the majority of people who buy cars in Nigeria are family people. Right now, a large number of volkswagen cars are being bought by people, family ones inclusive. In order to make things easy for the people, we should allow competition in Nigeria. Two companies are now enjoying the benefits of monopoly, because they know that nobody is competing with them. So, they can afford to leave their products until such a time that people will surely come to buy according to the price dictated by them. This is a very serious situation in this country. If we say that we are protecting foreign exchange for the good of the people in Nigeria, we are deceiving ourselves. This is so because the foreign exchange we are reserving is only for the benefit of a few capitalists we have in this country.

We are here for the interest of the common man. So, we should allow competition to take place in this country. In this particular case, competition can take place if we allow small and medium-sized cars to be imported into the country to force the prices of cars down, because, according to the law of supply and demand, the higher the demand the higher the price ; the higher the supply the lower the price.

If we have enough vehicles in this country, we shall as well save a lot, because a car selling, say, for ₦9,000 could jolly well sell for ₦8,000 where there is competition, and people will certainly abandon the ₦9,000 car in favour of the ₦8,000 car of the same quality. Eventually, ₦9,000 will drop to ₦8,000 or even to ₦7,000. So, we save the difference.

Hon. Members, my Motion is not a controversial one, and I do not want to speak much on it ; it speaks for itself. I appeal to hon. Members to give the Motion their strong support so that the President can allow importation of cars into this country for the good of the common man.

I beg to move. Thank you.

**Mr Speaker** : The Mover of the Amendment, please.

**Mr J. M. Nzalak (Gembu)** : I rise to move the amendment standing in my name—

In lines 3 and 4 leave out the words *small and medium sized* and insert the words *all categories* of instead thereof.

And the second amendment—

At the end of line 4 add the following words :—

*and that in view of the fact that many car owners are unable to obtain spare parts for their imported cars, local car dealers and their agents should be compelled to place orders adequately for the spare parts of these cars and to guarantee that the spare parts would be available to customers at all times— thus alleviating the maintenance problems of the car owners.*

I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker** : Anybody seconding the Amendment ?

**Mr Sarki Gambo (Takai/Kachako)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to second the Amendment.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, Mr Nzalak, tell us why your Amendment is necessary.

**Mr Nzalak** : Mr Speaker, Sir, before I go to the substance of my Amendment, I want to express my disappointment at the way that I have been deprived of speaking in this honourable House. Mr Speaker has never allowed me to speak for about two months now. I know how difficult it is to deal with over 400 Members. But if others can speak for about five times in about two months, and I cannot speak—

**Mr Speaker** : Go to the Amendment please.

**Mr Nzalak** : I will go to the Amendment.

Why I intend to bring this Amendment is because Nigeria is a capitalist country. Everybody is allowed to accumulate wealth in the way he wants ; he can also use his money in the way he likes, provided he does not use it in a way that the laws of the country do not allow. This Motion is intended to help the citizens of this country. If, therefore, it is intended to help the citizens of this country, I see that the only good we can do to the citizens of this country is to lift the ban on all the cars which we were using in the First Republic. During the First Republic, we had cars like Mercedes Benz and other luxurious cars coming into this country. Anybody who could afford to buy these luxurious cars bought them. The small and the medium-sized were bought by the average people. With the ban placed on cars with a capacity of 2,000 cc and above, the prices of cars in this country have increased.

Now, we have two Assembly Plants in this country ; the Volkswagen Assembly Plant and the Peugeot Assembly Plant. These were established in this country to help Nigerians own cars of theirs. But unfortunately, when a ban was placed on most of these cars, even Government Agencies were compelled to buy Peugeot for their uses, and they had to dispose of all Mercedes Benz cars and other luxurious cars, the prices of these locally assembled cars became very high and no ordinary person could buy these cars at the moment.

[MR NZALAK]

I shall give a rough data of the prices of cars assembled in this country which were initially meant to solve the problems of this country. Beetle (1500 cc) sells now at ₦3,405 ; Passat GLS (Air-conditioned with tape and cassette) costs ₦6,510 ; Audi GLS (With airconditioner, tape and cassette) costs ₦10,590. Here, this price list was displayed at the Members Quarters with the underwriting *four per cent discount for Members only*. This means that hon. Members are the only people privileged to have *four per cent* discount on these prices. It means that if an ordinary person goes to buy a car, he will not purchase it at the prices given here, but will purchase at the prices the car dealers will think fit.

Now, going to Peugeot, the prices of Peugeot in this country now are as follows : Saloon sells at ₦6,121, but if the service charges are included, it sells at ₦6,700. Saloon (with airconditioner, tape and cassette) sells at ₦6,691, when we add service charges, it costs ₦7,306. Family car, that is, three-seaters, sells at ₦6,651 ; but with service charges, it sells at ₦7,288. Peugeot GL (with airconditioner, tape and cassette) sells at ₦8,105, but with service charges, it sells at ₦8,955. Ambulance (with air-conditioner) sells at ₦10,045, and with service charges, it costs ₦11,374.

So, when we look at this, we see that the Peugeot and the Volkswagen have monopolised the market, and naturally when demand is high, the prices of these cars will be increased, and the common people, the average Nigerians are not able to afford to buy them.

Now, coming to the spare parts, you will see that most of these cars which are imported into this country do not have enough spare parts in the country. When they break down, that is the end. The car is gone, it is off road and you can never use it again. When one goes to the company to buy the spare parts, they will tell you *I have placed orders for the spare parts but they have not come*. The spare parts might cost only ₦10, but you cannot get it. It might be you borrowed the money from the bank or from any government agency. This money is being deducted from your salary, and yet, you are not using the car, because the spare parts are not available.

Therefore, if cars are to be imported into this country, they should be fully backed by spare parts so that when these cars break down, the spare parts would be available to service them and return them to the road to enable the owners to use them satisfactorily.

The manufacturers of both the Volkswagen and the Peugeot cars are no longer taking time to improve upon their performances.

**Mr Speaker :** Please, round up.

**Mr Nzalak :** Mr Speaker, Sir, one would find that after using these cars for about two or three months, their doors would go bad. The doors would not open properly any more. Therefore, if we lift the ban on all cars and allow them to be imported into the country, I feel that this country would be better off, and it would do a lot of good to the common people of this country. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker :** I would take it, Mr Nzalak, that you have argued the two Amendments.

**Mr Nzalak :** Yes, Sir.

**Mr Speaker :** In which case we shall now take the Amendments one by one. Mr Bob-Manuel, you may move the Question on the Amendments one by one, please.

**Mr Tubo O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I move that the Question be now put on the first Amendment.

*Question put and negatived.*

**Mr Tubo O. Bob-Manuel :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the Question be now put on the second Amendment.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Mr Joseph K. Ugo (Gwer East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to oppose the Motion.

In opposing the Motion, I ask the Mover of this Motion not to allow sectional interests to over-ride the overall national interests of this country. It is in the interest of this country that we should allow our infant industries to grow and prosper. We must also get the foreigners to come here to establish industries in our country so that we can benefit from their own technology. What we are to do as a nation is to expand existing Assembly Plants and establish new ones.

I am also not quite convinced that there are not enough cars in this country to go round. What we have is the hoarding of these cars. We should now ask the Ministry of Commerce to get the Price Control Officials to raid the places where these cars are kept so as to sell them at the controlled prices. But if the Government is of the opinion that there are not enough cars, I think the Government should order sufficient cars to offset the temporary shortage ; but it is in our own interest as a country to strive to achieve economic independence and we can only do this by striving to be less dependent on foreign countries. By importing more cars into this country and for that matter, any other goods, we are getting ourselves more and more dependent on these foreigners.

With these reasons I oppose the Motion and urge all hon. Members to throw it out.

**Mr Ime J. Ikpatt (Etinan I) :** I rise to oppose this Motion. In opposing this Motion I want the Mover of this Motion to realise that what he has told the House is that he is doing this in the best interest of the common man. If he is doing this in the best interest of the common man, I see no reason why he should be particularly interested in lifting the ban on importation of cars. He should rather be interested in seeing that more bicycles or motorcycles are manufactured in this country so that they could reach the common man.

1911 [Lifting the Restriction on  
the Importation of Cars]

5 MARCH 1980

[Lifting the Restriction on  
the Importation of Cars] 1912

Moreover, he is aware that by bringing in more cars to this country we might be draining most of our foreign reserves to other countries. Rather, we prefer that the cars already assembled in this country should be increased, not bringing in more cars which he would want the House to approve.

Moreover, the Amendment, which fortunately has flopped wanted the bigger cars to come in. In fact, we realise that bringing in bigger cars would further drain the economy of this country.

So, I rise to oppose the Motion and urge the House to make sure that the manufacturers of the Volkswagen cars and Peugeot cars that are assembled in this country should be encouraged to produce more cars, rather than bringing in more cars because that will drain the economy of this country.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, thank you, hon. Members.

**Alhaji Lawal N. Daura** (Daura West): Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion. I wonder how a Member in this House could rise and oppose this Motion straight away. It is rather unfortunate. We are on the eve of our loan today as we have heard from the Speaker.

**Some hon. Members:** Shame!

**Alhaji Daura:** Gentlemen, the man with a vehicle is very highly placed in Nigeria today, and it is high time we remembered that to have a vehicle in Nigeria is not at all a luxury. It is necessary and there are people ready to obtain vehicles but very unfortunately they cannot obtain them at prices that are minimal or reasonable. The cost of cars here in Nigeria is too high and this has created the scarcity of vehicles. The Agents are there. They have created scarcity of vehicles. It is artificial scarcity because they keep away their vehicles in order to increase the prices any time they like. For example, we were buying Peugeot cars here at a cost of ₦4,000 or ₦3,000 before. How can we now imagine that when these Peugeot cars are assembled here in Nigeria they are being sold at a cost of ₦8,000? How could you expect somebody with a low income to purchase a vehicle? Gentlemen, let us sympathise. I repeat, to have a vehicle in Nigeria is not at all a luxury. I hope you will give your support one hundred *per cent* for this Motion.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr Michael Amechi Oje** (Ohaozora West): Mr Speaker, Sir, indeed this Motion is on a vital issue, and it is a very important Motion. Let us not overlook workers as we look over the importation of cars into the country.

**An hon. Member:** Point of order.

**Mr Speaker:** There is a point of order.

**Mr Mohammed K. Labaran** (Darazo-Sale): The speaker is not properly dressed, please.

**Mr Speaker:** Yes, go on.

**Mr M. A. Oje:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for protecting me. On the issue of car loan, I do not see how many of us riding Mercedes cars would think that a worker on level 07 or 08 could get Toyota and other small cars. We are the people causing this inflation in this country because the answer to inflation is competition; but we allow two car Assembly Plants in the country to monopolise cars. Now, they are watching for any day our car loans will be approved and eventually the price of Peugeot cars will go up to ₦20,000. The car is a very important issue when we are talking about workers in the country. All of us know where they are and know what they are capable of doing. We cannot over-emphasise that a worker on level 08 cannot obtain a car worth ₦10,000 or ₦8,000. He needs a car worth about ₦4,000 to ₦5,000 or ₦3,500. If the Government can issue enough licences to importers before giving workers these car loans, the workers will be able to maintain those cars and maintain their families. We are not giving them loans to feed; we are giving them loans to buy cars and maintain the cars.

I do not see why people should look at things one way or the other. Sometimes they look at the man who brings the Motion and feel that he is not competent to bring it.

The Motion is for the nation and not for any single person. Many of us are now waiting to get our money to buy cars. How are we going to get the cars? If you approve this car loan for workers, where are they going to get the cars to buy? Is it *Volkswagen*, that small car, that is now rising to ₦4,000 that they are going to buy? If I do not like to buy a *Peugeot*, but I want to buy a *Toyota*, and you compel me to buy the *Peugeot*, are you not depriving me of my fundamental human rights? Why? Please, hon. Members, I do not see why we are going to argue much about allowing the issue of licences to the importers to bring in cars in the interest of workers. This is where I am going to stop in supporting the Motion, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker:** Yes, GNPP.

**Mr Garba Isyaku** (Minjibir): I rise to oppose this Motion entirely. How many average Nigerian can afford to buy cars in Nigeria? Our people in the rural areas are suffering from hunger and disease. I am opposing this Motion in reference to Section 16 (2) (d) of the Constitution. With your permission, Mr Speaker, I would like to read:

*The State shall, within the context of the ideals and objectives for which provisions are made in this Constitution—*

*that suitable and adequate shelter, suitable and adequate food, reasonable national minimum living wage, old age care and pensions, and unemployment and sick benefits are provided for all citizens.*

Therefore, with this Section, Mr Speaker, we have seen clearly that not every Nigerian can afford to buy cars. We used to pass so many people on the roads as we pass and these people do not even

[MR ISYAKU]

have ten kobo with which to board a danfo bus. They are suffering from hunger and there is not enough transport system in the country.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Alhaji Isyaku :** Therefore, I am opposing the Motion entirely because it is not serving the interest of the common man. How many common men can afford to buy cars here ? It would be better if we say we supply bicycles and motorcycles to the rural areas. During the olden days, we used canoes to transact trade. There were no accidents by then, but now everyday, we hear of thousands of people dying on the roads.

**Mr H. M. J. Wachuku (Ukwa) :** Point of order.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Mr Wachuku :** Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of Order is Order 26 (2). We are not talking about people who are going to buy cars. We are talking about lifting the ban on importation of cars.

**Mr Speaker :** Please restrict yourself to the Motion.

**Alhaji Isyaku :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am still standing on my point that I oppose the Motion. Therefore, I want to refer this honourable House to Section 16 (2) (d) of the Constitution, and concentrate our efforts on providing the items enumerated therein for the common man. Therefore, I am completely opposing the Motion, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, GNPP.

**Alhaji M. Bukar Mele (Matchina) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to oppose the Motion in its entirety. The reason for opposing this Motion is that despite the restrictions made on the importation of cars into this country, there are so many crooks who

indulged in bringing vehicles that are not suitable for the climate of this country. In fact, so many vehicles brought into this country just lasted for not more than two or three months before they got off the road. Because of that, Nigeria decided to assemble vehicles. In fact, before assembling vehicles, a lot of feasibility studies were made. The climate was studied carefully and vehicles were designed to suit our climate. Now the vehicles we have in this country, the *Volkswagen* and *Peugeot* vehicles, are favourable to the Nigerian climate. Therefore instead of lifting the restriction on the importation, I am of the view that we should call for the reduction in the prices of these vehicles so that the common man would have the opportunity of buying any type he wants.

With this, Mr Speaker, I beg to sit.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, UPN

**Chief Sam A. Oduntan (Ifo/Ota) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to support this Motion. (*Applause*)

My first consideration is not whether one wants to buy a car. The side effect which the banning of cars had created for the companies who import cars into Nigeria is unemployment. In the car industry in Nigeria we have over 50,000 workers. During the year 1978-79, over 20,000 were laid off because the companies were not allowed to import.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, the time is now 1 o'clock. The hon. Member for Ifo/Ota (*Chief Sam A. Oduntan*), you will continue tomorrow.

**Chief Oduntan :** All right, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, the time now is 1 o'clock and, according to the rules, the House is hereby adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*And it being 1 o'clock, Mr Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Thursday, 6th March, 1980

The House met at 10.15 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Speaker in the Chair)

ALL AFRICAN PARLIAMENTARY UNION

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, you will remember that we will send a delegation to Zaire in Congo Kinshasha for the meeting of the All African Parliamentary Union. Party Leaders who have not submitted the list of their own delegates should please submit them today or first thing tomorrow morning, so that the Members involved will submit their passports for necessary action, because they must leave here on Wednesday.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 19

**Mr Tom Egbuwoku (Isoko) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg the indulgence of this House to suspend Standing Order 19 in order that—(Interruptions)

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Egbuwoku :** So, that this honourable House—(Interruptions)

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order ! Hon. Members, please take your seats and let us hear the reasons for the suspension of the Standing Orders.

**Mr Egbuwoku :** As I said, the reason is to enable this honourable House to take note of the 71st Birth Day Celebration of Nigeria's foremost Political Leader, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, and to send accordingly a fitting birthday greeting and well wishes on this memorable day in the life of the Chief in recognition of his invaluable services to the unity and greatness of this nation. (Prolonged Interruption)

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order ! Hon. Members, please, take your seats. You are asking for Standing Order 19 to be suspended. Is anybody in support of that ? (Interruptions)

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Adebo Adeola (Ijero) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, the question is that this House suspends Standing Order 19 in order to enable the House to move a Motion of Greetings and well wishes for the 71st Birth Day of the UPN Leader, Chief Obafemi Awolowo.

*Question put and negatived.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, please, Members of the Judiciary Committee, you remember you will see the Chief Justice of the Federation ; you should

assemble at the lobby before 1 o'clock. So, Members of the Judiciary Committee should take note.

I asked the Party Leaders to meet me yesterday for car loan. The loan is ready and Party Leaders should come to my office and get details.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

There will be a meeting of the Members of the Internal Affairs Committee at 11 a.m. There will also be a meeting of the Committee on Commerce in my office because there is no Committee room for them.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Lifting the Restriction on the Importation of Cars

*Motion made and Question again proposed :* That in furtherance of the new policy of the Federal and State Governments in granting car loans to workers and considering the fact that cars assembled in Nigeria are limited in supply, this House calls on the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to lift the restriction on the importation of small and medium sized cars in the interest of Nigerian workers—(Mr Salisu Muazu Kanya).

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, you will remember that the hon. Chief Oduntan was speaking yesterday before we adjourned.

**Chief S. A. Oduntan (Ifo/Ota) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, the question of lifting the ban on the importation of cars is a very important Motion, and I implore the House to consider this Motion and give it the passage it demands. First of all, as I was saying yesterday. I first considered the plight of workers in all the Motor Industries in Nigeria. The first angle through which I look at it is the ill-effect of banning the importation of cars in Nigeria. Many of the Motor Industries in Nigeria have started to retrench their workers. The Motor Industry in Nigeria employs about one hundred and fifty thousand workers. During the years 1978 and 1979 over twenty thousand of them were retrenched because the motor trade could not function properly.

The employers told the workers that they could not import cars and therefore, they could not pay their salaries. This alone is enough for us to consider the lifting of the ban on importation of cars into this country. If we are not paying lip service to what we always come here to say, that we come here because of the interest of the common people, we should pass this Motion without any objection.

The second point which I want to raise is the important aspect concerning the shareholders. All the motor trades for the last two years have not paid any kobo to the shareholders in the motor industry because they could not make any profit. If they cannot make any profit they cannot pay any dividend to the shareholders. If we want the economy of this country to be buoyant and we want people to contribute to the buoyancy of the economy, we should allow the motor industry to function properly. The motor industry is totally handicapped now. They cannot function because they have nothing to sell.



[CHIEF ODUNTAN]

Hon. Members, I am very sure that you will not like a situation whereby workers will suffer. They have suffered enough. Today, thousands of them have no food because they were retrenched where they were working before. If we want to help them, it is only proper for us to lift the ban on motor importation to Nigeria.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to implore this House to consider very critically the question of unemployment in this country. Presently, we know that we have millions of unemployed people. If we are not going to add to the unemployment this country is facing today, we should lift the ban on motor importation, so that the motor companies could employ more hands. Those workers, over 20 thousand within a year, who have been retrenched, could come back to work so that they can have their means of livelihood.

Mr Speaker, Sir, if we are kidding ourselves over this issue and we want to help the common people as the five political parties that are in this House have been saying from time to time, that they are here to help the common man, to help the workers and so on, if you want to help them, you must give them employment. That is a very important aspect of helping the workers in this country. If we refuse to lift the ban on importation of cars, it means we are not ready to help the workers, because the motor companies will retrench them more.

I have information that if this restriction is not lifted as soon as possible, over 30 thousand of the workers in the motor industry will be retrenched, and that will be too bad for Nigeria. I want to implore the hon. Members to please consider this aspect. It is a very important aspect. We know that those who buy and own cars are those who have the money to buy them, but the workers who are working in this industry are very important too. If you have money, you can buy the medium sized, you can buy the small size or any type you want. But then that is one aspect of it. The most important aspect is the continuation of job for those who are working in this motor industry.

I therefore implore the House to please give their approval to this important Motion. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**Chief Olusola Omonira (Ilaje/Ese Odo)**: Mr Speaker, I rise to oppose this Motion. In doing so my consideration is for the workers of this country. We do not have to lift the ban on importation of cars. The workers are not the users of these cars. We want to lift ban on the importation of food and small clothing materials. What we need really in the motor industry is to expand the Kaduna Peugeot Factory and the Lagos Volkswagen Factory and to accelerate the Enugu NISSAN Factory, and of course, expand the Bauchi Factory. That is all we need to be able to employ the poor workers and give them their livelihood. To import more cars into this country will worsen our trade balance again. Remember, we are just getting out of the situation where our importation far, far exceeds our exports.

A few days ago, there was an export promotion meeting. Only few of these manufacturers were there. What they are interested in is just making things

for home consumption, they are not interested in export. Why do we have to lift the ban. Already you can get in the buses which workers can use. We are not talking about lifting the ban on importation on buses here. These are what the workers are using. To lift the ban on importation of cars is another way to show that we are here to satisfy ourselves. Mr Speaker, Sir, we should try, as much as possible to inform the President just to expand our factories to produce automobiles, not lifting the ban.

Mr Speaker, I beg to oppose.

**Mr Tubo O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II)**: I rise to support the Motion. Before I support the Motion, I would tell hon. Members who are opposing this Motion that the Peugeot Factory in Kaduna and the Volkswagen in Badagry produce only two types of vehicles.

We have about six to seven categories of workers. Any worker from Level 07 upward in the Federal Government service or in the Corporation or Parastatals is entitled to a year's salary to purchase a car. The salary ranges from ₦2,880 to the higher levels. Peugeot produces cars ranging from ₦6,116 to ₦10,000. Volkswagen produces cars from ₦4,000. Where do you keep those categories of workers who can only afford to buy cars costing between ₦2,800 and ₦3,500? But if we allow the importation of cars and struggle to reduce the duties on them, these workers will be able to purchase cars costing as much as their annual salary, and they can afford to pay back this money. But if the cheapest car available costs more than their annual salary, and they have to get loan from the bank to make up the difference, they will pay back more than what they could have paid per year.

The second part of the Motion speaks about the spare parts for imported cars. The spare parts for imported cars are very necessary. Between 1965 to 1975, you will see that certain cars which were imported with their spare parts lasted more than ten years. But today, without spare parts, cars, after only two years, are laid off. When your clutch is gone, you cannot buy a new clutch. The importers do not want to give you these spare parts because you do not import their cars.

The Peugeot factory and the Volkswagen factory only have assembly plants, and these plants only fix the spare parts brought down in completely knocked-down condition, plus the heavy freights paid on them.

Previously, they used airlines to carry peugeot parts, plus the heavy freights, thereby bringing about inflated cost of the parts before assembly. Then there is also the labour cost. They produce cars costing more than the imported ones. So, there is no wisdom in restricting cars and buying cars exorbitantly in Nigeria just because we have assembly plants, not even manufacturing plants. We do not manufacture even the screws.

For the short term, the ban on cars should be lifted. It should be open to general licence to all countries except South Africa and Namibia. On the long term basis, we shall find our way to increase our manufacturing plants. Let us use manufacturing

[MR BOB-MANUEL]

plants instead of assembly plants. At that time, when we are self sufficient to produce more cars per day to cope with the need of the people for cars, we would place total ban on importation of cars. But today, the production per day cannot even satisfy the demands of the people in Agege. The people who want to buy cars in Agege can buy up all the total productions of Volkswagen Assembly plant at Badagry and Peugeot Assembly Plant in Kaduna. The total production of the two Assembly Plants cannot even reach potential purchasers in Port Harcourt, Lagos, or Benin. Even the Kaduna Plant cannot supply all the consumers in Kaduna.

So, to restrict what you cannot provide would cause scarcity and unnecessary suffering for the people.

With these few remarks, I think hon. Members will vote in favour of this Motion and will keep the National Flag flying on imported cars coming into this country. Thank you.

**Mr Kabir Umar** (Kaduna South) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion and in doing so, I have few contributions to make. We all know that the Federal Military Government depended on car manufacturing industries in this country, namely, the Peugeot Automobile and the Volkswagen Assembly Plants. But we all know that whatever they assemble is not up to what is required in at least two of the States in this country, not to talk of the remaining seventeen States.

Peugeot is assembled in Kaduna, not manufactured as the hon. Member from Degema II (*Mr Bob-Manuel*) has said. But even in Kaduna you find it very difficult to secure Peugeot cars despite the fact that they are assembled there. I think, Mr Speaker, Sir, this Motion deserves the support of every hon. Member in this House. I would not agree with any other Member who will say that supporting this Motion will be only in our interest. How many Members are here considering the number of people who are entitled to have cars in this country? The number of Members here is so negligible that that type of thing cannot even arise. What I am saying Mr Speaker, is that we are not here to protect the interest of the privileged few, that is, the dealers, the middle men and the rest. Peugeot is assembled in Nigeria and yet it costs more than the imported vehicles. Why? This is part of the question that we have to ask ourselves, Mr Speaker.

So, I think it is quite in order for this Motion to be supported whole-heartedly. It should not only be supported, it should be followed up by the Committee concerned seeing that it takes immediate effect, not just passing the Motion while the highly influential dealers will definitely sabotage whatever efforts the Committee will make so that it would not see the light of the day.

Mr Speaker, I would like this House to support this Motion whole-heartedly and to make sure that the Committee follow it up with the required recommendations, so that it will not just be a resolution only but will take effect immediately.

Thank you, very much.

**Mr Edet Asuquo Ekpo** (Uyo III) : Mr Speaker, I rise to oppose this Motion. (*Applause*) In doing so, I wish to draw attention to the fact that it is time this country tried to discourage an affluent society. The tendency in this country is to look for things that try to increase inflation in this country.

I am speaking as somebody who has been a worker. If this Motion had been brought, as one of the speakers has said, calling upon the Government to lift ban on the importation of first-class buses and first-class vehicles that can carry goods from the rural areas to the urban centres, that should be understandable. Those of us here who had been workers would know very well that to own a car is not an easy thing.

You have a car on loan and at the end of the month, you spend so much for the repairs and maintenance of the car and you spend so much for the repayment of the loan granted you for the purchase of the car. This leaves the worker with barely something which is not even sufficient for the feeding of his family. I do not think we are encouraging a society which should be thrifty, which should look at life objectively and try to save money for other investments which would boost the economy of the country.

I do not believe that we are looking after the interest of the Nigerian workers or protecting their welfare by calling on the Government to lift the ban on car loans. We are rather trying to indulge the workers.

**Mr Dele Fayemi** (Badagry) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I am raising a point of order because the speaker on the Floor is reading from his jottings.

**Mr Speaker** : The hon. Member is not reading.

**Mr Ekpo** : I thank you, Mr Speaker, for protecting me. What I was trying to say is that we shall be indulging the workers if we come here to say that the ban on importation of something that is expensive to run should be lifted. Those of us who are running cars know how much it costs to run a car, and it is even worse for workers who obtain loans to buy these cars. They have to repay the loan and look after the repairs of the cars.

I think the best thing is to encourage the government to buy beautiful buses and place them at the disposal of the workers and not to lift the ban on the importation of cars.

With these few remarks, I beg to oppose this Motion.

**Mr T. C. Amasiatu** (Oru) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion, and in doing so, I want to highlight a few points. In the first place, assuming that the lifting of the ban on car loans comes through, there is the tendency that there will be so much demand for cars by the workers. If the ban on car loan is lifted, there will be so much demand for cars in this country. If this is true and if I can go by Dr Kwame Nkurumah's deductions on class distinction in this country and in West

[MR. AMASIATU]

Africa, I would say that the aristocracy class which numbers, at least, one and a half million people in this country will want cars. The middle class in this country which numbers about five million will all want cars. The working class people, qualified to own cars, which numbers about half a million in this country will all want cars. If my arithmetic is correct, we shall be needing seven and a half million cars in the first four years, and the Peugeot and the Volkswagen Industries in Nigeria cannot produce seven and half million cars in four years.

If this is so, Mr Speaker, there is the need to encourage the importation of cars below the weight of 2,000 c.c. into this country. The importation of these cars will also eliminate the soaring inflation, the high cost of cars, and it will also reduce what the car dealers choose to call accelerated list levy. This accelerated list levy comes to anything between five hundred and one thousand naira, depending on the make and type of car. For example, if you want to buy a Peugeot 504, you will have to pay, at least, five hundred naira in order to come into the accelerated list, and even if you come into this accelerated list, you will have to wait for the next two or three months. In doing this, you tie up the capital. There is a suspense, and sometimes, you do not get the car after all, and the reason is because of the scarcity of cars.

Another point is that if cars of different makes are imported into this country, people who want to buy cars will have the option to choose their brand of cars; but right now, it appears that government makes it mandatory on anybody buying a car to either choose Peugeot or Volkswagen, because there is no option. You cannot get the Volvo, you cannot get the Mercedes Benz 200, you cannot get Datsun, you cannot get anything, and whenever these cars are imported or smuggled into the country, you see that generally the import duties are terribly too high—200 per cent more than the cost of that car.

I think this imposes some hardships. It imposes hardship on our convenience, on our comfort and on the integrity of this country, because you see people who are supposed to own cars for their business not for pleasure going about on their legs or joining buses and not doing anything. I think this is not good. I think again this does not border on the conservation of Foreign Exchange, because the welfare of the citizens of this country must be paramount in our minds, in the minds and workings of the government. If this is so, the conservation of foreign exchange should not come into play.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I, therefore, suggest very seriously that the government should, during the impending budget, include the approval for the importation of all brand of cars below the 2000 c.c. weight.

Thank you.

**Mr Danjuma A. Zubairu (Jamaia North):** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion. This is a very important Motion. People have criticised it in so many different ways.

This Motion is a Motion on international trade in the sense that people have talked of foreign exchange. If you do not buy from my country, it is not possible for me to trade with you. What we are all asking for here is that the Nigerian Government should allow the importation of cars into the country.

The Peugeot Automobile Assembly Plant and the Volkswagen Assembly Plant here in Lagos are not sufficient for our consumption in this country. The Peugeot Assembly Plant produces 180 cars a day in Kaduna, and we have nineteen States in Nigeria. If you divide these 180 cars by the number of States in the country, it means that every State can only buy nine or ten cars a day. The statistics as at 1979, has it that the number of workers between level 07 to level 16 in the Nigerian Public Service numbered about 2.3 million people.

Almost every State Government has lifted the ban on car loan and the Federal Government has also lifted ban on car loan. If the lift had not been taken into consideration, nobody today would have asked the Federal Government to lift the ban on car importation.

The Army abolished car loan last year because they wanted to conserve the economy and impose a socialist economy. We do not want socialist economy in this country. We have pure democracy in Nigeria.

**Mr Speaker:** There is a point of order.

**Mr Mohammed Lawal Na-Rogo (Karaye):** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to point my Colleague from Kaduna to order. Throughout the thirteen years of the Military rule, there was no Decree on—

**Several hon. Members:** No! No!

**Mr Speaker:** Please, sit down.

**Mr Zubairu:** We have a system of free economy in Nigeria, we have not got a socialist economy in Nigeria whereby the Federal Government controls the national supply, controls importation, and controls almost everything; they cannot do it. If the Federal Government wants to compete with people, it should restore an open hand economy, whereby everybody can practise a democratic economy. We want a free economy in Nigeria whereby everybody can import anything he wants and continue with the Federal Government.

The people in the Peugeot Automobile plant, the French people who are here in Nigeria today, have created a self-imposed government within themselves. And when the Federal Government told them last year to move their administrative headquarters away from Lagos to Kaduna, they refused and up till today, they still sit here in Lagos. This is the type of economy we have in this country today. We sit in this House and cannot succumb to it. We are no more in a military regime whereby when you talk a gun is in front of you. Now, we are in a democratic government where you have freedom of speech as guaranteed in the Constitution. We know of the Peugeot Assembly and we know of the other Assembly here in Lagos but we are just asking the Federal Government to give a short term benefit to allow the importation of these cars, as workers are

[MR. ZUBAIRU]

getting car loans now in Nigeria. Workers are getting the loans, tell me, where are they going to get the cars? Those of you who have opposed this Motion are the same people who will be the first people to go and buy these cars when the cars are imported. People sit down here and say that they are talking for the common man. One talks about the common man but when one gets outside, one acts as if one is not a common man. You sit down in this House saying that you want this and that for the common man. Who is the common man? I want this House to consider this Motion seriously.

All we are asking the Federal Government to do is to lift the ban on the importation of these cars because we cannot play with the phenomenon of economy. The phenomenon of the economy cannot be played on. You have international trade. All we are asking the Federal Government to do is to negotiate with the German company, with the French company, with the American company. You have your oil, you have your cocoa and you have your cotton. Allow us to trade in these areas. If I am buying goods worth ₦2 million from the French Company, I will ask them to buy goods worth ₦2 million from me, and the foreign exchange you are talking about to balance your payments will be realised.

**Mr Speaker :** Round up.

**Mr Zubairu :** So, with this little contribution, Mr Speaker, Sir, I ask everybody to support this Motion without any bias.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Mr Kanu.

**Mr E. N. Kanu (Ikwanuo Umuahia) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members I rise to oppose the Motion.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Kanu :** We do not have to be sentimental here because we are talking about the ordinary man, the worker. We have to take into consideration the State of the economy.

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order !

**Mr Kanu :** The decision by the past government to place importation of these very cars we are talking about now under licence is obvious. They know that erratic importation of these cars causes the drain on our foreign exchange.

**Several hon. Members :** No. No.

**Mr Kanu :** That is true. Also, they know if we continue to import these cars, we shall not produce ordinary bicycle tube in this country. So, what the government has done is to put this small squeeze by asking companies, like the Peugeot and the Volkswagen companies to assemble the cars here, and gradually we will start manufacturing the whole components in this country.

Again, the Government has reason for setting up the plants here and that is, to increase productivity in this country and create employment for the ordinary workers. So, what I am trying to say is this. The lifting of the ban on importation of these small-sized and medium-sized cars will cause erratic importation

of these various cars into this country, to the detriment of the cars being assembled in this country. I can assure you that if the imported Peugeot is put side by side with the locally-assembled Peugeot and you ask the ordinary worker in this country to buy, irrespective of the price advantage, he will still choose the imported car. This is the reason why I am opposing this Motion because if we do not controvert the inflow of imported cars in this country, you will find that nobody will be interested to buy the cars we assemble in this country.

Granted that the quality is not one hundred per cent, but we have to improve. So, the only solution by the government is for them to take care of the policy on car loan. Since this is civilian government, they know what they are doing and I am pretty sure about this. The increase in the demand, as a result of this, will necessitate the government granting more licences for the importation of these medium-sized cars for the ordinary man.

So, I do see the reason why we should be sentimental here and say that we should lift the ban on importation of these medium-sized cars to the detriment of the economy of this country.

So, with these few points, I oppose the Motion. Thank you, very much

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, GNPP ?

**Alhaji Muhammed A. Yelwa (Yauri) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, looking at the Motion, there are three reasons for opposing it.

Those who advocate that cars should be brought into the country for the workers are not actually doing so in the interest of the workers. What percentage of the workers do get car loans? Very little percentage. What percentage of Nigerians could afford to buy a car? I feel the priority of every Nigerian, a common man for that matter, is food and shelter.

I would have supported this Motion if it were concerned with lifting the ban on the importation of rice or building materials; but certainly, not on cars.

**Alhaji A. D. O. Abutu (Ankpa South) :** Point of order!

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, what is your point of order?

**Alhaji Abutu :** My point of order is Order No. 26 (2). The speaker on the Floor is deviating from the substance of the Motion. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Please, continue, Alhaji Yelwa.

**Alhaji Yelwa :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Talking on the point of the Motion, the House has already defeated the Motion by restricting even this ban on small cars.

If we are talking in terms of the economy of the country, it should have been open, so that all vehicles, either small or large, could be imported because people use very large vehicles for their transport business.

[ALHAJI YELWA]

Mr Speaker, Sir, lifting ban without lifting Free on Board which they call F.O.B. and Carriage, Insurance Freight, that is, C.I.F, is meaningless, because the cars will still be very costly. People are thinking that by lifting the ban on cars, cars would be cheaper. They will not be cheaper. Those who will benefit from this are the shylocks among us, the few people who are going to get the licences to import these cars, and the car prices will still remain. So, the common man whom we are expecting to protect is not protected. He is even cheated by the few people who always get richer and richer in this country. The poor people are not fought for.

Frankly speaking, Sir, in opposing this Motion, I think in terms of the economy of this country. It is our duty to safeguard our balance-sheet. As rumours are going around, in a few years' time, we are likely to be in red if we do not restrict certain things. There is no doubt about this. So, if we continue to import cars, we are going to put this country in a very difficult position economically.

So, the interest of the economy of the nation should always be put into consideration. Not only this, we have to encourage our home-made goods. We should be proud of what we produce here and try to improve upon them rather than trying to bring things from abroad.

With these remarks, Sir, I oppose the Motion in its entirety. Thank you, very much.

Mr Speaker : Yes, PRP ?

Alhaji A. Y. Bichi (Bichi) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to give an absolute support to the Motion.

I have observed that some Members of this honourable House are opposing this Motion while some Members are supporting it. If we should go straight to the point and be frank and honest, we should all support this Motion because lifting the ban on importation of small and medium-sized cars to Nigeria is another way of bringing about competition with the cars assembled here in Nigeria. Peugeot car is assembled in Kaduna but its price is the same as the imported one, if not more. Why ? It is so because they are the only company assembling this brand of car in this country.

Mr David Akpang Ukpang (Itu) : Point of order !

Mr Speaker : Yes, what is your point of order ?

Mr Ukpang : My point of order is a constitutional one. I would refer this House to Section 58 of the Nigerian Constitution. Mr Speaker, with your permission, I shall read this Section. It says :

*The Senate or the House of Representatives may appoint a committee of its members for such special or general purposes as in its opinion would be better regulated and managed by means of such a committee, and may by resolution, regulation or otherwise, as it thinks fit, delegate any functions exercisable by it to any such committee.*

I have cited this Section knowing fully well that we are practising the American system of Government. This system is quite an open one. This system has made the American Constitution to be the longest Constitution in the world. It is so because—

Mr Speaker : Please, go to your point of objection.

Mr Ukpang : Before any law or Motion which would affect the citizens of that country is passed, the citizens themselves are given the opportunity to go to the Committee to have a say on such a Motion or law. Here, this House has a Standing Committee on Transport ; this Motion, which is going to affect the generality of Nigerians, has by-passed the Standing Committee. I am thinking that this Motion should be referred to that Committee and be re-drafted.

Mr Speaker : All that you have to do is to wait and speak on the Motion. You cannot do that by way of point of Order. Your point of Order is irrelevant.

Please, continue, Alhaji Bichi.

Alhaji Bichi : I can say the Peugeot assembled here in Kaduna is also not durable, although the price is very high, while the durable one imported to Nigeria is the same price as the one assembled here in Kaduna. Therefore, there is no value in using the only cars assembled here in Nigeria. Let Nigeria lift the ban and import small and medium-sized cars for those who are not able to purchase the high-priced ones. If hon. Members would look at the Motion, it says *the medium-sized or small-sized cars*. Therefore, those junior workers who are unable to buy the high-priced cars could manage to buy the small-sized cars. If there is competition between the imported ones and those assembled here in Nigeria, I definitely assure you that the price will go down. Mr Speaker, Sir, it is in the best interests of the junior workers of Nigeria if the ban is lifted.

Mr Isyaku Gumawa (Gabasawa) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion. What I would appeal to hon. Members is that when a Motion is presented to this House, we should always bear in mind what category of Nigerians this Motion affects. This type of Motion affects the low-income workers up to the middle-income earners. The bourgeoisies are not affected. Mr Speaker, even if these medium-sized cars are imported into Nigeria, the junior workers who are more in number today are the only people to benefit. As we can see, the problems of transportation is disturbing even the Members of the National Assembly, not to talk of the Nigeria workers in the middle and junior categories. You will always see people rushing for Lagos State buses even in the Federal Capital. Only God knows what happens in the remote and farther towns of the country. People are suffering, travelling on foot and sometimes if they are able to purchase motor-cycles, they have to ride motor-cycles for a number of miles because they cannot purchase even the Beetles. The car which is only ₦1,500 today is over ₦3,000 and even over ₦4,000 in the hands of dealers. This was imposed on workers through the embargo, the restriction on the importation of these cars. The restriction has served no useful purpose because we still continue to complain about the country's economy. What is the use of restricting cars coming into the country then if the economy is not up to expectation ? We have billions of naira lost here, billions of naira lost there. The restriction on importation of goods is not the remedy. It is not the remedy for this type of situation.

[MR. GUMAWA]

The only remedy is clear and is known to the Government. Let the attitude of workers, the attitude of Senior Officers in the Ministries be changed. Let us be honest, and let us be more patriotic to our country then the economy will improve. If officers should continue to mismanage the money given to them for the purpose of development simply because of their selfish and over-zealous desire to enrich themselves overnight, I do not think restriction on importation would do any good.

Therefore, with these few comments Mr Speaker, I will support the Motion that the Government should look once more into it and lift the ban on importation of, not only cars, but some other food items.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr A. O. Omisore** (Oranmiyan Central) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion that the ban on importation of cars should be lifted. I beg to add again that it should not only be lifted but be lifted right from now. Mr Speaker, hon. Members, we are no doubt the representatives of the people from all over Nigeria, and as representatives, we owe a duty of care to our different people all over this country. We cannot close our eyes to the suffering masses of this country.

I agree that our people need food and shelter, but at the same time, I must say that many among our people are in need of cars today. If you listen to Radio or Television or probably you read your papers, you will find that here and there many people have been depositing money to car dealers, willing to purchase cars for over a period of two to three years but neither are they given their cars nor their money back. I think the reason for this is because of demand and supply. In a nutshell, it is because of the restriction put on the importation of cars into this country.

I am urging this House to please support wholeheartedly the Motion on the Floor that the ban on importation of cars should be lifted. We are only deceiving ourselves when we say that we want to protect our industries. There is nothing we can do as at now. We pattern our economy on these manufacturers' economy and for this, they will continue to dictate our pace of advancement in this country.

As for the home-made cars like *Peugeot* and *Volkswagen*, we only assembled them, as said by hon. T. O. Bob-Manuel, we do not as yet manufacture even a pin in either of these two cars. So, there is nothing we can do. We are subject to the dictates of these producing countries.

If we want to protect our economy, the best thing for us to do now is to see that our steel industry takes off. When the Iron and Steel plant has taken off and is producing, it is only then we can do something to protect our own economy. But even then, we ought to have Technical Schools and we must emphasize on technical education. As at now, we all cry for universities everywhere. These people have limited universities, but they have technical schools where they train their children in technical education. It is this that will protect our industries and our economy.

So, Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I want us now to take a decision on this, that we must put an end to the sufferings of the masses of this country, I mean the people who are in need of cars and who cannot have their cars, although they have got their money. The importance of working is to satisfy one's needs and once you cannot satisfy your needs, what is the point of working? We must now agree that the right steps must be taken now to lift this ugly ban on the importation of cars into this country. Mr Speaker, I thank you very much for giving me the chance to speak on this Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : Thank you.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi** (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I think it is time to put the Question. I formally move that the question be now put.

*Question, that the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That in furtherance of the new policy of the Federal Government and State Governments in granting car loans to workers and considering the fact that cars assembled in Nigeria are limited in supply, this House calls on the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to lift the restriction on the importation of small and medium-sized cars in the interest of Nigerian workers.

**Mr Speaker** : Order! Order! Hon. Members, we now go to the second item on the Orders of the Day, which is Navy Board (Amendment) Bill—Committee. The Committee on Defence is reporting to the Committee of the Whole House so, we have to resolve into a Committee of the Whole House. The Leader of the House should move a Motion for us to resolve into a Committee of the Whole House.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi** (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I move that this House resolves itself into a Committee of the whole House for the purpose of considering the Navy (Amendment) Bill.

**Mr Speaker** : Anybody seconding the Motion?

**Mr A. B. Yahaya** (Ilorin East) : Mr Speaker, I second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That the House resolves itself into a committee of the whole House.

#### NAVY BOARD (AMENDMENT) BILL

A Bill for An Act to make Provision for The Number of Persons to constitute Membership of the Navy Board—CONSIDERED IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE.

**The Chairman** : Yes, the Chairman of the Committee on Defence.

**Mr John Laven** (Langtang) : Mr Chairman, Sir, hon. Members, last week, I presented my report on the Army Bill which we have passed in this honourable House.

**The Chairman :** No, we are dealing with the Navy Bill.

**Mr Laven :** The Navy Bill was passed to the Committee on Defence early last month. The Blue print was given to hon. Members last week. Now, Mr Chairman, Sir, my Committee, having deliberated on this Bill, recommended the following Amendments to the Bill and I beg to read :

The Committee in accordance with section 41 of the Force Act (Amendment) Decree, 1976 and Section 3 (1) and (2) of the Navy Act, 1964 recommended the following Amendments.

Navy Board (Amendment) Bill 1980—  
Committee Amendment to the Navy Board (Amendment) Bill Amendment proposed.

**The Chairman :** I have not seen where you are reading. You are reading from your report ?

**Mr Laven :** Yes, the content is the same as you have in the Order Paper.

(i) In page C1, leave out lines 7 and 8 and insert the words *the President who shall be the Chairman of the Board*

(ii) Between lines 8 and 9 insert line 8 (a) *the Minister charged with responsibility for matters relating to Defence.*

(iii) In page C2 under Explanatory Memorandum, leave out from beginning to the end and insert as follows :

*The Federal Government has decided to reconstitute the membership of the Navy Board inter alia to retain the President as a member and Chairman of the Navy Board.*

Accordingly the proposed membership of the Board in this Bill is as follows :

You may have yours as (a) but I have it as (1).

**The Chairman :** That is all right.

**Mr Laven :** (1) *the President who shall be the Chairman of the Board ;*

(2) *the Minister charged with responsibility for matters relating to Defence ;*

(3) *The Chief of Defence Staff ;*

(4) *The Chief of the Naval Staff.*

The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry charged with responsibility for matters relating to Defence shall be Secretary to the Board.

**Prince T. O. Olusi (Lagos South) :** Point of order.

**The Chairman :** There is a point of order. Order what ?

**Prince Olusi :** My point of order is Order No. 40. Mr Chairman, this Order states that :

*Notice of presentation of a Government bill shall be given by publication of the provisions proposed to be embodied in such bill in an issue of the Official Gazette of which a copy shall have been sent to every Member.*

Mr Chairman, Sir, I would like to draw your attention to—

**The Chairman :** The hon. Member for Lagos South (*Prince T. O. Olusi*), we got the publication in the *Government Gazette* weeks ago. Is that not correct ?

**Prince Olusi :** Yes, Sir. Mr Chairman, if you could hold on, Sir, I would want a clarification from the Chairman of the Committee on Defence.

**The Chairman :** You are asking a question.

**Prince Olusi :** I am directing your attention to this Order, Mr Chairman, Sir.

**The Chairman :** I have read the Order. What I am saying is that this thing has been published in the *Official Gazette* and distributed to everybody about four or five weeks ago.

**Prince Olusi :** If you can give me a minute, Sir, I want a clarification from the Chairman of the Committee.

**The Chairman :** No, you will not ask him questions.

**Prince Olusi :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I think it is not proper for the Committee to amend.

**The Chairman :** Your Point of Order is Order 40 ; under what Order are you asking the question ?

**Prince Olusi :** Under Order 40, Sir.

**The Chairman :** Order 40 does not allow that ? it talks of notice of presentation of a Government Bill and the Order has been complied with.

**Prince Olusi :** I agree, Sir, that, that has been done. But the Committee went further to amend the explanatory note.

**The Chairman :** If you have any other Order to cite for what you are saying now, please cite it.

**Prince Olusi :** Thank you, Mr Chairman.

**Mr Laven :** (c) The Chief of Defence Staff; (d) The Chief of the Naval Staff. Then you drop (e) on your Order Paper and make it :

All I have read under numbers (1), (2), (3) and (4) will form No. 1. Then No. 2 :

*The Board may, whenever it deems it necessary, co-opt any Naval Officer or any public officer or any person as a member of the Board for the purpose of any particular meeting of the Board but such naval officer or public officer or person shall have no vote and his membership shall cease at the end of that particular meeting.*

Now, another Amendment proposed is, instead of where I read *The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry charged with responsibility for matters relating to Defence shall be Secretary to the Board*, you bring it down after No. 2.

**The Chairman :** Do you mean, *The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry charged with the responsibility for matters relating to Defence shall be Secretary to the Board ?*

**Mr Laven :** Yes, after the Members, the Permanent Secretary now comes under, that is after the co-opted member then the *Permanent Secretary charged with responsibility et-cetera*, comes below as the Secretary. I can see that you are not following. All right, hon. Members, you just restrict yourselves to what I read first otherwise you get confused.

**The Chairman :** I thought that was better.

**Mr Laven :** Overleaf of my report, the Committee recommends that the Bill be passed as amended, and that the name be maintained as Navy Board. Mr Chairman, Sir, these are the recommendations for Amendment by my Committee, and I beg to move that the Bill be accepted and passed as recommended.

**The Chairman :** Thank you very much, the hon. Chairman of the Defence Committee. Hon. Members, we will go through the Amendments one by one ; thereafter, if you accept the Amendments, we will then go through the Bill itself, clause by clause.

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I have something to say.

**The Chairman :** Yes.

**Mr Etienam :** Speaking in support of this Bill—

**The Chairman :** We have just moved it.

**Mr Etienam :** I have a fundamental Amendment.

**The Chairman :** No, you cannot amend without giving us a Notice of Amendment.

**Mr Etienam :** May I say, Sir, that hon. Uwandu and I, in your absence, filed Amendments to three Bills, that is, the Bill on Army Council, the Air Force and the Navy Board Bills. The first two Bills have been disposed of by this honourable House, and our Amendments were duly accepted. In fact, they were unanimously accepted by this House and reflected in the Bill. If I may continue, Sir, our Amendments to this particular Bill, have been duly filed with the Business Committee but I am surprised that they are not reflected on the Order Paper for today along with the official Amendments from the Committee. This was in your absence, and if the Deputy Speaker is here, he would have advised you as to what happened.

**The Chairman :** What the Chairman of the Committee, Mr John L. Laven, is saying is that your Amendments were taken into consideration and are incorporated here.

**Mr Etienam :** Yes, but one is omitted. Our Amendments to the effect that the President should be the Chairman of the Councils and secondly that *any other person*, that phrase, should be added, and also that the Permanent Secretary, being a Civil Servant, should not be a member of the Board, have all been incorporated in the official Amendments. But, there is a fundamental Amendment regarding the title of the Board.

**The Chairman :** Mr Etienam, you cannot talk of Amendment that is not before this House. How do you talk of something we have not seen ?

**Mr Etienam :** May I speak then? Let us forget about the Amendment.

**The Chairman :** Let us finish with the procedure. He has moved this Motion, let us see who is seconding it.

**Mr Etienam :** I would like to second it so that I could proceed from there. (*Laughter*)

**Mr Sani Abubakar (Roni) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

**The Chairman :** Yes, Mr Etienam.

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I represent Oron II Constituency in Cross River State and the common people of this country. I do not think that the Amendments to the Bill are controversial, and they deserve unanimous support of hon. Members of this distinguished House. I only want to invite the attention of the House to an explanatory note from the report which the Committee submitted to this House. With your permission, Sir, I would like to read it. It says :

*The Committee noted the difference in the nomenclature as with respect to those of the Army and Air Force and the Navy Board, while those of the Army and Air Force Councils.....*

The explanation here is that the Navy in the British armed forces has a traditional seniority over the Army and the Air Force, and that the Council has always been referred to as *Board* to reflect the seniority of the Admiralty over Military. With due respect, Mr Chairman, Sir, I would like to say that the Nigerian Navy, not being an extension of the British Navy, and that the Federal Republic of Nigeria not being a colonial territory any more, I think that for anyone to suggest that we should adopt wholesale the nomenclature of any institution which the British exploiters and colonialists left behind in this country is an insult to the sovereignty of the people of this country.

We are not, I repeat, Sir, we are not, accepting or adopting wholesale everything that the British left behind for us in this country. There is no evidence that the Navy in Nigeria is older and to that extent that it could be accepted to be senior to the Army.

I would like to appeal to the Chairman of the Committee to take note of this observation, that we should not accept this British tradition because our own history of the Armed Forces is quite different from the history of the British Armed Forces. We have not been told that the Nigerian Navy is older than the Army and other arms of the Armed Forces. So, I am suggesting, Sir, that instead of adopting the nomenclature of the British System which is Naval Board we should call our own Navy Council as we have with the Army and the Air Force. That is that.

**The Chairman :** Please round up, and let us finish with the Bill. Have you finished ?

**Mr Etienam :** Yes, Sir, the other Amendment which is—

**The Chairman :** We cannot talk about an Amendment which is not before us.



Is there any other person who would wish to make a comment ?

**Mr T. Olusi (Lagos South III) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, the observation I would like to make is in respect of the Amendment No. 3. (*Interruptions*)

**The Chairman :** Order ! Order ! This is a Committee Meeting.

**Mr Olusi :** Amendment No. 3 relates to the explanatory note. The explanatory note is not part of the Bill. It is the explanation of the Government informing the public of its intention and its idea about the Bill. So, I think that it is not proper for this committee to amend that explanatory note. We can amend the Bill quite all right. I have observed that we have done that in respect of the Army and the Air Force. So, maybe the Committee could take note of this little contribution. Mr Chairman, this is my observation.

**The Chairman :** I agree completely with you Mr Laven, with all due respect, the explanatory note does not form part of the Bill. It is just the Executive's view.

**Mr Laven :** Mr Chairman, Sir, if you remember last week Thursday, I explained to the honourable House that this Clause is not part of the Bill and that it was just put there to throw some light on why the name has been left as *Board* instead of *Council*. We have dealt with it over two times. This is a Navy Council and it is for your guidance. In fact, we have gone down to ask even the Military and the Navy, and we have explored everything on this explanatory note issue and we discovered that they were right. Why should we have to change the nomenclature all over. Thank you, very much.

*Clause 1—(RECONSTITUTION OF MEMBERSHIP OF NAVY BOARD)*

**Mr Isaac Olaleru (Oyun) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I would like to speak on Amendment (a)—*the President who shall be the Chairman of the Board.*

As all of us are aware of the very great task of the President of this country and as the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, I think, Mr Chairman, that we are trying to over-stretch the President. Since the Minister of Defence is supposed to execute whatever decision taken on defence, he has to give the President a feed back. I would suggest that the Minister of Defence rather than the President should be the Chairman of this Committee.

**The Chairman :** That is your view.

**Dr M. B. Ukpung (Abak) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, last week we disposed of two similar Bills and people had exactly the same type of opposition. We are not dealing with the nomenclature of the Bill, but with the Constitutional and legal composition of the Navy Board in Nigeria. I want to talk on Amendment No. 1.

Amendment No. 1, is quite in order because the President of this country should be and, in fact, is directly involved in the defence of this country.

This Committee is a policy-making body that determines the fate of these people, and since the Navy is an important arm of the Government, it is quite in order for the President of this country to be the Chairman. In case of any emergency he will not have the excuse of saying there is no person to speak to ; he will just take a decision by speaking to himself. So, he is not over-stretched. As a matter of fact, the President of a country as great as this should have many responsibilities to protect the territorial integrity and political dignity of a country as great as Nigeria.

The second point is that one of the people talked about the great responsibility of the Minister of Defence not being a member. It is a known fact that in the Presidential System though in theory, or in actual practice there is no clear out line of demarcation in the theory of separation of powers between Law-making, Policy Formulation and Execution. But there must be some indication of that theory at least hypothetically. The Policy making body, that is, the Board is not the one to executive or implement its decision. It is the Ministry, that is the Ministry of Defence, and the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Defence is the person at the base to execute this.

So, I strongly believe that it is quite in order for the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Defence to be there so that immediately after the decision has been taken, and the President wants immediate implementation of the decision, he can just turn to him and say, over to you, Mr Permanent Secretary.

With all these, Mr Chairman, I have to thank the Committee for work well done, and we would like this House Committee to accept the Bill as recommended. Thank you, very much.

**The Chairman :** Let the question be put on Clause—1 so that we finish with it.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the Question in respect of Clause 1 be put.

**The Chairman :** The question is that Clause 1 should stand part of the Bill.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Clause 1—(RECONSTITUTION OF MEMBERSHIP OF NAVY BOARD)*

as amended—*ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

**Mr Afolabi :** I move that question on Clause 2 be put.

**The Chairman :** The question is that Clause 2 should stand part of the Bill.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Clause 2, ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

**Mr O. Afolabi :** Mr Chairman, I move that the Question in respect of Clause 3 be put.

**The Chairman :** That is the one relating to the Explanatory Note. The Clerk, please, read Clauses 1 and 2 one after the other as amended.

**Clerk of the House of Representatives :** The Bill as amended, reads :

*An act to make provision for the number of persons to constitute membership of the Navy Board*

BE IT ENACTED by the National Assembly of the Federation of Nigeria and by authority of the same as follows :—

1. For Section 4 of the Navy Act of 1964 as amended by Section 2 of the Forces Acts amended Decree of 1976 there shall be substituted the following new Section—Membership of Navy Board.

For (1)—The Members of the Board shall be—

(a) The President who shall be the Chairman of the Board ;

(b) The Minister charged with responsibility for matters relating to Defence ;

(c) The Chief of Defence Staff, and

(d) The Chief of the Naval Staff.

2. The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry charged with responsibility for matters relating to Defence shall be secretary to the Board.

3. The Board may, whenever it deems it necessary, co-opt any Naval Officer or any public officer or any person as a member of the Board for the purpose of any particular meeting of the Board but such naval officer or public officer or person shall have no vote and his membership shall cease at the end of that particular meeting.

Clause 3—as amended, ordered to stand part of the Bill.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi** (Oyo East) : Mr Chairman, hon. Members, I move that the Chairman do now report progress.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*(The Speaker resumes his Chair)*

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, the Navy Bill Report has been received and the Committee of the whole House has accepted the Report on the Amendments.

**Mr O. Afolabi** : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I move that the Bill be read the third time and passed into law.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill reported with Amendments, read the Third time and passed.*

**Mr Speaker** : So the Navy Bill has now been passed by the House of Representatives. Members of the Press, do you hear that ? *(Laughter)*

#### Report of the House Committee

**Mr Speaker** : I understand that the House Committee has its report ready for laying on the table. So, if the Chairman likes, he may lay the Report on the table. I am sure it has been distributed to Members.

Several hon. Members : No ! No !

**Mr Speaker** : Just lay it on the table then it will round to Members.

#### NOTICES OF MOTIONS

##### Reactivation of Power Stations

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, we will now go to what we have for the day—Reactivation of Power Stations. Mr F. N. C. Nwandison.

**Mr F. N. C. Nwandison** (Oji River/Agwu South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name :

That this House directs the Committee on Mines and Power to seek ways and means of reactivating all unserviceable Power Stations throughout the country with a view to improving the supply of electricity to neighbouring towns and villages and averting the rampant power failure arising as a result of inadequate power supply in the country.

**Mr E. N. Nweke** (Nkanu) : I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr Nwandison** : Hon. Members, this Motion, as I see it, is non-controversial. It merely seeks the best way of improving our existing power stations. The hardship which electricity consumers in this country suffer as a result of inadequate supply is most painful especially to those who cannot buy a stand-by generating plant. There are terrible losses in manpower.

**Alhaji Sa-idu Ibrahim** (Kiyawa) : Point of order. Mr Speaker, Sir, if I can remember very well, the same type of Motion was passed by this House on the 3rd of December, 1979, and if you can find out from the Chairman of the Committee on Mines and Power, that Committee is now working on this same Motion. I believe if we are going to continue with this sort of thing, then it means (I am sorry to say) that we are going to waste the time of the House. Thank you.

**Mr Speaker** : Mr Olinmah, do you know, whether we have referred any similar Motion to the Committee ? *(Interruptions)*

**Chief P. A. Gbinije** (Ethiophe South) : It is a fact that on the 3rd of December 1979, a Motion was presented on the Floor of this House criticizing the inadequacies and inefficiencies of NEPA. This very Motion was very comprehensively debated on the Floor of this House and it was subsequently referred to the Committee on Mines and Power.

Since that time, the Committee on Mines and Power has started work and has invited the Minister for Mines and Power and the General Manager of NEPA for briefing. Adequate arrangements have been made for Members of the Committee to undertake on-the-spot visits and obtain information from various parts of the country to enable us to present a cross-section information and adequate recommendation to the Floor of this House, which I hope will cover the field being sought for by this Motion. So it would be a duplication of labour and multiplicity to further debate this Motion, which had already been passed in this House.

**Mr Speaker :** I think the view expressed by hon. Member from Kano is correct. (*Interruptions*) Order ! Order ! The Business Committee will please get the Motion suspended until we get the report of the Mines and Power Committee.

#### Insurance Companies

**Mr Tom U. B. Egbuwoku (Isoko) :** I rise to Move the Motion standing in my name—

That in view of the ever rising tide of complaints by members of the public about the unwillingness of many Insurance Companies to settle genuine claims promptly, and considering the malpractices indulged in by unregistered Insurance Companies, this House directs the relevant Committee to investigate these complaints and review the provisions for settlement of claims under existing insurance laws and make recommendations.

I beg to Move.

**Mr Speaker :** Are you amending your Motion? That is not what your Motion says. If you want to amend, amend it. The Motion says that this House directs the Committee on Banking and Currency.

**Mr Egbuwoku :** It was pointed out to me by some Members. It was the Business Committee that put *Banking and Currency*. I thought Insurance was under Trade. That was why I put it to read the relevant Committee.

**Mr Speaker :** The Motion is now before us. There would be proper Amendment and then you continue with your Motion because all these will go into the records. What you would do is to get your Motion suspended so that the proper Amendment would be made.

**Mr Egbuwoku :** Mr Speaker, the point is that I do not think that the issue of Committee on Banking and Currency is substantial. It could be referred to the relevant committee.

**Mr Speaker :** This is our paper and we want another paper like this to come up and say exactly what you want. What is here goes into the records of this House. This is a rule of procedure. If you like you can take any date you like next week.

**Mr Egbuwoku :** Can I take Tuesday so that it will come as the first Motion for the day ?

**Mr Speaker :** The Motion is adjourned till Tuesday to enable Mr Tom Egbuwoku to make Amendment.

**Mr Egbuwoku :** That is all right, Sir.

#### National Voluntary Youth Organisations

**Mr Blessing E. Kayode (Idanre) :** I rise to Move the Motion standing in my name and in the name of Chief Okon Ikpeme—

That in view of the need to effectively, inculcate the social objective of our Constitution in our Youths, and thereby minimize the high incidents of juvenile delinquency and the misdemeanour by youths, this House directs the Committee on Veteran Affairs and Social Welfare to :—

(i) investigate the causes of the high incidence

of juvenile delinquency and indiscipline among Nigerian youths ; and

(ii) consider the role being played by the National Voluntary Youth Organisations in combating these evils and therefore to recommend other ways and means of ameliorating these social problems throughout the country, as an added effort to what these organisations are doing.

I beg to Move.

**Mr M. L. Na-Rogo (Karaye) :** Mr Speaker Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Kayode :** Mr Speaker, Sir, it is no gainsaying to mention that the success and progress of any nation depends largely on the quality of training and the direction given to its youths. This is why a nation should always aspire to give guidelines and form a central body to cater for the youths of that country. The problem becomes even more acute in a nation that is diversified tribally and linguistically, and this nation has to look at the burning question of national unity.

The existence of a nation like Nigeria depends largely on the ideas and the cross-fertilisation of the ideas of its youths. On the examination of the role of the youths in our present day society emphasis needs be laid on what roles the youths can play as regards the changing political and social patterns in our society. Useful programmes should be designed and a good sense of responsibility should be inculcated in our youths. No doubt, Mr Speaker, the youths require some sense of stimulation, direction and encouragement where we are trying to encourage them to take part in our development programmes.

As at today, Mr Speaker, nobody can dispute the fact that there is wanton incidence of juvenile delinquency in the Nigerian society. These delinquencies range from heavy smoking of weeds, reckless and excessive drinking, drug addiction, truancy, wanton destruction of property by students and the craze for undesirable fashion, culture, and what have you.

On close examination of these social maladies in our society, Mr Speaker, we realise that agents like our government, parents and guardians of young people, institutions of higher learning, lack of career counselling, unemployment among young people and inconducive environment are largely responsible for these social ills in our society. This is because our country, unlike the progressive countries of the world, has not come out with or evolved any acceptable dynamic youth policy.

Mr Speaker, Sir, from this Motion, you will realise that it is non-controversial and it cuts across party affiliations and ideologies, and I am sure we all stand to gain so much by the proper up-bringing of our younger generation. Therefore, Mr Speaker, I am saying that in compliance with Section 14 (ii) (b) of our constitution and I quote : *The security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government*, we should pass this Motion.

am, therefore, saying that our governments have not taken adequate care of our younger generation, and this is why the Committee on *Veteran*

*Affairs and Social Welfare* should investigate further causes of Juvenile Delinquency in our youths. It may interest you, Mr Speaker, to note that on several occasions when students or youths misbehave, government actions on these misbehaviours are often condemned or flouted, all just because such orders lack ingredients which are capable of curbing Juvenile Delinquency.

Whereas many national voluntary youth organisations have well intended and well designed programmes for curbing evil tendencies in young people, our governments are doing nothing to solve the problems. For the purpose of records, I would like to mention just a few of these national voluntary youth organisations in this country. We have the Boys Scout of Nigeria, the Council of Catholic Youths Organisation, the Federation of Boys and Girls Club, the Girls Guide Association of Nigeria, the National Federation of Young Farmers Club of Nigeria, the Girls Guide of Nigeria, the Islamic Youths League of Nigeria and the Local Students Union formerly called the NUNS, the Boys Brigade, Young Men, Young Women Christian Associations, the Voluntary Workers Association and so many others. Very important, too, we have the nineteen State Youth Councils co-ordinating the activities of these voluntary youth organisations and perhaps, to crown it all, is the National Youth Council of Nigeria which serves as the National Co-ordinator and as the apex youth body.

Further, Mr Speaker, Sir, these voluntary organisations embark on activities like community development projects or self-help projects, games and sports, young farmers club activities, life-saving and humanitarian activities, exchange visit programmes, adult literacy campaigns, career counselling activities, camping activities, National Youth awards activities or programmes, lectures, symposia, seminars and other social activities.

Mr Speaker, Sir, from the foregoing, you will agree with me that this is a Motion which I want every hon. Member of this House to buy. By so doing, we will be doing a lot to reduce the wave of juvenile delinquency in our society so that in and out of school youths will make judicious use of their leisure and the wave of juvenile delinquency will be considerably reduced.

I beg to move.

**Chief Okon Ikpeme (Akampa):** Mr Speaker, Sir, the good intentions of this Motion, as we all have seen, cut across political and religious frontiers. In fact, as the first speaker on the Motion has said, the Motion is not at all controversial and it will therefore, I hope, gain the support of every hon. Member of this House. But for the fact that it is traditional or conventional for Motions to be debated, I am sure all Members by now would have asked this honourable House to pass the Motion without debating it.

The first speaker, hon. Kayode, has mentioned some of these National Voluntary Youth Organisations. I will therefore not repeat what he has said. But from what he has said, we have seen that all of them have one principal objective, and that is the moulding of the character of our youths. We all

know that in spite of all these attempts by voluntary organisations and by individuals, our youths of today appear to be a little more unruly than their predecessors. The purpose of this Motion, therefore, is to help to highlight those conditions we know, or feel, are responsible for these unruly conditions among the youths in our society. We have also seen that it has the aim of bringing home to our youths, the students in particular, the social objectives of our Constitution and this is why the National Pledge is embodied in a lot of our activities these days.

In order not to repeat what the hon. Member has said, I will only briefly highlight those points I feel will help the Committee on this matter to quicken their work by bringing up recommendations that will help us nip in the bud, if that will mean what we are trying to do, the increasing incidence of juvenile delinquency in our society. I recommend thus :

Firstly, is what we see to be explosion of experience and knowledge. We have seen that before the advent of Television, the Radio and even the Newspapers and Magazines, education was virtually individualised. Our Parents, the Churches or whatever religious organisations we were attached to as well as the schools, took upon themselves to educate the child and to inculcate in the child the need for moral and religious well being of the society.

In fact what happened the other day that led to the death of so many persons in Black Maria should not have happened had the few people who were there not taken to the streets and done those things that attracted the suspicion of the Police. We see that as soon as our youths begin to learn to read, they actually and avidly read magazines and every other paper and publication that come their way. As soon as they do this they begin to, by make-belief, practise what the notorious characters portray in what they have read. In fact, it is this type of character that appeals to them more than the disciplined one and this is why we feel that much of our films and much of our reading materials, especially those designed for the children, should actually be censored in this country.

Another point we know is responsible for this situation is the qualification of the Nigerian teachers. Every day, every week, every month of the year, we read of riots, destruction of the Teacher's or the Principal's property and quarters and this is actually tied up with delinquency in youths. Quite often too, we discover that the teacher himself is responsible. And for this we should say it is a form of adult delinquency also. In the past, the teacher's qualifications were taken into account. In fact, his character was one of the basic qualifications for training him to become a teacher, but these days, we find that anybody, by any means, can become a teacher and have the opportunity to corrupt our children and make things difficult for the society.

It is the intention of this Motion to ask our governments to review the system of training of our teachers and those leaders who come to handle these young hearts.

[CHIEF IKPEME]

Another point we want to highlight is the uncontrolled exhibition of affluence. By this, I am not trying to refer to the so-called spraying because that, I think, is traditional and goes a long way to make people appreciate what others do. But we find that some parents and some adults dish out money to children more than those children actually need, and fail to control the expending of such money. By doing this, they entice other children to look for ways and means of raising such money and by this they actually stray and do what constitutes nuisance to the society.

The fourth point I want to mention is the out-dated method of approach in our effort to solve the problem of delinquency. In fact, in spite of all advancement we have made in science and technology, we still find that our schools are very badly equipped in men and materials. We have failed to move with time, as far as this is concerned.

We are only trying to highlight those points which will help our Committee do their work fast. We have seen, Mr Speaker, Sir, that when these children come under the old way of teaching in the modern cities, they find that the energy in them is not properly spent and for this reason, they have to play some form of truant activities to give them the opportunity to spend their energy.

Another thing we found to be responsible is the influence of our homes and the surroundings. Every day, every night, we find children hawking in the streets and doing those things that help to spoil them. We have seen that the main reason for this is the high cost of education in this country. If our education were made to cost less, parents of every average home will be able to sponsor their children to higher schools without allowing the children to resort to some form of life that help to spoil them.

If we go to many homes, we will find how loose the people there live. Nothing is kept away from the children that actually play on their intelligence and character. This is why we feel that the Parents Teachers Association has actually lost its essence. When this Association was first introduced into this country in 1955, the principal aim was to help the parents, the teachers and the Schools to interact and help one another to bring up these children in a normal, very good, conducive conditions and thereby help the society to live without fear of their children getting spoilt.

Mr Speaker, Sir, these are the highlights of what we find to be the principal causes of our children's delinquency. The first speaker on this Motion has said a little about our National Organisations not being properly funded and this is where we have to blame our governments to a point.

We feel that the governments have not actually funded these organisations and helped them to make use of these funds for the well-being of our children.

Just last week, we heard of Alhaji Jalo Waziri crying out for lack of funds to help the Scout Movement to carry out its activities throughout the Federation. If the government has actually taken this thing to heart, it would have been the other way round. Mr Speaker, Sir, we are now calling on

this honourable House to help us to appeal to our government to, please, help us fund these organisations and thereby help to reduce these delinquencies and other conditions in our society. With this, Mr Speaker, Sir, I say thank you.

**Mr Speaker :** NPN.

**Mr J. O. Odeunmi** (Ogbomosho South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion. An author in his book says *if you want your community to change, you must train your youths*. A warrior made mention in his book that he did not fear the booming of a gun, but he respected the youths because these youths will become the judges, the Speakers, the Ministers, the hon. Members and even the Executive President of a country in the future. So, if we want the Nigerian society to change, we must train our youths because these youths are young to take in the lessons given to them.

People say that a fool at 40 is a fool for ever. If you cannot train your youths, when they become older, they cannot take in the lessons again. So, by this time Nigeria should think of the youths and how to train them to have morale so that they will be fit physically and mentally. With this, I support the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Any other NPN Member ? Yes, Chief Akintola.

**Chief Yomi Akintola** (Ogbomosho Central) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion. In doing so, Sir, I wish to draw our attention to some problems which are affecting the everyday life of our children. Things have changed since our parents have passed off and we have started training our own children too. In the days of our fathers, our mothers were not compelled to work, but now our wives and ourselves have to go to work.

It is most unfortunate that the only other means whereby our children enjoy some discipline is now being taken away from them. I am now making my views known with regard to the elimination or eroding away of boarding schools. Unfortunately, this is part of the problems which are affecting youths of today.

Another problem is this. In years gone by we had community centres built in every town in the Federation. Unfortunately, most of these community centres now are being used or have more or less been taken away and we have been substituting sky-scrapers and other buildings for them. Unfortunately again, our children are the worst for it.

Another thing Sir, is that when I was in school we had playing grounds. These playing grounds have now gone and in their places we have night-clubs and what-have-you. So, these are part of the problems which this Committee should, please, look into. All over the country, previously we had places where youths could gather and play ping pong. Unfortunately now, youths who are interested in this game have to make shifts whenever they want to play this game.

We have to get our priorities right. Our children have been neglected and in place of discipline, we have a new trend. When children have no where to go, they start smoking hemp and misbehaving. This is not limited to children in secondary schools alone. Even our younger brothers and sisters who are in the universities are equally involved. Apart from their university life when they are in the campus, they have nothing else to do when they leave the campus. We should advise our various governments to look into these problems and create avenues whereby these young ones can have other ways of letting off steam apart from going to night-clubs. With these few remarks, Sir, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** NPP.

**Mr G. I. Anukwuem (Ihite Uhome) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, in my own contribution, Sir, juvenile delinquency, insubordination, and misbehaviour in our youths cannot be over emphasised. In my own observation, Sir, indiscriminate television shows and radio announcements in many cases help in spoiling our youths. These assist them in their behaviour, acting without knowing the consequences of their behaviour.

At the same time, Mr Speaker, Sir, in order to curb the excesses observed at the moment among youths in Nigeria, I think it will be proper to assist the youth organisations in the country that are involved in organising youths of all cultures in Nigeria.

At the same time, the Parents/Teachers Associations that help to do some good work in schools need to be assisted in every manner possible by the Government, so that their job would assist in making sure that youths behaviour in Nigeria is well controlled, thereby curbing the excesses and misbehaviour of our youths.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr Gambo Alhaji (Gulba) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion.

In fact, this is a very important Motion. We all know that the moral of our youths is below standard. One of the best things to do in order to reduce immorality among our youths is to ban all these Chinese films and other things which teach our youths such immorality which we are now trying to rectify.

Another way of reducing juvenile delinquency in our country is to introduce compulsory free education at all levels. (*Interruptions*) If all our children are accommodated in schools, they would not have time to roam about or run away from their homes.

With these few remarks, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr Mohammed Lawal Na-Rogo (Karaye) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion.

To start with, if we are to be fair and frank, the older generation would not claim moral sanctity over the youths of this country. The point is that the youths inherited whatever is their behaviour from

the older ones. The older generation is rotten ; this rottenness is passed down to the youths of this country. If a father is not rotten, he would not allow his child to be rotten.

To buttress my point the moral decadence and juvenile delinquency in this country which amounted to a sort of laxity amongst the youths are a reminiscence of the whole societal values, norms and culture. The youthful exuberance in this country started from the highest echelon of the Nigerian society. You cannot separate one from the other. It all started from the quest for materialism, which is the principle of grab and grab. Unfortunately, we are not yet allowed to speak in Hausa, otherwise, I would have said *wahura ahandama*. The quest for materialism has so much beclouded our minds that it now leads the youths to compete with one another. As a result, those who are not able to grab their own share of the loot would invariably be caught up in a sort of frustration which would lead them to alcoholism, drug-abuse and other vices.

Another factor, I believe, is the unchecked migration of the youths from rural areas to urban centres. We have long forgotten about our cultural heritage, which is, agriculture. When there is a large influx of the youths from the rural areas to the urban centres, they would have no employment. Therefore, in order to escape from frustration, they would just turn to become drug addicts and alcoholic, which would lead them to unwanted activities which are clandestine in nature and which, of course, would lead to unwarranted operations.

Therefore, we all have to change our attitude in this country. The whole point centres on, as I have said earlier on, quest for materialism. If we are to be liberal, humane, kind, just and fair, this society would give the younger generation another lease of life and the only way we can go about that is through democratic humanism. Democratic humanism, I believe, is the only answer to all our problems in this country. These heinous activities which have been passed down to our youths were not the making of our youths but of the older generation. The older ones should check themselves that is, the mother, the father, and all the elderly ones should check their activities, deeds, speeches and their approach to many things in life. I believe that if we can give this Committee a chance on veteran and social welfare—

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member for Karaye (*Mr Mohammed Lawal Na-Rogo*), the time is now going to one o'clock, please, wind up.

**Mr Na-Rogo :** It is all right, Sir, I shall soon take my seat. The older people of Nigeria should take their time and stop encouraging juvenile delinquency.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Mr Afolabi.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, there is an important announcement which I would like to make to this honourable House. As you all know, there is going to be a national assignment. With effect from Saturday, 9th March, 1980, Nigeria shall be hosting the African Cup of

[MR AFOLABI]

Nations. As representatives of our people, it behoves us to support this great nation to win this cup for the first time.

As such, I am suggesting to this honourable House that every hon. Member should donate a token contribution of ₦10. This would serve as a sort of support for the members of the Green Eagles. We should try to do this within today and tomorrow. Members can pay more, but we are asking for a minimum of ₦10.

Secondly, Representative Tubo Bob-Manuel from Rivers State, has kindly volunteered to arrange for us to get tickets so that Members who want to watch any of the matches would be able to do so. He has

volunteered to arrange with the Sport Council so that it would be very easy for Members to watch these important events.

So, hon. Members, I want to appeal to all of you to kindly give your financial support to this great team, the Green Eagles, so that Nigeria shall win this cup.

Thank you, very much.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, the time now is 1 o'clock and in accordance with Standing Orders 5, Rule 7, the House stand adjourned till 10 o'clock on Monday morning

*The House adjourned at 1 p.m. without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order 5 (7).*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Monday, 10th March, 1980

The House met at 10.10 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Speaker in the Chair)

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, I have seen the Votes and Proceedings of Thursday, the 6th March, 1980, and they have been approved.

Today we have presentation of Committee Reports. The first report is by the Committee on Public Service Matters—the presentation of the report on Police Service Commission Bill.

Mr Atta, have you distributed the report?

**Mr David Atta (Ikpokwu) :** Yes.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Police Service Commission Bill

**Mr David Atta (Ikpokwu) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I rise to move that this House do receive the report of the Committee on Public Service Matters in respect of the Police Service Commission Bill.

I beg to move.

**Mr Damisa Jimoh (Okehi Adavbi) :** I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Mr Atta, you have to read your own report to us word for word, or paragraph by paragraph, as the case may be. When you read one paragraph and we understand it, you will go on to the next. If you have an Amendment, let us know.

**Mr Atta :** The first one is an Act to make provision for the number of persons to constitute Membership of the Police Service Commission as required by the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Mr Speaker, Sir, your Committee is pleased to submit the report and recommendations on the above-mentioned Bill referred to it for action. The Bill was critically examined by the Committee and we believe the following key elements will facilitate its determination.

1. THIRD SCHEDULE :

It is necessary to explain that the Bill is in pursuance of paragraph 17 of the Third Schedule to the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1979. The said paragraph 17 of the Third Schedule provides that the Police Service Commission shall comprise the following members :

(a) A Chairman, and

(b) Such number of other persons, not less than seven but not more than nine, as may be prescribed by an Act of the National Assembly.

2. COMPOSITION :

The Bill provides that the Commission shall consist of nine members, being the maximum allowed, in addition to the Chairman.

3. POWERS :

The Commission shall have power—

(a) to advise the President on the appointment of the Inspector-General of Police ;

(b) to appoint persons to offices other than the office of the Inspector-General of Police in the Nigeria Police ;

(c) to dismiss and exercise disciplinary control over persons holding any of the offices referred to in sub-paragraph (b) above.

4. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS :

The Chairman and members of the Commission shall, subject to the provisions of the Constitution, be appointed by the President, and the appointment shall be subject to confirmation by the Senate.

5. QUALIFICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP :

(1) No person shall be qualified for appointment as a member of the Commission if :

(a) he is not qualified or if he is disqualified for election as a member of the House of Representatives ;

(b) within the preceding 10 years, he has been removed as a member of any Federal Commission or Council, or as the holder of any other office on the ground of misconduct.

(2) Any person employed in the public service of the Federation shall not be disqualified for appointment as Chairman or member of any such bodies :

Provided that where such person has been duly appointed he shall, on his appointment, be deemed to have resigned his former office as from the date of the appointment.

(3) No person shall be qualified for appointment to the Commission if having previously been appointed a member otherwise than as an *ex-officio* member of that body, he has been re-appointed for a further term as a member of the same body.

6. REMOVAL OF MEMBERS :

Subject to the provisions of Subsection 3 above any person holding any of the offices to which this Section applies may only be removed from that office by the President acting on an address supported by two-thirds majority of the Senate praying that he be so removed for inability to discharge the functions of the Office whether arising from infirmity of mind or body or any other cause or of misconduct.



[MR ATTA]

## Recommendation

Mr Speaker, Sir, your Committee strongly recommends that the Bill be passed as originally intended for the following reasons :

(a) It is within the constitutional competence of the President.

(b) Similarly, the requirements of the Bill are within the limits stipulated in the Constitution.

(c) Your Committee is also of the opinion that the establishment of the Police Service Commission is desirable to perform the aforesaid functions.

I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you very much. It appears that, from the Report, there is no Amendment. First of all, let somebody move that the Bill be read for the Second time and then the House will resolve into a Committee.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the Bill be read the Second time and that the House do resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House for the purpose of considering the Bill.

**Mr A. B. Yahaya (Ilorin East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

## POLICE SERVICE COMMISSION BILL

A Bill for an Act to make provision for the number of Persons to constitute Membership of the Police Service Commission as required by the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria—CONSIDERED IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE.

**Mr F. O. Iyayi (Okpebho) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I just wish to draw the attention of the honourable House to the fact that our job here is very simple because we are only required to make provision to consider this Bill in respect of the number of persons to constitute Police Service Commission.

This is provided for under paragraph 17 of the Third Schedule sub-paragraph (b) of the Constitution :

*The Police Service Commission shall comprise the following members, namely—*

(a) *The Chairman, and*

(b) *such number of other persons, not less than 7 but not more than 9, as may be prescribed by an Act of the National Assembly.*

Our powers here are just to legislate on the number, and we are not concerned with the names of individuals. That is within the discretion of the President, with the confirmation of the Senate. The other point I would like to—

**The Chairman :** Is that a question? If you have a question you can ask so that the Chairman of the Committee will answer.

**Mr Iyayi :** I have no question, I am trying to explain.

**The Chairman :** No, you are not a member of the Committee, so you just make your comments on the report.

**Mr Iyayi :** I make this comment to avoid any—

**The Chairman :** That is the job of the Chairman of the Committee. If you want to say anything on the report please do so.

**Mr Iyayi :** I happen to be a Member of the Committee.

**The Chairman :** I see, that is very good. So, you can throw more light on the report.

**Mr Iyayi :** If you look at paragraph 4 at page 2 of the Committee's report, you will find that the provision there is already woven into Section 141 subsection (1) of the Constitution so that is not to be debated. I do not think I need to read Section 141 sub section (1) at page 48 of the Constitution because it is already well set out in the report. Also paragraph 5 as regards qualification for membership is woven into Section 143 of the Constitution which you will find at page 49. So also is the power of removal of Members, this is provided for in Section 144 of the Constitution. To me, Mr Chairman, the report is clear and straightforward and I think that Members will not hesitate to approve the Bill. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

*Clauses 1-2 ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I report the Bill from Committee without amendment and move that it be read the Third time and passed.

*Question proposed.*

**Mr O. Otegbeye (Lagelu North) :** I have an explanation to make.

**Mr Speaker :** Please, wait a minute. You know we are at the Third reading. You lost your chance at the Second Reading of the Bill.

**Mr Otegbeye :** I thought as much, and I raised my hand to make my explanation.

**Mr Speaker :** I said, did anybody want to make any comment? I said it several times.

**Mr Otegbeye :** The explanation is not late. It is in the interest of the National Assembly.

**Mr Speaker :** You are out of order.

**Mr Otegbeye :** It is an explanation on important omission, Mr Speaker, Sir.

**Mr Speaker :** We have procedures here and we must go by the rules. I rule that you will not make the explanation.

**Mr Otegbeye :** Thank you.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, the question now is that the Bill be passed into law.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill read the Third time and passed.*

**Report on Vehicle Basic Allowance for Workers**

**Mr David Atta** (Okpokwu East) : I rise to move that the House do receive the Report of the Committee on Public Service Matters in respect of vehicle basic allowance for workers.

I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Ekok Ojogu** (Ikom) : I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : The proper Motion is that this Report be laid on the Table, so that Members would go home and digest it.

**Mr D. Atta** : I rise to move that the Report be laid on the Table for the consideration of the House and to be taken on when the House deems it appropriate. I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, is there anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr F. O. Iyayi** (Okpebho) : I beg to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Mr Speaker** : Well, the document is now received and is on the Table of this House. Each Member will get a copy, go through the Report and then the Business Committee will set a date for the debate on this Report.

The Chairman of the Committee on Public Works, please you will write a letter to the engineer responsible for the air-conditioners here. I understand that they were persuaded to come and put water into the equipment here during the weekend and they refused. So, I have sent for the engineer responsible who I understand is at Ijora. I do not know if he would be here before the House rises today. So, send a letter asking him to appear before this House. We are going to enter into very serious business from this week and we do not want these fans. I do not know why this thing should always happen in this Chamber. Please ask him to appear before this House with all his subordinates so that we know why they could not come at the weekend to put water into the equipments.

**NOTICES OF MOTIONS**

**Formation of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association : National Assembly Branch**

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : I rise to move the first Motion standing in my name on the Order Paper—

That the National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria resolves that a Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association be formed in the Nigerian National Assembly with effect from 1st January, 1980, and hereby instructs the Clerks of the National Assembly to forward this Resolution to the Secretary-General of the Association for submission to the General Assembly of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

I beg to move.

**Mr O. Afolabi** (Oyo East) : I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, Alhaji Kaltungo, have you anything to say ? Or has anybody anything to say on this Motion ?

**Mr Mohammed Lawal Na-Rogo** (Karaye) : Mr Speaker, I would like to make a few comments with regard to this Motion—that is, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. Mr Speaker, Sir, from my own observation, it is transparently clear to me that we are still attracted to the colonial bondage of yester-years. Let us have another Parliamentary life altogether. Let us have another Parliamentary Union. Let us try to get out of this Commonwealth. Commonwealth for what ? I do not see anything in common that binds any of these countries to Nigeria such that we should come together under one roof. This is my only submission.

**Mr D. Agi** (Oju) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I feel this House should accept the call being made by the Leader of the House, Alhaji Kaltungo, for the Nigerian National Assembly to belong to this Association. I think it is time we did away with the fear and inferiority complex that anything having to do with the former colonial masters of this nation and many other developing countries should be condemned straight-away.

I think we are now of age ; we can belong to any camp, we can belong to any group, but what we do, when we do it, anyhow we do it is what matters. It is not by making calculated attempt to isolate ourselves that we can remain ourselves. It is in fact by belonging to many other groups, and taking our stand based upon our own convinced principle, that we can maintain our identity.

So, I move and I support that we belong to this Association. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Abiodun Afonja** (Oyo Central) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise in support of this Motion. Mr Speaker, Sir, we all know that the Commonwealth of Nations is a voluntary Association of nations which, at one time or the other, were under the flag of the British Empire, on which, at that time, the sun never set. But today, I think we can congratulate ourselves that the Empire has become an Empire of the setting sun, and membership of this kind of Association will definitely help us to ensure that the sun sets permanently.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the idea of the word *Commonwealth* itself in the past, really meant that British wealth was British wealth but the other people's wealth was held in common. But today, Mr Speaker, Sir, you can be assured that the battle for economic independence which is one of the most difficult battles we can ever be called upon to fight, can be enhanced by membership of this Association, in the sense that when we sit together as equals or co-equals or near-equals, it will be easier for us to put our points across.

So, Mr Speaker, I whole-heartedly support our membership of this Association. Thank you.

**Mrs Biola Babatope** (Mushin Central) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I think we should conform with the practice of this House, as we have always done in this House. When this Motion was moved by the Leader of this House, I expected that he should give a follow-up on his Motion. This would have enlightened Members of the House why it is necessary or otherwise to join the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, and one would not be in a position to blame any Member who gets up and wonders why we should be a member of this Association.

Though I support this Motion I would like us to place all our cards on the table before we rush this House into jumping into conclusions. We are not all informed to-date as to what is going on in the National Assembly, and I believe that the forum of discussing and debating in this Assembly will enable all Members to know precisely what is going on.

As the last Speaker has said, we stand to gain a lot by being a member of this Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. Last week, we were all rejoicing at the success of Mugabe in the last elections, but if there had been no forum where the various members of the Commonwealth had been able to express their views and give their support to the Nationalist Movement, maybe that last election would not have come up with the resounding success it was.

I support the Motion and I would like us to make optimum use of the opportunity offered to us by this Association. It should not be only a selected few of the Members of this Assembly that should benefit from the wealth of experience which one could gain from this Association. As many of our Members as possible should be exposed to workshops, seminars, and working groups such that many more of us would be used to Parliamentary Procedure and we would be able to put our views effectively forward when we are called upon to represent Nigeria in any Association in the world, and our representation would be to the pride of our country.

Thank you.

**Mr Asgwana Apagu Waba** (Askira Uba) : Mr Speaker, Sir, if my memory serves me right, I think we do not have to even debate this Motion at all, because sometime ago we really did resolve to join the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association either in November or December. Now, it is time to approve the formation and we are now trying to oppose it again. I think that the Question should be put. We did actually resolve sometime ago to join the Parliamentary Association.

**Mr Speaker** : There was a debate sometime ago on this issue.

**Mr Waba** : Yes, and we resolved to join the Parliamentary Association.

**Mr Speaker** : What happened was that it was the I.P.U. that we voted in favour of, that is Inter-Parliamentary Union. That was the one we agreed upon. This one is quite in order. Please, move that the question be put and let us get out of it.

**Several hon. Members** : No ! No !

**Mr Speaker** : You want further debate ?

**Several hon. Members** : Yes !

**Several hon. Members** : No !

**Alhaji Y. Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That the National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria resolves that a Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association be formed in the Nigerian National Assembly with effect from 1st January, 1980 and hereby instructs the Clerk of the National Assembly to forward this Resolution to the Secretary-General of the Association for submission to the General Assembly of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

#### Membership of the Union of African Parliaments

**Alhaji Y. Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, the Second Motion concerns Membership of the Union of African Parliaments.

That in accordance with the provision of Article 4, Section II (Membership) of the Statute of the Union of African Parliaments (UAP), and in view of Nigeria's desire to promote and encourage contacts between African Members of Parliaments among themselves, as well as between African Members and Members of Parliaments of other continents, towards the strengthening of the role and prestige of the institution of Parliament, as well as the operation of effective representative democracy and the contribution to the fulfillment of the Objectives of the Organisation of African Unity, the National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria resolves to join the Union of African Parliaments and directs the Clerk of the National Assembly to take necessary action to forward this Resolution to the Secretary-General of the Union for transmission through the Executive Committee to the General Assembly of the Union of African Parliaments.

I beg to move.

**Mr O. Afolabi** (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to second.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, any comments ?

**Mr Akintunde Rotimi** (Ekiti North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, while I rise, to support the Motion of this kind of membership, I would like to place before the House some of my reservations. These reservations could be applied to the way we debated and passed the same resolution on the formation of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. Naturally, if you want to join any Association, it is expected that you, should know the terms and conditions under which you are joining it. Now, we have been out of the Parliamentary system for the period of thirteen years. At the moment, we do not even know the conditions that prevail under this association. Now, in view of this, Mr Speaker, Sir—

**Dr Junaid S. Mohammed** (West Ward) Point of order.

**Mr Speaker** : There is a point of order.

**Dr J. S. Mohammed** (West Ward) : Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of order has to do with the leaflets deposited in our boxes. I would advise the Member to go through those leaflets so as to know the conditions and what the terms are instead of coming to drag us behind. Please, there should be progress.

**Mr Speaker** : Please address the Chair.

**Mr Rotimi** : My reservation goes as follows : in order that we may have full knowledge of what prevails in all these associations, I would have thought that the Committee on Foreign Relations Affairs should scrutinize the existing conditions and terms of Membership of these associations. It is natural that a powerful country such as Nigeria should belong to all these international organisations. There is no doubt about that, but it is equally pertinent for Members to know what operates in this association. With these few comments, Mr Speaker, Sir, I support the Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : I thought you have got copies of the leaflets a long time ago.

**Mr Rotimi** : No, I have no copy of it.

**Mr Speaker** : May be you have not got it. This is why we should come here everyday and when you come you should go to the pigeon hole.

**Mr P. E. S. Ideh** (Ughelli) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion before this House. The text of the Motion, Mr Speaker, Sir, invites this House to take part in the deliberations which compliment the African people. Section 19 of the Constitution states—

*The State shall promote African Unity, as well as total political, economic, social and cultural liberation of Africa and all other forms of international co-operation conducive to the consolidation of universal peace and mutual respect and friendship among all peoples and States, and shall combat racial discrimination in all its manifestations.*

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is only by belonging to this kind of Association that we can effect and assert our total opposition to apartheid and that sort of thing which we are trying to fight. It is also, by associating with this kind of body, that we can actually participate to unite the African people the way envisaged by the Constitution. Mr Speaker, Sir, with this note, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr B. A. Chaha** (Katsina-Ala) : Mr Speaker, Sir, Hon. Members I rise to support this Motion, and in doing so, I would like to remind this House that when the first Motion on Inter-Parliamentary Union was brought up, I think I was the first person to oppose it, giving some reasons why. On that day in this House, Members were fairly against that Motion and our own argument was geared towards saying that it could be better to have that one of Africa. This concerns African Parliamentary Union.

We cannot oppose this Motion because it has to do with Africa. Nigeria has an effective role to play, not only in Africa, but the world over. One would have expected Nigeria to be the leading Member of this Union, as far as I am concerned, because this is even embodied in our constitution that we have to cater for the welfare of this continent. Therefore, Mr Speaker, I see no reason why we should argue or oppose this Motion. Nobody is opposing this Motion. The only thing is to pass it easily. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Alhaji Sidi Ali** (Dambatta) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, now that this House has resolved to join the Commonwealth Union where we all know the Queen is always the first President or the Head of Union even if our President is there, it would be difficult for us or for me to rise here and oppose the African Union. Therefore, I am not opposing, neither am I supporting. But Mr Speaker—

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Member for Dambatta (*Alhaji Sidi Ali*), so, you want to abstain ? You cannot speak on abstention. You can only speak for or against a particular Motion. You cannot speak on abstention.

**Alhaji Sidi Ali** : I am supporting Africa.

**Mr Speaker** : You are opposing the Motion.

**Alhaji Sidi Ali** : I am not opposing the Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : You are in support of the Motion ?

**Alhaji Sidi Ali** : Yes, Mr Speaker, Sir, I am supporting Africa. Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to speak on this issue, because I feel very strongly that this is an emotional issue, if to nobody, but to me personally. When the Republic of the Congo which later became Zaire Republic became independent, we all knew that was the first democratic government elected in that part of Africa under a constitution known as *Lois Fondamentales* in which Prime Minister Lumumba had the greatest number in that House and was overthrown by a Sergeant whose agent is today inviting us to sit down and talk about democracy in that country.

Mr Speaker, Sir, today in Africa, Nigeria, Ghana and The Gambia I think, are the only three democratic countries which can sit down and talk about democracy or call for Union of Parliamentary Council. If we look at those countries which are attending the meeting, we will see that they are those African countries that had their last elections in 1960 and their heads are still in power there. Most of them are Military Regimes which we abhor, and this was why we fought and laid down our lives to have a democratic government in Nigeria today.

Mr Speaker, Sir, if we go there, that is, if we pass this Motion to join the Union, Nigeria should use her resources and do everything possible to force those areas that have dictatorial military regimes and also diarchies, or, where the African Leaders have been sitting as Heads of State, for the past twenty years, to effect some sort of change so that we can have proper democratic institutions in Africa.

[ALHAJI ALI]

Mr Speaker, Sir, with the millions of naira we are committing to other African countries like Zimbabwe and Azania, it would be hypocritical for us to sit down with these dictatorial rulers in one Union called African Parliamentary Union.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Sir, although I support this Motion, I am only calling on our leaders or whoever will represent us, to do everything possible to see that proper democratic institutions are elected in the various African countries and are preserved. Thank you.

**Mr Speaker :** I will remind the hon. Member for Kano State about the provisions of the Charters of the Organisation of African Unity and the United Nations, that we must not interfere in the internal affairs of other countries.

**Mr S. U. Wanganga (Aba) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion, but I have a few cautions to sound. The cautions are that Nigeria has come a long way to become democratic. In Nigeria today, we have Leaders, those who won, those who lost, all accepting their lots, but it is not the same thing in most of these countries whom we will be joining in this African Parliamentary Association.

I am, in fact, supporting very strongly, what hon. Sidi Ali has said, because it is not enough just to say we belong to an organisation and you find a dictator sitting on one side and a bandist sitting on the other side, and Nigeria goes and mingles with them and comes out neither democratic nor one of the others. Therefore, I believe that a club like this should be exclusive to real democratic countries of Africa. It should be an exclusive club, and once a country becomes a member, it means that country has arrived, because democracy is the only way by which human beings should be ruled; no other way. Military dictatorship is a government of the cowards and that is why they carry guns. Democracy is the only form of government where people win or lose. When they win, they rule and when they lose, they sit down. That is how human beings should be governed. We are not animals.

Therefore, Nigeria has another leadership role to play. Her shining leadership role affecting Zimbabwe has yielded fantastic results, and we are all very proud of it. This is another leadership role. We are saying that we are democratic, and if you want to belong to this Association of which we intend to become members, you should be democratic. A lot of people in power in Africa today have seized that power, surreptitiously, they wangled the elections and got ninety *per cent* votes which are no votes. A lot of these countries submit one list for elections and they force the people to vote for that one list. There is no choice, and when there is no choice, it cannot be democratic. We join democratic organisations, we do not join communist organisations or dictatorships.

To that extent, I support this Motion but I would like our Leaders, especially Leaders of the Parliament, because this is a legislative affair, to go in there and fuse new conditions. It is not enough to say because the OAU says it is all right or you

do not interfere in the internal affairs of others we should fold our arms and see our fellow Africans being suppressed and treated like animals by people who are not more intelligent than they are except that they are more destructive than they are. To that extent, I add my support but I want Nigeria to show another sign of leadership and lead Africa to democracy. That is the only decent way human beings should be governed. Thank you.

**Mr Lawan (Geidam South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I was sitting down here laughing while some hon. Members were talking about the undemocratic attitude of other African countries, when we ourselves here in this country are not democratic.

**Several hon. Members :** No! No!

**Mr Lawan :** Yes, we are not democratic. Mr Speaker, Sir, we have been debating and passing Resolutions in this House which do not carry any weight. At the early stages of the sittings of the National Assembly, a Motion was passed in the Senate that the Central Bank should extend the date—

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order!

**Mr Lawan :** I am talking about democracy. We are talking about democracy in other countries while we do not have one in our own country here.

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II) :** Point of Order, Mr Speaker. My point of order is Order 26 (2) and I wish to say that the speaker should confine himself to the substance of the Motion.

**Mr Lawan :** Thank you very much. Mr Speaker, Sir, I am rising to support the African Parliamentary Union, that Nigeria should go and learn the same undemocratic attitudes from other countries because we are not ourselves democratic.

Mr Speaker, Sir, in this country, a Parliamentary Leader was stolen one night and taken out of the country and none of the Members of this Parliamentary Union of which we are a Member said anything about it. We cannot do anything about any of these things yet we pass Motions condemning other countries and we ourselves do not have any strength in the Parliament.

The Senate rejected the appointment of Liaison Officers with a majority of votes and it was still carried on. So, whatever you do in Parliament will not be respected or adhered to by the Executive. (*Applause*) You sit down here wasting your time while you are not even respected. Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to support the Motion of African Parliamentary Union for Nigeria to go and learn the undemocratic attitudes of the other African countries. Thank you.

**Mr M. Mustapha (Ringim Gado) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion, and in doing so, I would like to recall that sometime ago, one of the officials of this Association of African Parliaments came here and spoke to us about this

Association. One of the things he said was that Nigeria is the first and most important English-speaking country which they are inviting to join this Association, and that no Association on a continental scale would survive if Nigeria does not belong to it. They very much feel the support of Nigeria is very important to the success of this effort. Therefore, I am saying we must look at this matter in the light of our influence over other African countries, as well as in the light of the merits of the case.

The two main objectives of this Association, and I quote, Mr Speaker, with your permission, Sir, are very self explanatory, and they are :

*Aims and Objectives of the Organisation. The Strengthening of the role and prestige of the institution of Parliaments in Africa, inspired by the concept of fundamental African values.*

I am sure everybody wants to see democracy survive, and I am sure we would not like to see half of Africa still under military rule, and this is a democratic Parliamentary Group which, although started by the French-Speaking African territories from the history of it I feel Nigeria should lend her support with a view to influencing smaller African countries who look to Nigeria for leadership to do so.

With this, Mr Speaker, Sir, I support the Motion.

**Mr Tom Egbuwoku (Isoko) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I have just come from a democratic country. Mr Speaker, Sir, talking very seriously, the issue of association with the Union of African Parliaments, I think, is a matter that Nigeria should spear-head and in contributing to this Debate I hope Members will not try to wash our dirty linen here.

Mr Speaker, Sir, a Member did say something very seriously, and that is the history of political situations and developments in Africa which have been marked very ostensibly by Military coups and dictatorships. I believe, and those who share freedom will agree with me, that whenever people are talking about freedom, sometimes democratic institutions have influence over those who are in Military Regimes. If we do not encourage democratic institutions, Military Regimes will wax stronger and stronger every day. If Members of this honourable House do not know, go out now and find out the image we now have. Things that we are doing in this House are pleasing the ordinary man, because in the Military Regime things happen and they are swept under the carpet, but today the ordinary man finds you a succour. If something happens he goes to a Representative and you shout out in this House. We have taken so many decisions, decisions which, under normal circumstances the power-that-be will stop.

Therefore, wherever the Association is, I believe it will be out of place for a name like Nigeria to be counted out of it. We should go there, we should give our influence and we should give our leadership.

I do not want to speak very long on this Motion, but I believe that a Motion of this nature is not controversial, and wherever we have Associations, gentlemen, we should all go and learn and contribute. There is a parable in our place that if you are not in a meeting, then people will decide for you ; but let us be there and take decisions for ourselves. Take the issue, for instance, of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association which might come later or sooner. It is through the Commonwealth of Nations (though we say that it is a toothless bull dog) that Nigeria used her influence to force Britain and America to ensure that there was democratic election in Zimbabwe. Therefore, we should join : and, as you are aware, we who belong to this Side have some of the most democratic leaders. Our leaderships are some of the most democratic in this country. Therefore, we lend our full support to this Motion. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members I move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That in accordance with the provision of Article 4, Section II (Membership) of the Statute of the Union of African Parliaments (UAP), and in view of Nigeria's desire to promote and encourage contracts between African members of Parliaments among themselves as well as between African Members and Members of Parliaments of other continents, towards the strengthening of the role and prestige of the institution of Parliament, as well as the operation of effective representative democracy and the contribution to the fulfilment of the Objectives of the Organization of African Unity, the National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria resolves to join the Union of African Parliaments and directs the Clerk of the National Assembly to take necessary action to forward this Resolution to the Secretary-General of the Union for transmission through the Executive Committee to the General Assembly of the Union of African Parliaments.

#### Condition of Service of Judges and Magistrates

**Mr Speaker :** The Motion stands in the name of hon. E. O. Chukwu.

**Mr E. O. Chukwu (Okigwe North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name—

That in view of the important role of the Judiciary as the third arm of the Government of Nigeria, this House views with serious concern, the poor conditions of service of Judges and Magistrates in the country and hereby directs the Committee on Public Service Matters to find ways and means of improving the conditions of service of the Judiciary.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

**Mr Mike Agbamuche** (Oshimili) : Mr Speaker Sir, hon. Members, I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, hon. Member for Okigwe North (*Mr E. O. Chukwu*) just one minute.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi** (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I just want to draw the attention of the House to one important flaw in this Motion and I think if it is accepted there should be an Amendment. The Motion seeks to direct the Committee on Public Service matters to deal with a matter which is judicial and I am sure that we do have a Committee on Judiciary here. If the Mover will accept, I want to make an Amendment.

**Mr Speaker** : I think it is a proper observation. Hon. Member for Okigwe North (*Mr E. O. Chukwu*), do you hear the objection that your Motion should have read that it should be taken to the Committee on Judiciary ? That is what he is saying.

**Mr Chukwu** : Mr Speaker, Sir, if the Amendment is that—

**Mr Speaker** : No, it is not an Amendment. He is telling you what you should have done and you have not done it. So, the Motion will still have to go back so that you can make the proper Amendment.

**Mr Chukwu** : If it is an objection, I am not accepting it, Sir, because it is dealing with the conditions of service.

**Mr Speaker** : It is for the Committee on Judiciary. So, please make the necessary Amendment and send it back to the Business Committee.

**Mr Chukwu** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I accept your ruling.

*Motion by leave withdrawn.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### National Voluntary Youth Organisation

Adjourned Debate on Question (6th March, 1980).

*Motion made and Question again proposed*, That in view of the need effectively to inculcate the social objectives of our Constitution in our youths, and thereby minimise the high incidents of juvenile delinquency and the misdemeanour by youths, this House directs the Committee on Veteran Affairs and Social Welfare to :—

(i) investigate the causes of high incidence of juvenile delinquency and indiscipline among Nigerian youths, and

(ii) consider the role being played by the National Voluntary Organisations in combating these evils and therefore to recommend other ways and means of ameliorating these social problems throughout the country, as an added effort to what these organisations are doing.

**Mr Speaker** : The Movers of this Motion have both spoken and we have gone round.

**An hon. Member** : Yes, we have gone round.

**Mr Speaker** : It only remains the UPN. Is there anybody speaking on this Motion from the UPN ? It is the last one for the day.

**Prince T. O. Olusi** (Lagos South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion on delinquency. Mr Speaker, Sir, we all know that the question of delinquency—(*Interruptions*).

**Mr Speaker** : Order ! Order ! Please keep quiet, hon. Members, somebody is speaking. It is the very last Motion for today.

**Prince Olusi** : We all know that the question of delinquency is a social problem the world over, and our Government, like all other Governments, has a duty to combat the evils being posed by the problem particularly in the urban areas. Those who are familiar with our urban cities, and if I may take Lagos as an example, if you go round, under the Eko Bridge and the lorry parks, you would find a lot of young children either sleeping under the bridge at night, or in the day time working with drivers as touts. You will agree that under this circumstance, they lack parental care. Therefore, our Government has the duty to tackle this problem and, as it has been suggested, one of the ways to tackle this problem is by ensuring that we have sufficient recreational facilities for our children. We should have enough play-grounds ; we should have enough club houses and we should have enough community centres. Not only that, Mr Speaker, Sir, we should have vocational centres where people, young children, can learn various types of handwork, various types of trade, so that they can be useful to the community.

While discussing this matter, Sir, the role of the voluntary youth organisations has come into play, and through these voluntary organisations, in the past, we and the community had been able to reform children who are delinquents and it is a part of the prayers or the request of this Motion that the Government, that is the President, should make more money available to the various youth organisations. These organisations include Boys' Scout, the Boys' Brigade, the National Youth Clubs and all sorts of other organisations. May I, therefore, through Mr Speaker or through this honourable House, urge the President to increase, in the coming financial year, the subventions or grants being given to these organisations.

Mr Speaker, Sir, this Motion, as stated by the Movers, is non-controversial and I urge all hon. Members to support it.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, the hon. Member for Oyo East (*Mr Olusola Afolabi*) we have gone round.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi** (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

[MR AFOLABI]

*Resolved* : That in view of the need effectively, to inculcate the social objectives of our Constitution in our youths, and thereby minimize the high incidents of juvenile delinquency and the misdemeanour by youths, this House directs the Committee on Veteran Affairs and Social Welfare to :—

(i) investigate the causes of the high incidence of juvenile delinquency and indiscipline among Nigerian youths, and

(ii) consider the role being played by the National Voluntary Organisations in combating these evils and therefore to recommend other ways and means of ameliorating these social problems throughout the country, as an added effort to what these organisations are doing.

#### Meeting of Party Leaders

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, the Party Leaders will meet in my office immediately after this sitting and the Chairman of the Committee on Internal Affairs, please, will also come to my office for a message.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr Olusola Afolabi** (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that this House do stand adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

**Mr Salawu Atima** (Okehi-Isunwe) : I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : It is too hot hon. Members ; any debate on it ?

**Several hon. Members** : No !

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, Mr Afolabi, could you please move that the Question be now put.

**Mr Afolabi** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I respectfully move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That this House do stand adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 11.27 a.m.*



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Tuesday, 11th March, 1980

The House met at 10.10. a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

List of Members for African  
Parliamentary Conference

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members those who will be travelling to Congo Kinshasha, Zaire, for the all African Parliamentary Conference are the hon. Mr Hamza M. Nganjiwa, Alhaji H. Dikko, Mr Fola Omidiji, Mr I. A. Olaleru, Mr Amos Bez Idakula, Mr A. N. Agwu, Mrs J. C. Eze, Alhaji Ibrahim A. Gada, Alhaji Muhammed Danjani Hadejia, Alhaji M. Bachaka, Mr B. A. Chaha, Alhaji Muhammed Kabir Umar.

These are the people who will travel to Zaire and they will be led by the Leader of the House, Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo. So, please submit your passports this afternoon. All the travelling arrangements must be concluded today. You will probably travel tomorrow, or if it is not possible, then it will be on Thursday.

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Hon. Members, I have seen the Votes and Proceedings for Monday, 10th of March, 1980 and they are in other.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Insurance Companies

**Mr Speaker :** Today, we have Notice of a Motion on Insurance Companies. This Motion stands in the name of hon. Members, Mr Tom U. B. Egbuwoku and Mr Mohammed Lawal Na-Rogo.

**Mr T. Egbuwoku (Isoko) :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. hon. Members, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name and that of hon. Member for Karaye (*Mr M. L. Na-Rogo*).

That in view of the ever rising tide of complaints by Members of the public about the unwillingness of many Insurance Companies to settle genuine claims promptly, and considering the malpractices indulged in by unregistered Insurance Companies, this House directs the Committee on Commerce to investigate these complaints and review the provisions for settlement of claims under existing insurance laws and make recommendations.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker :** Mr Egbuwoku, we are still facing that your problem. The problem is that Insurance is under Ministry of Finance. You want us to refer it to the Committee on Commerce. That was the mistake you made the other time.

**Mr Egbuwoku :** Well, we discussed this and I guess that the Clerk of the House who looked into this matter felt that Committee on Commerce was the relevant Committee it should be referred to and it was the decision of the Clerk of the House.

**Mr Speaker :** The problem is that we have a Joint Committee on Finance. The issue now is whether we can send this type of Motion to that Joint Committee. I was telling the Clerk that our own Members of the Joint Committee form our own Committee on Finance. It is only when they meet together along with the other Chamber that the Joint Committee takes effect. But when there is no opportunity for them to meet together, our own Finance Committee considers all financial matters. Those of our Members who go to the Joint Committee form our own Finance Committee. That is how I understand it.

**Mr Egbuwoku :** Mr Speaker, Sir, in view of the fact that this Motion has been pending, even when I was in the US, can I then seek the indulgence to suspend the Orders and move an Amendment immediately that it should be referred to the Committee of Finance ? In fact many Members still believe it should be the Committee on Commerce. We can say the relevant Committee so that we can refer it later.

**Mr Speaker :** Mr Egbuwoku, in order to save you the trouble and inconveniences, we go on without mentioning any special Committee. I will later refer it to a convenient Committee.

**Mr Egbuwoku :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Can I just re-move the Motion?

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, go on with the Motion but leave the Committee aspect of it. Just say, to be referred to the appropriate Committee.

**Mr Egbuwoku :** Thank you, Mr Speaker, may I once more state that I rise to move the Motion on Insurance Companies on the Order Paper standing in my name and that of Mr Mohammed Lawal Na-Rogo—

That in view of the ever rising tide of complaints by members of the public about the unwillingness of many Insurance Companies to settle genuine claims promptly, and considering the malpractices indulged in by unregistered Insurance Companies, this House directs the relevant Committee to investigate these complaints and review the provisions for settlement of claims under existing insurance laws and make recommendations.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr L. O. Okoi (Obubra II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Mr Egbuwoku.

**Mr Egbuwoku :** Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir, Hon. Members today I rise to bring once more into focus a problem which confronts members of the public, the people we represent, and it deals with insurance.

I believe, hon. Members, this Motion is not controversial. At one stage or the other, either we or members of the public have had cause to come in contact with insurance companies, either by insuring our personal effects, our vehicles, our lives, marine and so on and so forth, and the tales about the behaviour and attitudes of insurance companies to customers, I think, leaves quite a lot to be desired.

Firstly, as you will see, the base of the Insurance Company was the Insurance Act of 1961 amended, and I think the latest amendment was Decree 53 of 1978.

Hon. Members, reading through the Decree I have discovered that there are a lot of loopholes that the Insurance Companies run away with, and make life impossible and difficult for their customers. Originally, it was my intention to bring a Bill, a Private Member's Bill, to this honourable House, but when you consider the various ramifications of the Insurance business, you discover we, as Private Members, with due respect Mr Speaker, Sir, have not got the facilities sometime to handle these things single handedly. That is why I have this constraint to refer this Motion to the relevant Committee. I am even sure that the Committee would have to do quite a lot of work, with the scarce facilities available to us, to produce a review of the Insurance Act, as it affects all the aspects of insurance industry in Nigeria.

Coming strictly to the details of public outcry, firstly, hon. Members will observe that of recent, the premiums which the insurance companies take of you, whether it is on car or life or marine, whatever it is, are so high. Take the case of even cars, for example. It is almost one quarter of the price of a car, particularly if you have to go comprehensive. The insurance companies find it very enjoyable to take these high premiums. The public pay to them, but no sooner your car is stolen, no sooner you lose your property, no sooner there is a mishap on your insured valuables, than you begin to discover that the insurance companies would not pay in accordance with the value of the insured thing.

Again, take the case of a car, if you insure a car which is five years old the insurance companies are interested in the value you are registering this year ; but if you get an accident a day after, and your insurance company wants to pay you, they will discount the value of your car back five years and pay you a paltry sum. I think that this is very unfair. If the companies know that a car which is five years old must attract certain value, then it is their duty to so inform their customers. If I insure a car for five thousand naira this year, and my car is stolen, this is not related to the discount rate, because stealing a car has nothing to do with the technical set up of a car. But you will find that they will re-value the car five years, and for a car you insured for five thousand naira, they would probably pay you a value of about one thousand naira. This is absolutely unfair.

Not only that, you will find that a lot of the insurance companies that are registered are fakes. Despite the Amended Decree of 1978 which specifies very strict conditions under which people can register companies, a lot of people still go away with fake companies. As a result, when members of the public go to these so-called registered insurance companies to insure their properties, when it comes to the period of making claims, they will find that most of these companies are fake.

Hon. Members, as I said before, this is not a controversial Motion. I would rather speak very briefly on this matter in order to give Members enough chance to contribute. This is a highly professional matter that cuts across Insurance, Law, Economics, and all that we can think of. I believe that better justice would be done to this Motion if more Members speak on it. But before then, in referring this Motion to the relevant Committee, I would like to make just a short recommendation of what I think should be one of the things that the Committee should take seriously into consideration.

Firstly, henceforth, all payments must be related to the insured value of a car. Details should be worked out in such a way that if a car gets an accident, the Committee should be able to set up the minimum discount rates. In most companies, these discount rates for the life of a car is known. Therefore, if a car has an accident and the cause is traceable to the fact that the car was old, then it becomes clear that the insurance company must have basis on which to work.

Secondly, there is one annoying and frustrating delay in the name of Police Reports and Engineering reports. I think the time has come for this Committee to stop this type of nonsense, once and for all. If I have a comprehensive insurance policy, it covers everything. If my car is involved in an accident, it would take about two or three months before I can get the Police Report. Not only that, I have to pass through the needle's eye to get the Police Report. After passing through the needle's eye, and you eventually get this Police Report, you go to the insurance company, they still want Engineering Report. I do not think that is the basis and understanding of what we call comprehensive insurance.

Therefore, I believe that this Committee should look seriously into this matter and, once and for all, stop this system of obtaining Police and Engineering Reports before claims could be settled.

In this respect, as you see in most of the advanced countries, if you have an insurance policy, particularly if it is comprehensive, all you need do is to carry a form with you. If you have an accident somewhere, just pull the car off the road and stop being a nuisance to other road users, fill the form, let it be signed, and inform your Insurance Company. I believe that is what we should do. Once you inform the Insurance Company, the law should specify the number of days they must complete all the assignments. It is their duty to chase their customers ; it is not the duty of the customers to chase the

[MR EGBUWOKU]

insurance companies. They make so much money and they have nothing to do with the money. They must invest this money in the comfort of their customers. Therefore, this aspect must be looked into. When a customer drags his accident car into the workshop of the mechanics of his choice, he informs his Insurance company. The Insurance Companies should be given a time limit within which to settle all their problems and your car must come back to you in a given time. We must spell this out clearly. (Applause)

That is not all. If your vehicle is stolen and your car is comprehensively insured, the comprehensive insurance covers the stolen vehicle. In the circumstance, all you need to do is to inform the Insurance Company and specify the time that the Insurance Company must settle all the problems. There should not be any question of going for either Police Reports or Engineering Reports any more. If your car is stolen, you only have to inform the Insurance Company, who should settle your claim at a given time and for a given value.

I am also saying that, if you observe the Companies Decree, you would find that it is the duty of registered companies to publish their activities and statements of accounts every year. I have always looked through the newspapers and I find that very few Insurance Companies publish their statements of accounts and activities. If these Insurance Companies are really sure of themselves that they are not fake, henceforth, we have to look into the fact that these companies must comply with that aspect of the Decree; that is, that they must publish their yearly statements of account and activities.

Take Lagos alone for example. The average number of cars that are stolen in a year is about twenty thousand. You can imagine the number of people who suffer. This is not a play game.

Therefore, let me round up by saying that, hon. Members, the purpose of this Motion is to help in alleviating the sufferings of our people. If you look at the Insurance Law you would find that there are so many loopholes which most of our people do not understand, and which the Insurance Companies use as a trick to play on the intelligence of our people. When you want to insure your car, you pay exorbitant money; but when you come back for a claim, then the Insurance Companies must have a clause in the law which would state why you are not entitled to that claim. I feel this is unfair to members of the public who make these Insurance Companies to survive.

On this basis, I beg to move this Motion for your consideration. Thank you, very much. (Applause)

**Mr M. L. Na-Rogo** (Karaye): Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to associate myself with the substance of the Motion standing in my name and that of my terrible colleague, hon. Tom Egbuwoku.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is unfortunate that when my Colleague put forward his case, he was asking for a sort of reform for the sustenance of the *status quo*; but mine is a complete departure from the *status quo*. In view of the obnoxious, dubious and

clandestine activities of the Insurance Companies in this country, couple with cheats and other inhuman indignities that are meted to some people in this country, I am standing here to condemn the activities of the Insurance Companies in totality.

The history of insurance companies started in the colonial era and was later handed over to the elites in this country. Mr Speaker, Sir, the fundamental reason why I associate myself with this Motion is simply because of the Constitution which I swore, in this House in October 1979, that I will protect, preserve and defend.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to quote some relevant Sections of the Constitution to buttress my point. With your kind permission, Sir, I am referring this honourable House to Section 17 (2) which says:

(c) *governmental actions shall be humane;*

(d) *exploitation of human or natural resources in any form whatsoever for reasons other than the good of the community shall be prevented;*

Mr Speaker, Sir, by the provisions of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1979, and as stated above that governmental actions shall be humane, I believe that the *status quo* deserves to be changed because it had managed to concentrate the economic activities of this country in the hands of a few individuals.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I may go further. Let us look at Section 16 (2) (c) of the Constitution which says—

(c) *without prejudice to the right of any person to participate in areas of the economy within the major sector of the economy, protect the right of every citizen to engage in any economic activities outside the major sectors of the economy.*

Mr Speaker, Sir, very many people have engaged themselves in the insurance business duping thousands of innocent citizens of this country in the name of insurance.

Let us take the case of motor insurance policy, for instance. You will find out that a certain percentage of the total cost of the vehicle is being spent on insurance policy. On having an accident which may be as a result of mechanical fault or any other fault, these insurance companies have dubious laws whereby they covertly refuse to pay due claims to these innocent citizens.

Mr Speaker, Sir, if I may come up with another suggestion to this committee, I will say that how I see insurance is not the way it is being operated as at now. I believe there should be insurance for old age, death, disaster and so on. I cannot see the justification whatsoever in some few individuals making themselves the risk bearers of certain individuals. After all the said government is to protect and preserve each and every individual in this country. I can see no reason why the government should vest some certain welfare activities in the hands of some individuals. Therefore, I believe the National Insurance Company of Nigeria should be, at least, expanded and other mushroom insurance companies in this country should wind up to give room for the expansion of this National Insurance Company of Nigeria so as to cater for old age insurance benefits, be you in the public or private sector or any other

sector of the economy. The type of insurance policy I will recommend is one in which the children and relations of a deceased will be catered for, buildings and other assets protected, and certainly the education of our own children from the nursery to university education assured.

Mr Speaker, with these few remarks and recommendations, I beg to take my seat.

**Chief P. A. Gbinije** (Ethiopia South) : I rise to support the Motion being debated on the Floor. I think one of the problems confronting insurance business in this country is not strictly with the insurance companies as such, but lack of information and inadequate education of the masses as to their rights in respect of claims arising from what was insured. This is the problem confronting every member of the public.

It is the duty of every insured to know his rights, and in doing so, of course, the insurance companies owe it a duty to inform the public what and what constitute the rights they have in respect of any insurance contract into which they have entered.

It does happen in this country that when you go along the streets and see two cars involved in an accident, you find that both cars are adequately covered by comprehensive insurance. Each driver or each owner of the car insists on asserting his rights that he was right and therefore the other man was wrong. This argument drags on for a long time. Police are invited in. They cause a long go-slow and no action is being taken. This is simply because people do not know their rights. In civilised places, when any issue of accident occurs and the men involved know their rights, all they do is to compare their insurance papers and say, *All right refer to my insurance company for claims* and the matter is settled. But, in most cases, we are the causes of our own inconveniences. We keep on arguing for the whole day without knowing exactly what to do.

In the second place, where you have to make insurance claims, because of this argument, the rules flaid down were there but they were avoided, and the insurance company takes advantage of this and say *well if you are involved in any insurance problem giving cause for claims, we want a police report to give proof that you were actually involved in an accident and how it actually happened*, because many things do really happen in this country. It takes a long time, therefore, for the police to be able to prepare a report. Why must we go to the police at all? This is the question. I agree with those who suggest that there should be no question of inviting the police in this matter. It is the insurance company which has to be notified. After a report has been made to the insurance company, if they feel that something was fishly, they should investigate as to who was right and which of the insurance companies of the two persons insured should carry the blame and pay the relevant claim to the person concerned.

As to the rate of payment, the valuation of a vehicle after it has been on the road for some years, I think, if anything is wrong, it is the tariff approved

by the government of the country. There is a tariff stipulating the rate of payment. I think all insurance companies in the country have one common tariff. Whether it is named A, B, C, D Insurance Companies or not, they all have a common tariff. With regard to lack of payment of adequate compensation in respect of damages to any vehicle, I think a review should be called for in respect of the existing insurance tariff.

Also, talking of insurance, it is high time this country initiated a national insurance policy to cater for all aspects of our economy. We notice that very many important things which could be readily covered by insurance are not being practised in this country. For instance, we have old-age insurance, property insurance, marine insurance.

**Mr Speaker** : You are moving away from the Motion.

**Chief Gbinije** : No, we are talking of insurance.

**Mr Speaker** : We are talking of motor insurance.

**Chief Gbinije** : It is not motor insurance alone, we are talking of insurance business as a whole. I think I am in order, Mr Speaker. We are talking of insurance in general.

We should have a national insurance policy to cover all aspects of our economy, and the public should be adequately educated on the rights they will derive in having insurance to cover all aspects of our economy.

Unfortunately, in Nigeria, the insurance business as many people see it from outside, looks a very lucrative engagement. But going into the details very strictly, you will hear of insurance companies refusing to insure certain goods arriving at our seaports. This is simply because the rate of pilfering in our ports has been very high. The rate of pilfering goods arriving at our ports is so high that the insurance companies have even refused to accept marine insurance in respect of some of our goods. This is a serious matter which must be looked into by Government.

As I said earlier on, lack of education in respect of our insurance should be looked into. People do not know their rights and very frequently they come out arguing unnecessarily. If only the Government ensures that all members of the public know their rights and claims are put straight, the insurance company should be able to pay. If any insurance company fails to meet up its obligations within a specified time, that insurance company should be reported to the appropriate quarters and its name removed from the list of registered Insurance Companies.

Thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker** : NPN. Yes, Princewill.

**Mr Dagogo Princewill** (Degema I) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members I rise to support the Motion, and in doing so, Sir, I wish to put forward the following suggestions and explanations. It would appear, when people talk of insurance, many people seem to think that it is mainly car insurance. I have a

[MR. PRINCEWILL]

belief too, and this is true, that car insurance forms a very negligible portion and is an unprofitable side of insurance business.

If I may take car insurance first, insurance companies in this country do not strictly adhere to the terms of car insurance. This is so mainly because, as the Representative for Ethiope South (*Chief Gbinije*) has said, most of us do not know our rights, obligations and responsibilities towards the insurance company *vis-a-vis* the insurance company itself towards us. The Nigerian Government has tried in this respect to regulate the insurance business, and in doing so they have formed the Nigerian Insurance Corporation of Nigeria and also the Nigerian Re-insurance Corporation.

The Nigerian Re-insurance Corporation's job is to take over from the Commercial Insurance companies shares of about sixty *per cent* of the premiums as well as sharing the liabilities as and when they do arise. So, you will see, hon. Members, that if at all the insurance companies have a claim made against them, they are backed by the Nigerian Reinsurance Corporation. The Nigerian Re-insurance Company is set up with a view also of helping the Nigerian Insurance Companies to regulate the system and to advise them on the best way of insurance.

Car insurance, as I have said, forms a very negligible part of Nigerian insurance business. When accident occurs between two cars in this country, we seem to say *I will repair it for you* and we just settle it like that. In other civilised countries, as hon. Members are aware of, they always exchange insurance certificates, and the other chap makes it known to his insurance company that he was not at fault when this accident occurred. In fact, of course, the Police are there. Our Police never come to the scene up to three, four, or five hours, and even up to a day you will never see them at the point of accident, and they are neutral persons to testify who actually was wrong when this accident occurred.

If you have a comprehensive insurance policy in other countries, the insurance company which you insured with will definitely come to your aid even if the Police takes you to court for negligence and dangerous driving. The insurance company will get a lawyer to appear for you and do all necessary things. But in this country, these types of things are never found. Even if you have a third party policy and you are right, your insurance company will get a lawyer for you because they feel that if you are right you might pay for the repairs on your own car, but definitely they are going to repair or make right the third party's car. These things are not found in this country. So, I would like this House to direct the appropriate Committee to investigate why these things are not done with a view that we can streamline our insurance companies and make them behave like they are helping the insured.

There are other forms of insurance, such as old-age insurance, fire insurance, and all other various kinds of insurance in these companies. As I said earlier, if the liability is high in case of marine insurance, in case of insurance of goods on highways and other things, if the insurance is high, the Nigerian

Re-insurance Corporation always comes to the aid of the insurance company. So, there is no question of the insurance company being unable to meet the obligations of the insured.

So, in this respect, I would also say, Sir, Mr Speaker, that the Nigerian Re-insurance Corporation should also be invited to the appropriate Committee to explain why there are delays in settling claims because they are also involved in all aspects of insurance including the car insurance which is very well known to all of us.

With these few points, Mr Speaker, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Alhaji Mustapha.

**Alhaji M. B. Mustapha** (Bida North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, in supporting the Motion, I would disagree with the contribution by one of my Colleagues which put across the blame on the part of the victims for not knowing how to submit their claims. This assertion is entirely irrelevant. What matters and what is required to be done has completely been covered by my hon. Colleague from Isoko (*Mr Egbuwoku*). Everything that is required has been said, and I would urge this House to support the submission by hon. Tom Egbuwoku. What matters in insurance is not who is guilty, but the information that is required is whether in actual fact the accident has occurred. If we should restrict ourselves to this, I think the insurance company will require a limited time to get the information as to whether in actual fact there was an accident be it fire, death and so on.

The question of police intervention is no excuse to make the accident victims suffer the long delay. The police can come in to carry out their duty. But, what matters is that immediately there is a notification that there is an accident, the mere confirmation of the occurrence of the accident is sufficient for the Insurance companies to proceed and relieve the suffering on the part of the victims.

In short, I would like this House to give complete support to what was put across by the first Mover of the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Mr Agbamuche.

**Mr M. A. Agbamuche** (Oshimili) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to oppose this Motion. I do so on the ground that it is becoming fashionable in this honourable House for Members, in most cases, to make allegations against companies or corporations outside this House without substantiating them. I am not a director of any insurance company.

The Motion, as proposed by the hon. Movers says—

*That in view of the ever-rising tide of complaints by members of the public about the unwillingness of many insurance companies to settle genuine claims promptly—*

This is talking about settling genuine claims promptly. One would expect the hon. Movers to give instances of such complaints and what companies are involved. Who made the complaint which was

[MR. AGBAMUCHE]

genuine but was not met? That would assist the House or the relevant Committee to know what to investigate; it should not, in my submission, be a sort of general and unspecified allegations against every insurance company in this country.

I would have supported the Motion if it had asked for the review of Insurance Acts so as to make amendments, plug the loopholes which he alleged exist there. Otherwise, I submit that other allegations made by the mover of this and various other speakers are not justified at all. That is all.

**Mr F. C. Adigwe (Awka):** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to oppose this Motion. (*Interruptions*). Well, I am not a director in any insurance company. I would like hon. Members to allow me to air my views so that they can pick up some useful ideas from them in view of my little knowledge in this profession. Well, insurance companies, I believe, are all registered and approved by the Ministry of Commerce.

**Mr Speaker:** No, it is not Ministry of Commerce; it is Ministry of Finance.

**Mr Adigwe:** The problem with policy holders in this country is more or less that of ignorance. In Nigeria today, we have in various policies, various endorsements that attract certain specific discounts with the result that you find some Agents who come to policy holders to give them various types of discounts. As a result, the more discount you take on any Policy the less the cover. Again, in this country we have very few insurance brokers, and where you do not have enough insurance brokers most policy holders deal directly with the insurance companies and also their agents. For an agent to sell enough policies, he is usually compelled by the way and manner our people like cheap things, to give much discounts. They prefer to have more discounts, like what is called compulsory excess on car policy. But, with that which is compulsory, if you still want a further discount, you take a voluntary excess which will attract to you 10 per cent discount, whereas you still have in the same Policy—O.O.D.—Owner Only Driven. *Owner Only Driven* is usually when you are the fellow to drive your car and nobody else. In fact, your wife or children cannot drive it. When that is the case, you are given another discount of 10 per cent. With all these discounts, if your wife happens to take your car out without knowing that you insured it under O.O.D., and if anything happens to that car, nobody will pay you a kobo. It is very clear. With this ignorance, you find people who deceive others that their cars are comprehensively insured. When the insurance companies come up to tell you that they will not pay you a kobo because you had taken an O.O.D. Policy, you feel disappointed. So, with this, you will agree with me that people are not sincere to themselves. They do not tell the truth. Comprehensive Insurance Policy on any car does not mean that anything that happens to your car, you must be paid. You have to pay certain discounts you had taken.

Then, coming to the general insurance practice in Nigeria, we have Government owned Insurance Companies and the Federal Government is even controlling a major share in them.

**Mr Speaker:** Please, round up.

**Mr Adigwe:** Mr Speaker, please protect me; give me audience. What I am saying is that in Nigeria today there is a clear monopoly of Insurance Business by Government agents. With this monopoly by the Federal and the State Governments, it is difficult for the indigenous insurance companies to actually get their own share of the market.

So, I would advocate seriously that, for some of these insurance companies to perform effectively, all the Government agencies in this country should be discouraged from engaging in insurance business. The Federal Government should not allow the State Governments to take up insurance business.

**Mr J. O. Iwuagwu (Mbano West):** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Gentlemen, the question before us is a review of the provisions for settlement of claims under existing laws. The Insurance Law, as we know it today in Nigeria, is incorporated in Decree No. 59 of 1976. Sections 43, 44 and 45 deal with settlement of claims. All the Sections are full of loopholes which only favour the Insurance Companies. I am minded to say that it would appear that there was a colossal conspiracy between the government, who drafted this Decree, and the Insurance Companies. Section 43 subsection (1) says:—

*Where civil proceedings are taken in court in respect of any claim under a policy of Insurance and judgment is obtained against any person insured by a policy of insurance, then not withstanding that the insurer may be entitled to avoid.*

The insurer may be entitled to avoid. That means that as soon as the company has heard that you have an accident, it can withdraw that policy which you have already taken with them and you are left with nothing.

In fact, I am so disappointed that some hon. Members would get up here to oppose this Motion because the Insurance Companies today are involved in the most gigantic fraud in Nigeria that you can ever think of. (*Applause*)

A Colleague said that allegations were made without substantiating them, without giving examples. I would have liked not to mention the names of insurance companies, but I have at least fifty claims against insurance companies today, some of them dating as far back as 1976.

**Mr Speaker:** Please, hon. Member, you can mention names because you are absolutely free to do so. You have Parliamentary immunity. Go on.

**Mr Iwuagwu:** As far back as 1976, a vehicle was coming down Okigwe road, inside Okigwe township it plunged into some market sheds, and killed six people. There had been actions at the Okigwe High Court against the Insurer. One of the cases so far has gone through and it went against

[Mr Iwuagwu]  
the insurer of this vehicle. The Insurers—the Milverton Insurance Company—refused to pay compensation. Even though the law says in Subsection (1) of Section 43—

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Mr M. A. Agbamuche (Oshimili) :** Mr Speaker Sir, hon. Gentlemen, Order 26 (3). It says,

*Reference shall not be made to any matter on which a judicial decision is pending, in such a way as might in Mr Speaker's opinion prejudice the interests of parties thereto. (Interruptions)*

**Some hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Agbamuche :** Let the Speaker rule.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you, I have great respect for Mr Agbamuche, a very senior member of the Bar, but I do think that the hon. Member, Mr Iwuagwu, is in order.

**Mr Iwuagwu :** This case, as I said, has been decided. Subsection (1) of Section 43 of Decree No. 59 of 1976 says :

*The insurer shall subject to this section pay to the persons entitled to the benefit of any such judgment the sum payable including costs and interests on such sum not later than 30 days from the date of delivery of such judgment.*

The judgment was given as far back as March 1979, it is more than 30 days and the Milverton Insurance Company has refused to pay. I have so many examples to cite here.

**Some hon. Members :** Fire ! Fire !

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Mr F. C. Adigwe (Awka) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of order is Order 26. The hon. Member is using this forum to defend his case. Here is not a Law Court.

**Mr Speaker :** Mr Adigwe what point of order ?

**Mr Adigwe :** He is using this forum to defend his clients' cases, and I am referring to Order 26.

**Mr Speaker :** Please go on, hon. Iwuagwu, I have ruled against the Order.

**Mr Iwuagwu :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Gentlemen when you pick up the policy contract of Insurance, you find that so many portions of the contract are written in very small letters. Now, the use of small letters in Insurance contracts have been banned in civilized countries like Britain and America. Every letter of the contract must be written in bold letters. The Committee which will review the provisions of the existing Insurance Laws, must remember to make sure that there will be no more small letters in any contract of Insurance policy. This is very important. (Applause) Please also include that no tiny little bits of papers are gummed on top of the Insurance Policies, excluding the provisions of the law. This is where they get us.

Again Section 43 Subsection (2) Subsection (a) of the Insurance Decree provides,

*No sum shall be payable by an insurer under the provisions of subsection (1) above in respect of any judgment unless before or within 7 days after the commencement of the proceedings in which the judgment was given the insurer had notice of the bringing of the proceedings.*

Hon. colleagues, up till today no court in Nigeria has given a ruling as to when a proceeding in court commences. Now, if we put in this law, if we allow this type of law to be inserted, then the insurance company will turn round and say, *when did the proceeding start ?* Was it when you were served with the summons or was it when the proceedings actually commenced in the court, and from this they can just exonerate themselves from their responsibilities. Please, I want you to understand that this is a very serious matter.

We are not just talking about car insurance policies. Also, there are life insurance policies. You will find that a husband takes up an insurance policy ; he dies in a motor accident, or anyhow, natural death. The insurance company will tell the wife to produce a medical report to show that the husband died a natural death, that he did not die of cancer or any other disease which he ought to have told them, when up till tomorrow it is not possible for anybody to know that he is suffering from cancer because the thing just comes out and it kills. Because of this type of thing, the insurance company just exonerate itself and runs away from its liability. This is a loop-hole which must be plugged. Subsection 3 of Section 43 says :

*No sum shall be payable by an insurer under the provisions of this section if in an action commenced before—(Listen to this) if in an action commenced before or within three months after the commencement of the proceedings in which the judgment was given he has obtained a declaration that apart from any provisions contained in the policy he is entitled to avoid on the ground that it was obtained by the non-disclosure of a material fact.*

Now, when you were issuing the policy and collecting your premium, you did not look behind. I agree that this should be done in good faith, but it is up to the insurance company to go behind and find out actually whether this man is suffering from any other disease. When you have issued the policy, then you cannot run away from your liability. There is an adage that says that the buyer should beware—*caveat emptor*.

Now, I would make one more suggestion before I sit down. It may not be extremely popular, but it is in regard to motor drivers and motor users. As I said, it may not be very popular. I would suggest that a further one kobo is put on each litre of petrol and petroleum products and this money should be specifically given to the Nigerian Insurance Corporation who pays victims of road accidents. This money should not be given to any insurance company otherwise we would be putting ourselves into a most diabolical conspiracy in this country

Mr Speaker, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr Mike Akpabio (Uyo II):** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion wholeheartedly. It is no denying the fact, Sir, that there had been a lot of public outcry on the fraudulent way the insurance companies all over the country had been functioning. Mr Speaker, Sir, insurance companies operate under the provisions of the insurance laws or decrees as the case may be. But surprisingly, Sir, over the years, over the period, insurance companies had engaged in acts of fraud amounting to stealing and exploiting the common people of this country by failing to settle their claims in time.

I have had the privilege on many occasions to go to battle in courts with insurance companies over delay in settlement of claims. I very much associate myself with the submissions already made by my learned Colleagues on the provisions of the Insurance Decree already cited by the last Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I seem to hold, Sir, that most of the fraud being perpetrated in the main is by the insurance canvassers. The canvassers who go about with some brief cases harassing people in their offices, in motor parks, and all over the place, giving out some write-ups about insurance, misleading people who are not learned in insurance law. You find Sir, that perhaps after a client had been so misled and had paid the first premium, when the policy comes up, it would be discovered that all what the client discussed with the canvasser would be quite different from what he would be seeing on the terms of the policy. The policy would contain obnoxious provisions which a lay-man would find very difficult to understand. The result is that whenever an event occurs, it becomes very difficult for a particular customer to know what to do about his or her claim.

Like an hon. Member had said, the public have been so ill-informed as to know what to do when they run into difficulty with the insurance companies. Most of our people have no money to brief counsel to take up their cases, and the result is that these insurance companies run away with so much amount of money. In fact, it will be false for one to say that the insurance companies are not operating profitably. I think the insurance companies operate more profitably than any other company in this country. We have been reading of a number of accidents on the roads, of people dying, of houses set ablaze, and so on and so forth. One may really ask how many of these claims have these insurance companies settled? You will find that they have not been doing anything at all. You will get to an insurance company and they will tell you, *look at provision so, so and so ; term so, so and so. You have not seen the IF there, you have not seen the OTHERWISE there.* This sort of thing should be nipped in the bud before it is too late.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would suggest, with due respect, Sir, that insurance like motor insurance—perhaps my suggestion may not be very popular—I am saying Sir, that it should not even be compulsory to insure motor vehicles. Owners of motor vehicles should be left with the option of either to insure or not.

The owners of motor vehicles should be left with the option of either to insure or not, because after all, what do they really benefit after insuring their vehicles when they have not been paid by insurance companies on the occurrence of any accident?

The Insurance Companies will come up with one stupid type of interpretation or the other and run away with claims. So, I would suggest that the Committee in reviewing the activities of the Insurance Companies, *vis-a-vis* Insurance Laws, should really think of the need, the continued need, for people to insure their cars of any category.

Now, Mr Speaker, Sir, on life insurance, with due respect, the dependants of people who have insured their lives have been having very many difficulties in collecting their claims. I had a particular example, Mr Speaker, when an assured person died and a claim was to be made. The Insurance Company came up with the excuse that the date of birth of the assured was not confirmed at the time he insured his life. But there was a man who kept on paying his premium every month through his Bankers but the Insurance Company did not come up, at that time, to say that his date of birth was not confirmed. Yet, after his death, they brought in that stupid interpretation just to block the chances of the dependants benefiting from the insurance.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am also asking for your permission to touch on the second arm of the motion, that of the unregistered insurance companies. I am saying, Sir, that I really indict the Police on this issue, because these unregistered companies should not be allowed to operate. The Police should go about checking most of these insurance companies in order to axe all these companies that are not registered. They cannot remain in this country and allow our people to dump their money into companies that are not registered and do not have legal personalities. You cannot sue such companies to court ; you cannot make any claims against them and yet, they are operating side by side with the registered companies. So, I think it is a very good thing that the sponsors of this Motion have brought this particular brand of rogues who operate in the name of insurance company to this honourable House for scrutiny.

**The Speaker :** You may wish to wind-up.

**Mr Akpabio :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I would also recommend to the Committee that would be reviewing the operations of the Insurance Companies to invite learned people in the Law of Insurance, that is, those who have really specialised in the insurance industry to come and testify before the Committee as to the need to continue with insuring against certain risks or certain items of property in the country.

With due respect, Sir, with these very few observations, I strongly support the Motion. Thank you very much.

**Alhaji S. Konduga (Konduga) :** Mr Speaker, Sir hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion, but in doing so, I would like to say that when we examine



[ALHAJI KONDUGA]

this Motion critically as Nigerians, this Motion is very sympathetic. It is sympathetic on two grounds, in my opinion.

On one side, here is a person who is involved in an accident. On the other side here is another person who is going to be responsible for compensation to this person involved in an accident. But, how could we critically determine the genuineness of these claims here? It is, indeed, very difficult. Had it been that this Motion had not come up, we could not have got the chance of deliberating over this issue, and this is why I support this Motion. We have so many insurance companies in this country. Insurance brokers have been compiling lists of accidents one after the other, but have not been sending returns to their head offices and by so doing, they cause delays in payment of claims.

On the other side, also, there are so many insurance companies whose financial capabilities are, perhaps, not properly determined and because of that, they go about deceiving people that they are for Insurance company so, so and so.

If you get insured with their companies and you happen to get involved in an accident, they are nowhere to be found, let alone for them to settle claims because of their financial incapability. At the other end, again, on the causes of delay of claims, we have so many authorities who are involved. First is the Police, second is the Vehicle Inspection Officers in the case of motor vehicles, and third, the Insurance Agents or Insurance Brokers who live in the local areas. On many occasions one may be involved in an accident and you go to the Police Traffic Office for months without finding the particular person charged with the responsibility of covering this particular accident you got yourself involved in. You can find in many cases that you go to the Vehicle Inspection Officer who is to cover this accident and to your surprise, he has gone to attend court in another State and on other days, he might have gone to inspect an accident in one place or the other.

Thus, the dilly-dally continues and the report on your accident will never reach your insurance to enable them settle your claims. Still, the Insurance Agents in some localities are becoming part of the delay by conniving with the Police and conniving with certain Inspection Officers to work against their companies, and to give support to whichever party that caused the accident. By so doing, argument will ensue. The Insurance company will never be satisfied with the report which the Police or the Vehicle Inspection Officer has given. This causes another delay.

Let us go to the other side, gentlemen. As Nigerians we must blame ourselves for our mistakes and for our misbehaviour. In cases of accidents, most claimants engage themselves by corrupt practices in Nigeria. You can find that so many traffic regulations were broken by drivers and by motorists, but these are never taken into consideration when accidents occur. A transporter who owns a chain of transport vehicles will get in touch with the Police and the Vehicle Inspection Officers or the local Insurance Agents, to bribe them in order to put the fault on the vehicle and not on the driver or the motorist.

That also creates an atmosphere which is not conducive for the Insurance companies to accept the responsibility of settling claims. You can cite so many of these, if we are honest with ourselves as motorists or as transporters. I may, perhaps, hit the nail on the head. You can find a man, who has just bought a car, at the back of the wheel within the first week of his owning a car. He has never handled the steering before, and within the first week, he becomes so proud that he is now the owner of a new car and he starts to drive without a driver by his side and without fixing the learners labels on his car. Other motorists may think that he is a licensed driver and try to entertain him on the road as drivers are entertained or treated. He will thus become scared being a learner of just one week behind the steering, and he gets himself involved in an accident. The same corrupt practice will be used and the fault will be put on the vehicle, and an innocent driver somewhere will be brought to come and accept responsibility that at the time of the accident, it was that driver who was driving the vehicle before the accident occurred when, in actual fact, it was not the driver driving it but the motorist who had never handled a steering until this his very first week of owning a car.

How could this Insurance Company accept responsibility for such a claim? For commercial vehicles, you can find drivers violating traffic regulations; transporters, may tell their drivers to leave Kano for Lagos and come back the second or third day. How can this driver make it? A poor driver who refuses to do so will be sacked, and he will not have the means of livelihood. As a result, he will involve himself in drug addiction and alcohol to keep himself awake. By so doing he is naturally tired but owing to drug and alcoholic influences he will insist on going. He will not know when he has got to a narrow bend or a narrow bridge or approaching an on-coming vehicle and he will be involved in an accident. His master who is a transporter has all the means to go to the law enforcement agencies—Vehicle Inspection Officers or insincere Insurance Agents and bribe them to falsify this particular accident, and put up a genuine claim to be paid by the Insurance Company. How can the Insurance Company accept such a claim and settle it?

We are all Nigerians, we are contributing to this Motion, but are these things not practicable here in Nigeria? They are very practicable. Therefore, it is appropriate for whatever Committee is responsible for investigating these companies to go as deep as possible to find ways and means of making the law enforcement agents, Vehicle Inspection Officers and Insurance Agents, to stop supporting false claims and to stop delaying reports on accidents.

With these few remarks, I beg to sit down.

**Yusifu Nadabo Gaya** (Gaya North): Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I would like to support the Motion and make the following contribution. In Nigeria the purpose of making insurance policy is being defeated entirely. Insurance Policies are made to safeguard the interest of the various clients to the Insurance Companies, but the reverse is now

[YUSIFU GAYA]

the case. These Insurance Companies have delaying tactics when you come to make a claim which will be settled after you have had an accident or your car or your vehicle has been stolen.

Around 1976, there were only two Insurance Companies accepting to insure bulk transporters, that is, the heavy lorries carrying petrol to various parts of the country because of the risk involved in that kind of transportation, and those two companies charged at least twenty-five *per cent* of the cost of the vehicle. Again, Mr Speaker, I am advising that the whole provisions of the Insurance Law should be revised entirely to the benefit of the clients.

Looking at the Insurance Companies in Nigeria, you will find that there are over two hundred companies registered as Insurance Companies most of which exist only on sign-boards and news-paper advertisements. When you want to pay them the money they will come to your office or to your house and make all necessary trade tactics to get your money, and if you look at the address you will only find the signboard and the owner of the house will tell you that these people have left for over six months and you have nowhere to find them.

Again there are unregistered companies which are operating in this country illegally, and being unregistered all their papers and their actions are illegal. I strongly advise the Committee that is going to investigate these Insurance Companies to do as much as possible to find these unregistered and illegal insurance companies, bring them to book, and then to the law, so that they can be punished. We cannot allow the money of the innocent people to be carried away by people who only prepare forms to cheat their clients.

With these few remarks, I call on the Nigerian Bar Association (and I know the Speaker is part and parcel of them) that when they come to draft the Agreement Form they should think of the thousands or millions of people who are benefiting from the Insurance Companies and make it in a way that it is not a one-man business, because when you look at the Agreement the Insurance Companies are giving out it is only one sided. It is only defending the Companies and not the clients. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Mohammed Shu'aibu Kaugama (Aliyo/ Kaugama)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion. In doing so, I have to draw the attention of this honourable House, Mr Speaker, to the point that the moment you call the name *insurance* in Nigeria you are reminding the people of Nigeria of their sick baby, because insurance has been what is never known in its true form or as an entity. Insurance should be a part and parcel of the body that will cater for the welfare of a person who wants to be insured against any disaster or anything that will come his way unexpectedly. But the moment you mention insurance in Nigeria, you are calling a side that only wants to benefit from the other. The Insurance companies do not want to give out the benefits that are due to people who are supposed to be given. Nobody will tell you that he is involved in an accident of whatever

type and then he goes to his insurance company to lay claims and he was paid promptly and efficiently. To say that Insurance Companies in Nigeria are not as efficient as they should be, is really an abuse on the generality of the Nigerian masses.

Mr Speaker, Sir, in associating myself with this Motion, I have to make some observations from some Insurance Companies I saw in operation abroad. You go and insure your company or your house or your car or what have you. The moment anything happens and you go and lay your complaints, within twenty-four hours you are paid that claim if it is genuine. The moment you lay such a claim to the Insurance Company in Nigeria it takes at least a year before you are compensated for whatever loss you have suffered. So, Mr Speaker, with these few remarks I beg to take my seat.

**Mr Dele Fayemi (Badagry)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion. The best way to cheat the people of Nigeria is by going into the Insurance business. There are so many ways by which these insurance companies defraud their clients of their hard-earned money. Among these are, first, they have a clause in their unwieldy papers which they always give to their clients saying that at a certain time if you fail to pay your premium the policy will lapse. Whether you have paid your premium for a period of a year or two you cannot claim any money from these insurance companies. It means your money is already gone into the purse of these shylocks. Secondly, for the people who have legal experience and legal knowledge it will be very difficult for the Insurance Companies to defraud them, but how many people have legal knowledge in the country? Very few indeed compared with the population of the country. The clauses contained in the paper served on the clients by the Insurance Companies are so finely worded. They are so many. They are so unreadable that it takes any intelligent person a very long time before he can comprehend all these clauses. How many people, I ask, Sir, can sit down to read through all these clauses? The best way to do away with other people's money is to give them unwieldy and unreadable clauses, that will scare them away at the appropriate time when they need to lay claims to the company.

Not only that, Mr Speaker, Sir, the insurance companies vary their premium according to their whims and caprices. In fact, there is a guiding principle on what and what to collect in the form of premium, but they make it so flexible that they move from one figure to another according to the standard of the client involved.

Mr Speaker, Sir, there are so many other companies that ought to come under review in this honourable House, but the first on the list is the insurance companies. Insurance business, I repeat, Sir, is a business where you can cash in big money ; where you can become a millionaire ; or call yourself whatever name you want ; be it a legal adviser or a director of the company, you are already in money as long as you can play your game in a very clever

[MR FAYEMI]

way. The insurance business is a legalised fraud, legalised in the sense that it is poorly practised by the people in this particular field. In fact, the people who make the law to guide insurance companies or the operation of insurance companies did not view it in a very critical way to foresee that people who want to be rich over-night can circumvent the law at any given time. The only way by which people get rich quickly in this country is to circumvent the law.

I repeat, and I still repeat, Mr Speaker, that insurance companies are the best fields in which the law can be side-tracked to make money for the people who are engaged in the business.

I beg to support.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you.

**Mr Z. Momodu (Etsako) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I am rising to support this Motion. I am supporting the Motion in the sense that the essence of the establishment of insurance companies need not be over emphasised, but nevertheless most of the insurance companies are not performing up to expectation. We cannot stand here to completely condemn the services of all the insurance companies. I know of good insurance companies like NEM and other insurance companies who live up to expectations. However, there are others—

**Mr T. O. Badejo (Mushin Central I) :** Point of order.

**Mr Speaker :** Is it a point of order ?

**Mr Badejo :** Yes.

**Mr Speaker :** What is your point of order ?

**Mr Badejo :** It is against the rule of argument.

**Mr Speaker :** What is your order number ? Please go on.

**Mr Momodu :** Thank you, very much, Mr Speaker. The hon. Member for Mushin Central I (*Mr T. O. Badejo*), will you take your seat. (*Laughter*)

Now, as I was saying, there are other types of insurance. We have the comprehensive insurance, the third party insurance and the Acts insurance. Most of the insurance companies know the various activities of these insurances, and as such we must have to, in fact, legislate to curb the excesses of some of these fraudulent insurance companies. I know of insurance companies which particularly delay the report after the police have submitted their own report. They deliberately delay this report with a view to defrauding the innocent citizens of this country.

That being so, Mr Speaker, we should actually ask the Committee to look into the possibility of ensuring that people are not defrauded. I know of some insurance companies, Mr Speaker, which, after having delayed this claim for a considerable period, the claimant will go there to ask for his dues. He will not be given, but after many years some members of the insurance companies will put in their thumb or foot impression to claim this money for their own pocket. This type of thing should stop

as it does not augur well for good administration of this country. With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I have to take my seat. Thank you, very much.

**Mr C. A. Oluwatosin (Ekiti South-West) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion. So many of us have spoken about the ignorance of the people of this country for not knowing their rights about the insurance companies. It is that aspect of education I rise to speak about.

While I was in the school teaching, we taught pupils about the essence of paying taxes and every pupil knew why taxes are paid in this country. Why is the essence of having insurance companies not included in the syllabus of secondary schools. If you look at the pages of newspapers, almost everyday, you will find how people are being killed on road accidents and these people are innocent people. Their dependants are just left without any compensation because the dependants of these people may not know that they have the right to go to court and make claims against the owners of those vehicles, or to sue their insurance companies and that they should pay something towards the death of their parents. There are cases where the father and mother of the children die in a certain accident and these children will be hoping that life will be very attractive to them because they were born by eminent people. But once their parent die together like that at one spot, the children become quite miserable and nobody thinks about them anymore.

Therefore, I shall implore this honourable House to refer to the Committee on Education to see that pupils in secondary schools are made to understand or, at least, know something about insurance companies, and the rights of the people of this country, that if at anytime any member of their families is involved in any accident, they have the right to go to court and make claims. With this short remark, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, before putting the Question, I would just like to inform the honourable House that the appropriate Committee is the Committee on Finance. We have a separate Committee on Finance apart from the Joint Committee on Finance which is monetary.

It is time that the Question be now put. I respectfully move accordingly.

*Question, that the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

**Resolved :** That in view of the ever rising tide of complaints by Members of the public about the unwillingness of many Insurance Companies to settle claims promptly, and considering the malpractices indulged in by unregistered Insurance Companies, this House directs the Committee on Finance to investigate these complaints and review the provisions for settlement of claims under existing insurance laws and make recommendations.

1987

[Declaration of Rights to  
Economic Activities]

11 MARCH 1980

[Declaration of Rights to  
Economic Activities]

1988

**Declaration of Rights to Economic Activities**

**Mr Speaker :** The second item on the Order Paper is the Declaration of Right to economic activities.

The Motion stands in the names of hon. Members E. D. N. Uwandu, T. O. Bob-Manuel, S. A. Adeagbo, Kemte Giadon and chief Olusola Omonira.

**Mr E. D. N. Uwandu (Mbaitoli) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to move the Motion that stands in my name and other hon. Members.

That in view of the need to protect the rights of every citizen to engage in any economic activities outside the major sectors of the economy and considering the incessant outcry of the generality of the public of this country that the Federal Government and its Agencies should limit their economic activities primarily to the major sectors of the economy, this House hereby directs the Committees on Commerce and Industries to investigate and recommend what economic activities shall be managed and operated exclusively by the said Government and its Agencies with a view to this House declaring by a resolution to that effect in pursuance to Section 16 (4) (a) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

I beg to move, Sir.

**Mr Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr D. A. Zubairu (Jamaia North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Uwandu :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to say that we are the representatives of the different sectors of the people of this country and also of the different communities, and in the long run we represent the whole country. We are here to protect both the economic, political and social interests of the people of this country.

This Motion, as hon. Members might have seen, is brought under Section 16 (4) (a) of the Constitution with due respect to the House and to the Speaker, I will read. Section 16 (4) (a) says—

*For the purposes of subsection (1) of this section—the reference to the “major sectors of the economy” shall be construed as a reference to such economic activities as may from time to time be declared by a resolution of each House of the National Assembly to be managed and operated exclusively by the Government of the Federation ; and until a resolution to the contrary is made by the National Assembly the economic activities being operated exclusively by the Government of the Federation on the date immediately preceding the day when this section comes into force, whether directly or through the agencies of a statutory or other corporation or company, shall be deemed to be major sectors of the economy.*

Now, Sir, the danger involved in leaving this Section of the Constitution untouched by this hon. House can be seen from the examples which I may like to give to this House. In every society there are three alternatives open to every economic

activity. In the first one, if the factors of production, the sources of production, and distribution are all controlled by the State it becomes very dangerous. There may be a sort of political organisation which may result into totalitarianism in a society. There may be another section of the economy which may be controlled by the individual, and if it is controlled by an individual alone, in that case, it becomes extreme capitalism which may sow the seeds of revolution in the near future.

There is another alternative by which the economy can be controlled both by the State and the individual. In that case, the State and the individual participate. So, there will be initiative both from the government and the people. In that case, we may have what I may call mixed economy. The society may go on without trouble, but when it comes to a society where the Government tries to monopolise all the businesses, it becomes very dangerous. In Nigeria today, we have noticed the control of certain sectors of the economy either by the government or through its agencies. We have seen the effect of the wage freeze, and the ban on importation of goods had made it difficult for businessmen to operate as they used to do.

There is unemployment and at the same time there is under-employment. As a result, productivity is declining fast, consequent upon the fact that private economy is not being stimulated because those involved in it have nothing to do.

So, I am asking this honourable House to think about this Motion dispassionately and without any grudge, to see what it will be like where there is a tension between the private economy and the Government. As you all know, Government has not got the capacity to organise; to know when they can make losses or to know when they can make profit. The clearing and forwarding businesses, for instance, are still in the hands of some other people and the big Companies. If you look at certain commodities in this country, these are monopolised by some big companies. So we have to ask ourselves whether we are part and parcel of the society.

If you look through the list of the businesses in this country in which the Federal Government should engage, there are many businesses like petro-chemicals ; this is a very heavy capital intensive business. The Federal Government can invest in this petro-chemical business because the private economy cannot muster the means, the huge amount of money required to go into this type of business.

This is also true of the Steel and Iron industry, but fortunately the government is already involved in this at present, even though there are many hitches involved. Whatever happens, this is the type of areas the Government should be involved.

Talking about Airways, Nigerians at the moment cannot muster the means to go into the operation of airlines. The Railways should be streamlined, and a host of other things. What we should understand is that the Government and the private sector must depend on each other. The Government cannot kill the goose that lays the golden eggs.

[MR. UWANDU]

The people in the private sector of the economy pay their taxes. They supply the means of helping the economy; they can do all sorts of things. In fact the companies in this country are paying fifty per cent of their net profits.

Now, with all this contribution it becomes reasonable that we Members in this honourable House the protectors of the people of this country, the protectors of both the public and private sectors, should at this material time enumerate the major sectors of the economy in which the Federal Government and its agencies should engage in, and then we leave petty businesses, petty importation businesses, to the ordinary men and women so that they can exist.

**Mr David Afaiyio (Gboko East) :** Point of order !

**Mr Speaker :** What is your point of order ?

**Mr Afaiyio :** My point of order is Order 26 (4), and with your permission, Mr Speaker, I read :

*It shall be out of order to attempt to reconsider any specific question upon which the House has come to a conclusion during the current session except upon a substantive motion for rescission.*

Mr Speaker, Sir, you were not here on the 19th of February when we treated a similar case. At that time, the Motion was brought under the name of Nigerian National Supply Company Limited. It is the same Motion that has made its way into this House indirectly. The first time this Motion came forward, it was twisted so much that most of the Members here were confused as to what the Movers of the Motion were looking for. So, they were asked to go and re-word the Motion. They have done so. The hon. Member on the Floor has cleverly brought his Motion in the same way as that of the Nigerian National Supply Company. He mentioned the Nigeria Airways, *et cetera*, without mentioning the actual thing he has in mind.

All the same, I would quote what the original Motion says :

*That in pursuance of Section 16 (1) (c) of the Constitution and in view of the need to protect the rights of citizens to participate in the economic activities of the nation and aware of the insistence of the generality of the public that the Federal Government and its Agencies should limit their participation—*

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member from Gboko (*Mr Afaiyio*), this was the one that came up last week ?

**Mr Afaiyio :** Yes, this is the one you told them to re-word.

**Mr Speaker :** The one I am talking about is the one you said had already been disposed of. You should read that Motion.

**Mr Afaiyio :** All right, Sir. It reads :

**Nigerian National Supply Company Limited**

*That in pursuance of the social and economic objectives of the Constitutions whose ultimate goal is to protect the welfare of the common man, this*

*House views with great concern, the persistent complaints by the public against the Nigeria National Supply Company Limited for the Company's inefficiency in the performance of its duties and its engagement in grave malpractices and hereby directs the Committee on Commerce to investigate the system of procurement and distribution of Commodities by the Company with a view to recommending as to whether or not the company should be wound up or prohibited from participating in certain economic activities on behalf of members of the public.*

That was the original Motion which was disposed of.

**Mr Speaker :** Mr Afaiyio, it is not the same. They have nothing at all in common. This Motion has nothing to do with the present Motion before this House. However, I thank you for your observation.

**Mr David Okwoche Agi (Oju) :** Point of order.

**Mr Speaker :** What is your point of order ?

**Mr Agi :** My point of order is a Constitutional one. I would like to refer to Section 16 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Mr Speaker, with your permission, I shall read Section 16 (1) (b) and (c). It says :

*The State shall, within the context of the ideals and objectives for which provisions are made in this Constitution—*

*(b) without prejudice to its right to operate or participate in areas of the economy other than the major sectors of the economy, manage and operate the major sector of the economy ;*

*(c) without prejudice to the right of any person to participate in areas of the economy within the major sector of the economy, protect the right of every citizens to engage on any economic activities outside the major sectors of the economy.*

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to point out, relating these particular Sections of the Constitution to the Motion before this House, that the intention of the Movers of this Motion contradicts the two Sections I have just quoted. This is because the Movers are asking this honourable House to make a delimitation of the activities that can be regarded as major sectors of the economy which the Federal Government can act upon, exclusively and without interference to other sectors of the economy which may not be labelled major. The Constitution provides in these two sections I have quoted in such a way that both the private and the Government can get into these sectors of the economy depending upon the policy or the expediency of the economic situation of the nation.

So, in that respect, with all due regard and respect to the Movers of this Motion, there is a contradiction on the provisions of the Constitution. Thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, I agree completely with the hon. Member from Oju, Benue State (*Mr Agi*). I had the feeling that this amounts to amending the provisions of the Constitution. (*Applause*) Of course, we know very well the procedure for amending any provision of the Constitution which is contained under Section 9 of the Constitution.

So, hon. Member for Oju (*Mr Agi*), I agree with you completely, because if we go through the provisions of Section 16 (1) (b) and (c) of the Constitution, we would find that every citizen and the Federal Government are entitled to take part in both sectors of the economy. Therefore, if we pass this Motion and restrict the right of the Government to take part in the other sector, it amounts to amending the Constitution. (*Applause*)

**An hon. Member :** You are quite correct.

**Chief Olusola Omonira (Ilaje/Ese odo) :** I have a Constitutional point of order. With your permission, Mr Speaker, I beg to read Section 16 (4) (a) which says—

*For the purposes of subsection (1) of this section—*

*(a) the reference to the "major sectors of the economy" shall be construed as a reference to such economic activities as may from time to time be declared by resolution of each House of the National Assembly to be managed and operated exclusively by the Government of the Federation ; and until a resolution to the contrary is made by the National Assembly economic activities being operated exclusively by the Government of the Federation on the date immediately preceding the day when this section comes into force, whether directly or through the agencies of a statutory or other corporation or company, shall be deemed to be major sectors of the economy ;*

In other words, this Section explains Section 16 (1) for the avoidance of doubt. The Motion now, Sir, is that we want to decide what is the major sector of the economy. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** No, no, Hon. Member, I can see what you are saying quite clearly. But the Motion itself is talking about asking the Federal Government not to take part in a particular sector. That is what it is saying. The Motion is not seeking to enumerate what and what subjects come within a particular sector. That is not what the Motion is seeking to achieve.

I think, in the circumstances, the Motion fails. (*Applause*)

#### August Visitor to the House

Hon. Members, we have with us this afternoon hon. Chief Ndaeyo Uttah. He is the Deputy Speaker of the Cross River State House of Assembly. Chief Uttah, you are welcome. (*Applause*)

#### Natural Disasters

**Mr Speaker :** I have a small comment on this Motion which stands in the names of Mr S. E. Asuk and others. You mentioned natural disasters. You are a very distinguished lawyer and you know that human beings and governments cannot stop

natural disasters. It is only prayers that can stop earthquakes, land slide, tornadoes, heavy rains, and so on. Only prayers can stop them. You are now asking the government to take steps to stop natural disasters.

This is your request : *And that this House further directs the Committee on Housing, Community Development and Environment to seek ways and means of providing a lasting solution to these problems within the next Development Plan period.*

How can we do this ? It is super-human. Nobody can do that. In the circumstances, your Motion also fails. (*Applause*)

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I move that this House do stand adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

**Mr Eddy A. Okon (Ikot-Ekpene) :** I rise to second the Motion.

#### Black Maria Victims

**Alhaji Isa Aliyu (Makarfi) :** Mr Speaker, I would like to make an observation on certain Press release made by the Minister in-charge of Police Affairs. I have noted with regret that the Minister wrote a letter to the Leader of the Senate telling him that the 68 people arrested by the Police were suspects charged for armed robbery involving ₦13 million. This is contrary to the first story, that these people were arrested—(*Interruptions*).

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II) :** Point of order. Order 26 (3) says :

*Reference shall not be made to any matter on which a judicial decision is pending, in such a way as might in Mr Speaker's opinion prejudice the interests of the parties thereto.*

**Mr Speaker :** The Point of order is well taken. The next person is Mr Edet Bassey Etienam.

#### Motions

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I would like to make a brief observation on the unfortunate trend which I have observed in this House for some time now.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have noted with regret that quite a number of Motions that come up for debate in this House give the impression that they represent not the vital interests of this country but the interests of some forces outside this country. I am very happy, Sir, that the Motion touching on the economic objectives of this country has been thrown out by this honourable House, because that Motion sought in effect to alter the economic objectives of this country in favour of the interest of the multi-nationals. We are aware, Sir, of the concern of the people who wrote the Nigerian Constitution for the welfare of the common people of this country. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Bob-Manuel** : Point of order. This is a Motion that has been finished with, and therefore he cannot bring it up again. He is talking about a Motion we have dismissed.

**Mr Speaker** : Do not re-open a debate on this Motion again. Go straight to the point you want to speak about.

**Mr Etienam** : I want to say generally, Sir, that since this honourable House represents the symbol of the hopes and aspirations of the common people of this country, whatever Motion is brought before us should be designed to meet those hopes, those aspirations and those objectives of the people. We are aware, Sir, that quite a number of people who come to this honourable House do so for different reasons. There are those—(Interruptions).

**Mr Speaker** : Please do not impute motives.

**Mr Etienam** : Thank you, Sir. I think probably the Business Committee would help us by ensuring that the Motions which are allowed to appear on our Order Paper do not represent any interest of foreign monopoly capitalism. Such Motions should be seen to represent the interests of the common people of this country.

**Mr Speaker** : Thank you. That is all right, Mr Etienam.

#### 1980 Budget

**Dr Junaidu S. Muhammed** (West Ward) : Mr Speaker, I rise to appeal to the Executive, and in so doing, I would like to direct my appeal particularly to the President on two issues.

One has to do with the Budget. Mr Speaker, you are aware of the unease that is permeating this country regarding the arrival of the budget on the Floor of this House and the other Chamber. There have been so much speculation on what are the likely provisions in the budget. Of course, in a democracy, this has to be the nature of things. But at the same time, Mr Speaker, I would urge the President to make sure that his Secretary to the Government, his Budget Adviser, his Minister of Finance, gear up and deliver this budget well in advance of the financial year so that we can discuss the provisions of this budget in time.

I am saying this, Mr Speaker, to avoid any misunderstanding. We know what happened in the past when we have had misunderstanding of some sort between us and the Executive. The Press took one way today and took the another way the other day.

We do not want a situation to arise whereby the activities or motives of the National Assembly are being deliberately misunderstood by the Press, if we refuse to approve or we reject outright any provisions that are likely to appear in the budget. I think the sooner the President realises this, the better.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the second one, is **Nigeria's Diplomatic Corps**. You and I, have had the privilege of travelling outside this country recently, and I am sure that you, like myself, have had the privilege of speaking with members of the Diplomatic Corps representing this country abroad. I am sure you noticed the very low morale among our Diplomats who are representing Nigeria abroad. For a nation like ours that

seeks to pursue a very activist foreign policy, the question of morale among our foreign affairs officers certainly is a very important one, and I think the sooner the President realises this the better.

Many Ambassadors are not sure whether they are going to be retained or asked to come back home. The sooner we assure them that they are going to remain on their posts so that they can continue with the normal diplomatic business the better. Otherwise when a man approaches any Nigerian Ambassador abroad and asks him, *Look, what is the policy of the Government regarding this or that issue*, the Diplomat is unable to explain this policy of the Government. He is in fact, not sure whether he is going to be the same Ambassador to explain the same policy of the same Government in a month or two.

The sooner these areas of uncertainties are cleared by the Executive, the better. There can be no talk of minimum Government in a democracy. We either govern or we do not govern and let those who want to govern come in and play the game.

Thank you.

#### Police Delay of Members

**Mr Sidi H. Alli** (Dambatta) : Mr Speaker, I rise to bring before this honourable House an incident that took place yesterday.

When we were coming to the House, the whole convoy of the Members of the National Assembly were stopped by the Police on the ground that some Ministers who went and saw the President off to Port Harcourt were returning.

We tried to speak to the officer that we were Members of the National Assembly and that in fact it was not the President who was coming. They said no, and that as far as they were concerned we would wait until the Ministers passed. We had to be kept waiting for some ten minutes until the Ministers drove past.

I feel it is important that the attention of the Executive should be drawn to this. With due respect to two of the Ministers, Minister for Works, Mr Victor Masi, and Minister for Commerce, Mr Isaac Shahu, who were elected before they were appointed Ministers, some of the Ministers cannot win elections in their own States. (Applause) All the same, we give them due respect because they are appointed as Ministers of the Republic by the President of this country.

So, the various arms of the Government must be made to know the respect they should give to Members of the National Assembly who were elected by their people.

Mr Speaker, this is a notice I feel I should bring to you. Thank you.

**Mr Speaker** : Thank you, very much.

**Mr Afolabi** : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, may I move that the question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That the House stand adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House accordingly adjourned at 12.28 p.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Wednesday, 12th March, 1980

The House met at 10.10 a.m.

**PRAYERS**

(The Speaker in the Chair)

**Personal Explanation**

**Mr Mike Ugwu (Udi)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to correct an impression by a newspaper publication in the *Sunday Times* of March 9, 1980 that the House Committee on Communications is to scrutinize all the Posts and Telecommunications' contracts from 1974 up to date. What the Committee has been directed to do by this House on the 10th of December, 1979 was and I quote :

*That this honourable House views with grave concern the present biting and painful inadequacies of the services of the Posts and Telecommunications and therefore resolves to investigate the causes of these inadequacies with a view to making recommendation for improvement.*

Probing the Department of Posts and Telecommunications is, therefore, outside the terms of reference of my Committee, and I wish to assure this honourable House that my Committee has no intention of going farther away from the resolution passed on the Floor of this House on the 10th of December, 1979. My Committee is only carrying out such investigations as would enable it to establish the root causes of the Institution's short-comings and certainly not probing the Ministry.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker** : Thank you very much.

**Votes and Proceedings**

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, the Votes and Proceedings of yesterday have been approved.

**PRESENTATION OF PUBLIC BILLS**

**National Insurance Corporation  
(Amendment) Bill (S. 8-80 E)**

A Bill to make provision for reconstitution of Membership of the National Insurance Corporation of Nigeria, presented by Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) ; read the First time, referred to the Committee on Finance.

**Securities and Exchange Commission  
(Amendment) Bill (S. 9-80 E)**

A Bill to make provision for reconstitution of Membership of the Securities and Exchange Commission, presented by Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) ; read the First time, referred to the Committee on Finance.

**Nigerian Institute of Social and  
Economic Research (Amendment) Bill  
(S. 11-80 E)**

A Bill to make provision for reconstitution of Membership of the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, presented by Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) ; read the First time, referred to the Committee on Industries.

**Nigerian Reinsurance Corporation  
(Amendment) Bill (S. 12-80 E)**

A Bill to make provision for reconstitution of Membership of the Nigerian Re-insurance Corporation, presented by Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) ; read the First time, referred to the Committee on Finance.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Mr Speaker** : Party Leaders should, please, let us meet in my office immediately after this sitting so that we consider the question of Motions, because we are having so many Motions and, of all the references made to various Committees, we have only got a report. So, we will consider it and know how to curtail Motions, and increase the time for the Committees to meet. Please, we will meet immediately after the sitting.

Please, do not expect to get your Official Report (Hansard) as usual because the printers are very busy printing the budget, and they say that after two or three days you will start to get them as usual.

**Committee Meetings**

Members of our own Finance Committee will meet in the Committee Room No. 5 at 12 noon on Thursday, that is tomorrow, to consider the various Bills. Our own Members of the Joint Remuneration Committee will meet at one o'clock today.

**Notices of Motions**

**Select Committee on Public Relations—  
Composition**

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to move the Motion entitled : Select Committee on Public Relations—

That there shall be established a Committee to be known as the Select Committee on Public Relations, the composition of which shall be 6 NPN, 4 UPN, 3 NPP, 1 PRP and 1 GNPP.

I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, hon. Member for Oron II (*Mr Etienam*).

**Mr Edet B. Etienam (Oron II)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, Mr Afolabi, you should give some explanation as to the purpose of the Committee. Or do you want me to help you ? The Speaker does not speak



**Mr Afolabi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I probably would say a few words, perhaps you can also add something to it.

The purpose of this Committee is very urgent. It becomes necessary to be able to have good relationship between us and the Press. Right now we lack public relations here and we have not been able to get any good public relations. So, the whole arrangement is to involve the Members of the Legislature here to be able to go into this thing, to be able to recommend appointments of public relations staff for the House, and to be able to do quite a lot of other things in respect of our public relations with the Press and with other members of the public.

This, Members will agree, is very paramount, and it has become very urgent and necessary. Hence, this Motion has been brought for your consideration. I am sure that perhaps the Speaker will like to add a few words to it, but I commend this Motion in the hope that it will be passed speedily.

Thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, it is quite clear from what the Deputy Leader of the House, Mr Afolabi, has said that—

**Alhaji Sanda Konduga (Kondunga) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am not satisfied with the formula used to give 3 for NPP, 1 for PRP, 1 for GNPP. If it is on the strength of our parties, 47 will never be a third of 87, and I am not aware when this formula was worked out.

**Mr Speaker :** I did not quite get what you are saying. I think there is a proportion agreed by all the parties for the sharing of committee membership.

**Mr Afolabi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I think this is not the first time that we are using this ratio. This has always been used in all the things that we have been doing here.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Afolabi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, it depends on the total strength of what we are going to have. If the composition is going to be 10, then you use the ratio. If it is going to be 15, of course, the strength per party will then increase. It could be 3 in certain respects and it could be one in another respect depending on the number that we want to use. This is what I was just trying to say. It is mathematical and I think this is fair and equitable, taking into consideration the strength of the various political parties in this Assembly. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr A. Afonja (Oranmiyan Central) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I think the point here is that there is no dispute about the formula. The only thing is that the application of the formula is wrong. If you look at the strength of the PRP, for example, you will find that if NPP has 3, by the weighting PRP should have 2. In fact if you use the formula strictly, then PRP should have 2 and NPP should have 2. What now happens is that with NPP's 73 you are using a weight of 30. Using a weight of 30 shows that NPP is going to lose 13.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am a mathematician.

**Mr Speaker :** There is point of order. (*Interruptions*) Order ! Order !

**Mr Afonja :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am sorry that my arithmetic seems objectionable to some people, but it is the truth. I am a mathematician and I know what I am talking about. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order !

**Mr Afonja :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not believe in one-quarter of two-thirds and all that. I am just talking the truth of mathematics. Let me explain briefly. If you use a weight of 30, with NPN's 170 you will have six. But you actually have five two-thirds which is 6. (*Interruptions*). If you take UPN's membership of 110—

**Mr Speaker :** It is all right. Leave the arithmetic.

As the Deputy Leader of the House, Mr Afolabi, has said, the purpose of this Motion is to enable the House have its own Public Relations Department. We have suffered in the past in the hands of our very good friends up there, the Press, who have frequently misquoted us either because of insufficiency of facts or for other reasons. So, we intend to set up our own men who will always liaise with them, and then put across to the public what had actually transpired in this Chamber. That is the purpose of this Committee.

I think it will be in our own interest that we have very good Public Relations with other members of the public. Hon. Members, you may wish to make some contributions to this Motion before putting the question.

**Dr E. J. Sowho (Ethiopia North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I think, without doubt, we have all suffered immensely, because of the lack of this sort of body which we are trying to set up, since we started in October, last year.

A lot of things that happened could easily have been avoided if a body of this nature were in existence putting across our views squarely, truthfully and untwisted for any particular interest. Since last October, newspaper reports of things happening here were twisted to such an extent that people were made to believe that those of us who earnestly came here to serve them were actually here for other things.

This should not be a Motion to be debated at all. I think it is a straightforward one. It should not even take the time of the House. Nothing could be more justified than this. If we have actually done only this for the whole morning, I would say we have done very well. In the last few weeks a lot of things had happened in this House. Since we came back from recess, we have observed that a lot of Bills have been passed, the Committees have been working ; on some occasions, we find that people have been invited to observe certain proceedings, yet when I pick up the newspapers the following morning, I hardly see what is happening. It looks as though quite a number of people among the Press are just not interested in projecting the image of this House in proper light.

Therefore, the existence of such a body is paramount for our own well-being and good understanding with the public.

Mr Speaker, I support the Motion.

**Mr J. C. Ojukwu (Idemili)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, as the last hon. Member has said, the Motion is quite straightforward. I think the formation of this Select Committee is a score for the House of Representatives in the sense that we are all aware of the need to communicate with the public and with the various people that we represent.

The need for public relations is paramount in any sphere of government and administration. This Committee will, among other things, one hopes, deal with all aspects of Public Relations, to wit, having a good Press Relations image, Community Relations, Relations with the Employees, Staff Relations, and what have you. And as time goes on, one hopes, we shall have established such good rapport with the Press and other arms of electronic media, so that we can be quite properly understood, there shall be no misgivings, and basis of suspicion will be reduced to the barest minimum.

I urge all hon. Members to give their fullest co-operation to the Members of this Committee when they do take off.

Mr Speaker, I beg to support.

**Dr Gordon J. Idang (Etinan II)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, the principle underlying the formation of this Committee is very well known to every Member of this honourable House. What we oppose is the composition of this very important Committee.

I do not see the magic figure of fifteen. If the NPN has six, the UPN has four, and the NPP has three. I think it is quite fair and reasonable that the GNPP and the PRP should be given two each. There is no magic formula for this particular exercise.

**Mr Speaker** : The rule says that the Select Committee must have fifteen Members.

**Dr Idang** : While the rule says that the Select Committee should consist of 15 Members, I think in an important Committee like this, Party Leaders should have been consulted before these particular figures were arrived at. I would crave the indulgence of Mr Speaker and the Chairman of the Select Committee to ask for an increase in the number of the GNPP and the PRP representatives.

**Mr Speaker** : That is all right. Party Leaders here would bear me out that we discussed the issue of this Public Relations Committee at the Party Leaders' Meeting. Of course, you are not a Party Leader.

**Alhaji Sarki Adamu (Dawakin-Kudu)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion wholeheartedly because I know it is already overdue. It is high time we should start to get some ways and means of how to project a positive image of this National Assembly to the masses. It is high time we should start to establish something which would be a liaison between the National Assembly and all other sectors of the economy.

Mr Speaker, Sir, we of the PRP are also against the composition of this Committee. The reason for our opposition is that in the past we have experienced some difficulties. By having a single Member in each Committee, Mr Speaker, we are

not represented. In most cases when our single Member in the Committee does not turn up at the Meeting, it means we are not represented. We do not know what is happening, and we may not know. Therefore, we beg, Mr Speaker, for your sympathy and for the sympathy of this honourable House. We ask the whole House to reconsider this issue and see the justification why we are against this composition.

Mr Speaker, Sir, we should like to have two of our representatives in this Committee. Thank you very much.

**Mr R. O. Adegoke (Ibarapa)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, looking through the figure that makes up the Members of this Committee which is fifteen, I see no reason why we should confine ourselves to 15, and not 17.

NPN Members in this House are 170 and they are given six. The UPN has 110 Members and they are given four, that is justified. The NPP are given three, that is also justified. But the PRP and the GNPP are given one each. We are unfair to them. Their membership should be increased to be two each. The total number of that Committee should read 17 instead of 15. I submit.

**Mr Speaker** : If you look at Order 60, it says—

*A select committee shall be appointed after notice given on motion made and question put, and shall consist of fifteen members to be nominated by the Committee of Selection, which shall nominate one of the members to be chairman.*

This rule has not been amended, so there is no question of talking about seventeen Members.

**Mr Afolabi** : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I respectfully move that question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That there be established a Committee to be known as the Select Committee on Public Relations, the composition of which shall be 6 NPN, 4 UPN, 3 NPP, 1 PRP and 1 GNPP.

## NOTICES OF MOTIONS

### International Centre for Child Study

**Mr Apollos N. Njoku (Isiala Ngwa)** : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name and the names of other hon. Members as contained in the Order Paper—

That in pursuance of Section 17 (3) (f) of the Constitution, and in furtherance of the United Nations declaration of the year 1979 as the International Year of the Child, this House notes with appreciation the declaration by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as regards the need to sustain children's welfare, and hereby directs the Committee on Veteran Affairs and Welfare to seek ways and means of establishing an International Centre for Child Study in Nigeria as well as recommending other measures for the achievement of this objective.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

**Mr Okon A. Eddy** (Ikot-Ekpene 1) : I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Apollos N. Njoku** : Mr Speaker, in moving this Motion, I would draw the attention of hon. Members of this House to the provisions of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria Section 17 (3) (f) which reads :

*The State shall direct its policy towards ensuring that—(f) children, young and the aged are protected against any exploitation whatsoever, and against moral and material neglect ; and it goes on to (g).*

I draw my inspiration from this provision of the Constitution in drawing attention to the welfare needs of the child in this society. In doing that, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of this honourable House to the speech made by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on the 1st of January, 1980. In that speech, the President was acknowledging the need and the work done by the International Year of the Child, and in order to consolidate the gains of the International Year of the Child, the President had this to say. Mr Speaker, with your permission, I will read some part of his speech.

*In order to consolidate and build further on the result of the activities of the International Year of the Child, my Administration intends to convert the National and State Committees of the I.Y.C. to National and State Child Welfare Committees to continue with the discharge of their present functions on permanent basis for the benefit of the Nigerian children. The Federal Government is also considering the establishment of nineteen Child Welfare Centres, one in each state of the Federation, to work in collaboration with the state and Local Governments, to voluntary organisations, various communities, individuals and U.N. Agencies, to develop and maintain relevant social welfare services that will ensure the physical, social, intellectual, moral and emotional development of each child. Another proposal to establish a National Children's Referral Hospital is receiving government's consideration. In addition, my Administration may set up a National Children's Trust Fund which will mobilize resources from both the public and private sectors for the further development of children's welfare.*

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have read this relevant portion of the President's speech to show how much the President himself is concerned with the welfare of the Child. You all would agree that, in moving this Motion, common factor which unites everyone in this House is your child, my own child and everybody's child. We are very much aware that for too long in this country the welfare of the child has been taken for granted.

Several Voluntary Organisations have tried within their own means to create a level of welfare for the child, but the Government on its part has hardly done so much to recognise that the child is the greatest asset which any country has, and the Government has not been very much in the area of the child to ensure the steady development of the child.

By making this speech, the President appears to have, for once in a while, taken the challenge of preparing for the child. So, Mr Speaker, Sir, it becomes necessary that what is important at this stage is not just that provisions have been made, but I think it is a duty binding on this honourable House to ensure that adequate provisions are made and that adequate measures are also taken to make sure that these provisions are actually brought into being.

A proposal for a permanent Committee is quite good enough. But these Committees, as you know, are *ad hoc* situations even though they appear to be made permanent. They will be working on materials supplied to them by Social Welfare Centres or otherwise they cannot actually implement. They may only recommend, but not implement. I think the onus of implementation lies with the Executive to make sure that money is provided to build these Welfare Centres in each of the nineteen States of the Federation.

It will be a good idea if this honourable House will see this as a serious matter, because the Child has various problems. The Child has educational problems, health problems, recreational problems. Even the normal child in Society has these problems, not to talk of the various handicapped children, the mentally retarded, the malnutrition children and all the rest of them. They have peculiar problems and I think the first step of building Welfare Centres in these States will go a long way to show that the problems of these children are being cared for.

It is a duty also of the State Governments to make certain things available. For instance, if the Federal Government makes fund available to build a Welfare Centre in the States, it is not going to be their duty to provide the land there. It is the duty of the State Government to provide the land otherwise this will not be implemented. So, it is necessary that this House should alert the State Governments and the Local Government Areas about the need to co-operate with the Federal Government in making land and other requisite materials necessary available in order to ensure that this policy statement is hereby implemented.

It would also be a duty on the part of the State Governments and Local Governments to start what may look like pilot schemes in the Rural Areas. It is not enough to have these things in Lagos, Owerri, Enugu, Kaduna and Sokoto, whereas in the rural areas there are no similar schemes. So, the Local Government Areas, through assistance from the State Government, should also take a leaf from what is happening in the Centres and State doing something in the rural areas so that children in the rural areas would have a feel of what a good life may look like.

Mr Speaker, in doing these things, it becomes necessary that there should be a basis for continuous study of the child's problems. It is not just enough that these adequate measures are being taken and they flourish once and eventually vanish. It becomes absolutely necessary that some measures should be taken to study the child's needs on a continuous basis, to make recommendations to the Social Welfare Division of our Ministries, to the Ministry of Education and to the Ministry of Health.

Of course, all these Ministries have need to provide for the child. So, the provision of such an organisation which will continuously study the problems and needs of the child, articulate these needs, define them and propose solutions, becomes necessary. In order to achieve that, Mr Speaker, we are calling on the Federal Government to establish in this country, an International Centre for Child Study.

I would not like to dwell so much on the type of children we have who would benefit from this. Mr Speaker, you will agree with me that we have the normal children, we have the physically handicapped, we have the mentally retarded, the abandoned, the motherless, the slum children, the abused children, the refugee children, children of unwedded mothers, children in poor rural areas, children exposed to drugs and crimes, children of the Saharan areas of this country. So, in taking all this into account, there is need for a broad-based institution to look into all the ramifications of these problems of the child, and propose a comprehensive solution, perhaps giving rise to a national policy on child welfare. Once this happens, then we can be sure we are, for the first time, beginning to take care of the child.

Now, one may wonder why I choose to call this *the International Centre for Child Study*. Mr Speaker, Sir, in preparing this Motion, I have been to several Ministries and several Agencies, including the United Nations Agencies. I have had consultations, I have had exchange of words with them, and I have had some encouraging suggestions from them. It is *International* in the sense that the child is everybody's child. Children have similar problems almost all over the world. Our children are in a peculiar situation. Because of the problems of the industrialised countries and the developing countries, the industrialised countries have succeeded in taking measures much better than the sort of things we are grappling with at the moment. So, if we institute an International Centre, working through the United Nations Agencies (and many of them are willing and prepared to take part in this organisation) we should be able to borrow from the experiments of the advanced countries of the world, and then we will be able to benefit by their technical know-how and ability, to be able to serve our own children.

In doing that, we are not thinking of Nigerian child alone. Nigeria has always taken the initiative in Africa in liberation wars, in economic wars and so on. I think this is another area where it is necessary for Nigeria to take the initiative in establishing a Centre which will not only care for the children of Nigeria but also for children of Africa, the third world, and the other developing countries of the world.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have to say this, that even during the year of the International Year of the Child, there were about 350 million children who still remained without reach of the basic necessities of life, like good water to drink, like good schools to attend, like good medical care, and yet we were having International Year of the Child. If we allow this to go on for too long, a time will come when most of our children will perhaps die out.

I have this also to say, Mr Speaker, that it is on record that out of every hundred children born, about forty-five of them die within the age of one minute, particularly in the under-developed world. Out of the others who survive, out of every ten that go to school, six have no chance of being into the classrooms, four who go to schools do not necessarily complete their primary education. So, all these are problems which are facing the third world countries, and I think it is the duty of Nigeria and other countries of the world to take steps in making sure that these problems are solved.

One may like to know what would be the objectives of an International Centre for the Child. Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to state briefly that, to me, the objectives might include :

- (a) To establish a permanent basis for the identification and definition of the problems of the child in all their ramifications ;
- (b) To propose practical solutions to the problems of the child ;
- (c) To create national awareness about the child and the desire to encourage the level of services to the child on a more permanent basis ; and
- (d) To prepare the necessary background papers as a means of dissemination of information.

What this institution is going to do will not only be confined to our consumption here. We should make efforts to sell out these ideas to the countries of Africa, particularly countries which are very much under-developed. By doing that, we shall be helping our country as well as countries of Africa.

Mr Speaker, Sir, like I did say earlier on, we have several United Nations Agencies that could be called upon to render the necessary assistance. These include the UNICEF which is already interested in child welfare, the World Health Organisation, the World Food Programmes, the World Food Council ; the United Nations Agency for Population Activities, the United Nations Agency for Funds for Human Settlement, the UNESCO, and the UNDP-United Nations Agency for Development Programmes.

**Mr Speaker :** Please, round up.

**Mr Njoku :** If all these Agencies are invited, I am very sure, Mr Speaker, that they will be willing to come to the aid of Nigeria in establishing an International Centre for the Child. Mr Speaker, Sir, it must be realised that no investment can be greater than that one made in the area of human resources ; no investment can be greater than that which ensures the existence of this generation. After all, our time may go ; and without making sure that those who are to succeed us are in a healthy atmosphere, that they have all the necessary inputs for their growth, we cannot be sure of perpetuating this generation. Mr Speaker, Sir, it becomes obviously necessary that at this point in time, Nigeria should take the initiative in not only providing for the Nigerian Child, in ensuring that the social needs of the child are provided for as a result of conscious government effort, but we should also go further than that and ensure that we provide for the benefit of children of the third world, particularly children of Africa.

[MR NJOKU]

Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I have tried in a brief way to tell you the purpose of the International Centre for the Child. I am calling upon you to give full support to this Motion to ensure that your child and my own child have a better future. My argument is based on the provisions of the Constitution and I hope no Member will go against it.

Thank you, Mr Speaker. (*Applause*)

**Dr O. Ogunkoya** (Ijebu-Remo): I am very much happy to be associated with the Motion on the Floor of the House, and I join hand with my good Colleague, Mr Njoku, to be a co-Mover of this Motion. My dear Friend, Mr Njoku, has exhausted the social side of the problems facing children in Nigeria. I want to try, as much as I can, to delve into a bit more scientific approach of the problems facing Nigerian children.

It is a solid fact, an inescapable fact, that we all were once children, and therefore if care had eluded us when we were young, most of us would not be here today. I, therefore, call on you to do your utmost best to support this Motion, because it concerns the very fabrics of our existence and our great country.

I do very much support the establishment of an International Centre for the study of the child's problems. It is a scientific fact that two factors govern the behaviour of children. One is a genetical factor, and the other is environmental factor.

We know that the genetical factor is a very strong factor and we do not have to go into the details of Watson and Creeks experiment on the NAD and FAD and all that is associated with it. But I should say without any reservation that the genetical factor, as strong as it may be, if the environmental factor is very strong, the genetical factor will be subdued, and this is one of the reasons why we are here, to advocate a system whereby the welfare of the child can really be studied. What are the environmental factors that govern the life of a child?

In Nigeria, for example, we have an urban child, and we have a village child. A village child may not necessarily be different from an urban child; it all depends on the environment in which the child lives. If we really want to be honest with ourselves, we must realise that every child is born innocent; and every child is capable of turning into anything. He can become a lawyer, an engineer or a highway robber, it all depends on the environmental factor that is there. If we encourage a child to behave well that child may go a long way in giving us all those good things that we can be proud of as a father. If the environment actually makes it difficult for a child to develop properly then we have a problem in our hands. A good child can become a vagabond.

Rogues are no fools; they are very clever; they have brains and they work mathematically with their brains. If these brains had been used in a positive way, maybe, we could have had more people developing aeroplanes, *et cetera* in this country, but unfortunately they have been used in a negative way. This is why the child study becomes a matter of paramount importance to our country.

What are the problems of children in Nigeria? Are our children well-fed and well-clothed? What is the family doing for the child? What is the father's responsibility towards the child? These days, and I want you to believe me, no child does anything *as I say*, they do things as you do them. I have always said one thing, that there are no delinquent children but delinquent parents. If we try to originate ideas to govern the welfare of our children, there are very good chances of developing more responsible citizens for this country tomorrow.

One of the greatest problems that we are facing today in this country is the problem of self-discipline. Where does self-discipline come from? It comes from homes. The homes must be organised in such a way as to give a child a directive. *Oh, daddy does not do that, Oh, mummy would not do such a thing.* This is the type of society we want. I am proud to be a Nigerian and I am proud to be a Member of a great society called Black people of the World. But often at times, during my hey days in Europe, there was always a belief that the white child is better than the black child. I was about to succumb to this until I went to see the records of some universities in Europe and I was astonished by the outstanding performances of Nigerians in so many universities in Europe. Some of them really shattered the records of universities and this makes me believe that *What a can can can, another can can can it.* And I believe very strongly that Nigerians and black people all over the world are very competent people. But because the white man has such environmental advantage which is so superior to ours, this is why they have advantage over the brain development in every child. We must develop the brains of our children in the right perspective, and to do this, we need a place to study their behaviour, their desires, their wants and their natural gifts. So many children who should have become engineers are wallowing somewhere in Ogunpa Motor Park; some of them are just messing around with no destination, no where to go.

I believe strongly that it is high time this country took the bull by the horns. Surely one day we are all going to disappear from the surface of the earth, but our children have the responsibility that they too will be in our shoes and they may even perform better than what we are doing today. Most children today are beggars in the streets, and they are hungry. It is our duty to study their problems and give them what they need.

I should quote one Chinese adage which says, *Give a child a fish a day, you feed him for the day; teach him how to fish you feed him forever.* It is the duty of this country to look into the problems and the welfare of the children. I do not believe that any group of children, no matter where they are in any corner of this world, is better than our own children. It depends on the chances, on the opportunities that we give to them.

This is where I do support the President for giving a lead in this particular respect. If he has done anything since he has been in that place that won my heart, it is his concern for the children that really had won my heart. (*Applause*)

I personally see it this way, that poverty is a problem. It is a problem all over the places, and it is our duty to conquer poverty in this country because any child of any poor parent is bound to suffer, no matter how you look at it. I was in England in 1959-60 when I realised that Morris MacMillan was made an Under-Secretary in the MacMillan's government and one reporter went to him and asked ; *Mr Prime Minister, your son is made a Permanent Secretary and He said ; Go and ask him, don't ask me.* The reporter went to the son and the reporter asked him ; *how do you come about you becoming an important personality in the Cabinet again when your father is a Prime Minister ?* He replied, *My brother, there is always a great advantage in good and successful parentage.* This is a great answer. If the parents are successful, the child is almost certainly bound to be successful.

These days, I can tell you that most of us who are here today started life with nothing, but we have made something. But we want these children to start their life with something and make something, and we want them higher. It is the duty of all of us to do something to study their problems, and this is where I come with all my might to ask you to be kind and generous enough to give all what you have got to support this motion. With this, I say thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir. (Applause)

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, the next co-Mover.

**Mr David Atta (Okpokwu East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I am extremely delighted to be associated with this Motion. To my mind, this is a classical example of a Motion which you could say is mutually beneficial and non-controversial. It has almost become a cliché here, in introducing Motions, to say that some of them are non-controversial and they are mutually advantageous. I think this is the best case of such a Motion, in the sense that we are all either fathers, mothers, brothers or sisters ; and more importantly, we ourselves had been children.

I am delighted that previous speakers before me have done an excellent job by way of providing the honourable House with the general analysis of this so much talked about International Centre for Child Study, but about which very little is known. I think their brilliant dissertations will certainly aid our understanding of this very important subject matter. They have almost concluded what I ought to have done unless I want to repeat all the points they have already made. But, be that as it may, I want to make a very brief contribution to this very important Motion and I am going to take my bearing from the standpoint of human resource development.

I want to draw the attention of this honourable House to the general saying that *the child is the father of the man* and that man is the most important asset and agent of change. For this reason, what we do to the development of this very important resource is very necessary in the sense that progress is a result of human effort. You will agree that the child is born completely free into an environment. He shapes up his personality, he acquires his world view and outlook as a result of whatever arrangement you have in your socialisation process. Dr Ogunkoya

has told us that black children or children in third world countries are not biologically inferior to their white counterparts. If there is any difference in the Intelligence Quotients of the two, it is as a result of whatever socialisation and up-bringing the children have received.

Countries are underdeveloped because in the main their people are underdeveloped having had no real opportunity to develop their innate capabilities in the service of the society. You need human effort to create and mobilise capital, you need human effort to exploit natural resources, and you need human effort to create market and to develop trade. Man is the centre of all things, and this is the more reason why we should take step to catch them young.

I want to emphasise that a society gets the kind of future it deserves. If we allow our children to drift without the necessary development, protection and guidance they will be left to be pulled in the direction of where the greater social force pulls them. And I want to argue that we have allowed our children to drift for too long. We have wasted this most valuable asset, but this is the time to make up for our past mistakes in this direction. So, I am calling on all institutions which have responsibility for the formulation of the attitude and the personality of children to come forth to render their very useful service in this direction. I have in mind all the socialising institutions. The most primary among them is the Family Unit. We, as parents, owe it a duty to accord greater attention to the development of our children. Churches, Schools and the government have a duty in this direction as well.

In many countries of the world, development means industrialization, to some it symbolises the achievement of independence politically and economically, and to others such as ourselves, it means the construction of huge Dams, the building of skyscrapers, bridges over dry land and the creation of a new capital in the wilderness. Development can mean all these, but I want to emphasise that human resource development is a process of unlocking the door to modernization and it has to start with the development of our young ones whom we have neglected for too long.

As I said, my Colleagues and previous speakers have emphasised the issues I would have loved to talk on.

In conclusion, I would want the Government and the social and economic planners to regard programmes for children welfare as an integral part of our planning process. I want to suggest too that efforts should be made by all State Governments throughout the country to create recreational facilities for our children. This will help them early enough to develop their innate capabilities and abilities. They have to do this early enough in developing their personality and shaping up whatever inclination God has endowed them with.

I want to appeal to our environmental and city planners too, because in the present situation, we have deprived children the right to play, by the nature of the urban arrangement we have at the moment. If you look at all our housing estates today, recreational facilities are never part of the total complex.

[MR ATTAH]

Roads are built almost next to residential buildings and there is no space at all for these children to play. I see this as a denial of their right to play, and this has been recognised by the world Body.

Thirdly, I would want a remodelling of our school curriculum. What I mean by this is that this has to be reworked in a way that would emphasise the special psychological, social and even intellectual needs of the children. Apparatus have to be provided and in the process of fidgeting with these apparatuses, the children actually get to re-discover themselves.

I would very much want hon. Members, without bothering you too much, to support this Motion which I think is in the over-all interest of all of us and our great nation.

Thank you very much.

**Mr Speaker** : Thank you. The next co-Mover.

**Prince J. S. Sangha (Degema I)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I am extremely happy to be associated with this Motion. Infact, my knowledge of the problems of the Nigerian child very much came into focus during the International Year of the Child when I happened to become the Vice-Chairman of the Rivers State Branch in Port Harcourt. During that exercise, I discovered, to my utter dismay, that the most deprived, the most denied, the most abused and the most neglected member of our community is the child. So, many reasons have been advanced for that type of situation, but I think it will still be frightening to add here that most of the fate of our children today in this country come from the primary institutions which I regard as a home, the correctional institutions and, perhaps, the incarcerating institutions.

For example, a child is caught for pilfering, instead of talking to him, instead of communicating with him, you throw him into jail. You are not throwing him into a place where he is going to meet with people who have the knowledge of trying to prevent him from that type of thing, but you throw him into the hands of criminal addicts. Three four or five months later, this child had become a new covert and, perhaps, after six months you release him and he takes to the street.

I think that if there is this International Centre for Child Study, more information on how to deal with the child, on proper ways of communicating with the child, on ways of showing the child live which he wants more than anything else would be developed to the advantage of the Nigerian child. I think also that 1979 was a great year for the child but the purpose of the International Year of the Child was, more or less, to highlight the problems of the child. I do not think that apart from the well theoretical measures adopted by the President, so far, no other concrete actions have been taken to solve some of these problems, and I think the Centre that can best address itself to the solution of most of the problems that were highlighted is the International Centre for Child Study which this Motion is calling for.

I do not need to belabour what have been said, but I think as I am speaking now if your walk down the street, even here at the Tafawa Balewa Square, you will see a society that is most insensitive to the problems of the deprived, the handicapped, the neurotic and the mental. Our children are allowed to litter the streets. Many of them, even those in correctional institutions do not really get the type of thing they are expected to have. Instead of brining experts or those who understand the child, you send people with whip behind the child, and I think that is not what the child needs.

Child abuse is a crime in some countries, but our type of correctional institutions in this country encourage it. You can even see the fate of an innocent child who, for one thing or the other, is brought into a correctional institution, but instead of attention being given to solving his problem, he finds whip behind him all the time. I do not know what type of child this country is planning to have, but it is true that in some civilised countries, at least in most developed countries, the child's rights as guaranteed in the constitution have been defended and protected, not only by governmental agencies, but by other philanthropic organisation. Such philanthropic organisations, I think, we still lack in this country.

Today, many of our children still die, deaths that could have been avoided if there were people to help. This is more prominent in the rural areas where a mother has a baby but does not know how to get the next cup of *garri* the following morning. Our family planning system here is still below expectation, and in these areas, the rural areas, the man has no job, the wife has no job and they engage themselves in producing children. There is no food and nobody seems to care.

I think the time has come when this country should re-examine the question of child allowance. This is being done in many other developed countries and I think we should do it if really we are thinking of the child. We are thinking of using computers in the passport office, but some day, the memory, of the computer will fail. But if we train the child the child will live on especially when that child has the right calibre of mind that he could go to institutions, write books to leave his findings for posterity.

So, I think any investment undertaken in the name of the child is a very healthy investment and, so, the International Centre for Child Study, I think is a proper thing. It is timely and I hope you will all join me in supporting this Motion. Thank you, hon. Ladies and Gentlemen. *(Applause)*

**Mr Speaker** : This Motion is not for Doctors alone, so let us hear the hon. Member for Bende. *(Mr Ogwe Kalu Ogwe)*

**Mr Ogwe. Kalu Ogwe (Bende)** : Thank you, Mr Speaker, Hon. Members, I think this is not a case in which we will be extremely verbose because the importance of the child is equally the importance of the man. When we are talking of children, we are thinking of those who will replace us after we have passed away, and it means that when we are alive we have to do some proper planning in order to have adequate substitute after we have passed away. This is what the Motion is talking about.

**Mr Speaker :** Just a minute please. Those hon. Members who are going to Zaire should please go straight away to collect visa forms in Room 65. Yes, the hon. Member for Bende (*Mr Ogwe Kalu Ogwe*) please, continue.

**Mr Ogwe :** This is what the Motion is saying—the Study of the Child, adequate care of the child, in order to make him an adequate and a responsible citizen in future and a leader for that matter. If we support this Motion, we are supporting that Nigeria will be re-organised in a proper way to make it more responsible, so that the future leaders will be more and more responsible. The idea of establishing the International Centre for Child Study is clear enough. It has my support because if we have an institution of that nature where the child is properly studied, we will know from the very early stage of the child what that child has aptitude for. This will actually prevent the child being sent to study what he cannot do. By forcing the child to do what he cannot achieve, he will end up in failure. When he ends up in failure he becomes a frustrated man in future. When he becomes a frustrated man in future, he becomes a danger to the society. That is why a proper study of the child is imperative.

Again, to think of developing a child by studying him means raising his morality, and by raising his morality, we are trying to cure some of the societal ills. For example, nowadays, we find children who are quite inefficient in their academic studies trying to buy question papers in order to pass their examinations. If we encourage such a situation, the Nigerian economy, since the basic resources of developing our economy rest on labour, will be jeopardised. That is why we do not need to be very verbose in order to support this Motion. It has my support, and I ask hon. Members that there is no need being verbose in this matter. I give the Motion my support.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, the hon. Member for Ethiopia North (*Dr J. E. Sowho*).

**Dr J. E. Sowho (Ethiopia North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir hon. Members this Motion is a very good one, but unfortunately the speakers up till now, except the hon. Member for Bende (*Mr Ogwe Kalu Ogwe*), have actually been arguing the cause of utilization rather than the study centre which is the thing advocated for in the Motion. If people were to take it strictly and were to throw the Motion apart, we will find ourselves voting against a Motion that is otherwise good. I, therefore, wish to touch on the essential points why the study centre is actually necessary rather than emphasise the activities of the utilization centres. These are supposed to be centres where you have the motherless babies homes, the nurseries, the recreation centres and the like. These were what have been talked about, but the Motion specifically mentioned the International Centre for Child Study.

Why is this necessary? We will all agree, basically that the stable child contributes to a stable home and stable children contribute to a stable society. If, therefore, we want to have a stable society now and in the future, then there is need for us to study and find out their activities, the behavioural patterns of our children, to be able to assess what remedial

measures should be taken in future to put them in the right paths. These are the things to be considered.

What is the attitude of the father and mother, the parents, to the children: their general attitude, care or lack of care? What is the attitude of broken homes to children, what effect has it got on them? What effect has an unmarried mother got on the attitude of the children in the society? What is the exposure to drugs doing to the children in the society? What exactly are we expecting if our children in future have to compare favourably with other children in other parts of the world? How do we now assess what is happening in our society with what is happening elsewhere, so as to be able to put them in the correct light? These are the things and many others that should be considered in a study centre.

This is why one is talking of a study centre. A study centre to look into these possibilities, prevent what is preventable, prepare them with a better background to be more useful citizens to the society in future. If we look at it from this background we may even go further to say, what effect is the lack of nutrition having on our society? The kind of set-up which we have these days in our primary schools, what effect is it having on our society? How are we going to prevent people from going into remand homes in large numbers? If we look at this, we will find that it is strictly a professional area, and it is very essential for a proper study to be made, for a proper prescription to come out, to have the desired result. This is why I have been itching to be allowed to talk on it because I have been rather disturbed that a very good Motion was standing the chance of being lost because the case was not being argued as intended.

Hon. Ladies and Gentlemen, I plead with you to consider this Motion as most essential, very vital for our society and for the future, and to give it your whole-hearted support. Thank you.

**Mr Irmiya D. Hassan (Dase-Tafawa Balewa) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I believe that the establishment of the International Centre for Child Study is an ideal thing and, therefore, I support this Motion very whole-heartedly. Nigeria stands to gain more from such a Centre than any other African country, because our social problems in this country, I think, are far more serious than what you will find in any of the neighbouring countries. These social problems have developed as a result of the poor attitude of adults and parents towards children. Parents fail to realise that man is a product of not only heredity but that of environment as well. In short, two factors make up man, that is the heredity and the environment.

The process of moulding a citizen, therefore, should start from childhood, and when a single process is missed, the scar or the mark remains there until the individual grows up, gets old and dies. The mark remains there. When he has grown up with certain social habits as a result of exposure to bad environment, no amount of laws can reshape him, and even if all of us in this country should become Policemen, and even if we could evoke as many laws as possible, we would not be able to change the individual any more.



[MR HASSAN]

The International Centre for Child Study will, therefore, acquaint the parents and adults with the problems of children. It will acquaint parents with the need to promote the welfare of children and to expose them to ideal social environment, physical environment and moral and spiritual environment. In fact, it is my belief that if the International Centre for Child Study is established, it will go a long way towards changing our society.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, GNPP.

**Dr Gordon J. Idang (Etinan II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion. I feel that the time has come for us to do something positive to improve the welfare of our children. Since the previous speakers have tended to highlight the other physical and welfare problems, I will like to confine myself to an aspect that could be adequately dealt with by a Centre such as is being proposed by this Motion. I am having in mind, Mr Speaker, the whole problem of political socialisation. I feel that not only will this Centre concentrate on improving the general welfare of our children, but will also work in this particular area to make them more patriotic and more nationalistic.

I feel that in this country, with the exception of repeating our National Anthem and the rest of them in schools, we have not done enough to inculcate in our children the need for national unity and the need for our own political survival. I think our children have been brought up in an atmosphere where we emphasise ethnic particularity and where they think more or less of other groups with some funny ideas about them. I feel that an International Centre for Child Study in Nigeria will go a long way to remedy this particular situation. I do not intend to belabour the facts already mentioned by the previous speakers. I think with these few remarks, I support the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, PRP.

**Mr Umaru Sadiq (Kumbotso) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, let us please try to cut our coat according to our size. Let us not spoil in trying to repair. This Centre for Child Study, I feel, is a question we should tackle when we have equipped our primary schools with enough text books and when we have got qualified teachers to man our primary schools. It is then that the need will arise for establishing this Centre. If we say that we want to establish this Centre now, where will it be situated? Is it here in Lagos or where? If we establish it here, to what extent will it help all the children from each and every State of Nigeria? It is not a question of centralising things that matters but how it can benefit a child at Niger State or a child from the extreme end of the Southern State and so on and so forth.

So, Mr Speaker, if you go to some primary schools, you will find that there are no qualified teachers to man these primary Schools, but now we are talking of establishing a Centre for Child Study. How can it help our children? We have to be realistic. If at all these people from the Western World are ready to help us towards developing education in this country, let them help us with

textbooks rather than introduce something that will divert our attention from developing the education of this great nation of ours.

So, Mr Speaker, I feel that this is not the right time to establish this Centre for Child Study because it will not help most of our children especially those from the rural areas. With these remarks, Mr Speaker, I rose to oppose this Motion.

**Dr J. S. Muhammed (Kano West Ward) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion. In supporting the Motion, Mr Speaker, I would like to draw from what has been said earlier by Movers and co-Movers of this Motion and particularly by my distinguished medical colleague, the hon. Member from Ethiopia North. (*Dr Sowho*)

Mr Speaker, Sir, you can see the result of our trying to drag highly specialized matters into mundane discussion of this nature. Many people have not bothered to go into the substance of this Motion or to in fact, realise what the implication of the International Centre for Child Study in Nigeria is for the child. The Centre is supposed to be a centre for a number of purposes, one of which will be to study the effect of the environment, the effect of the medical factors, and determining the kind of children we will have in the Nigeria of tomorrow.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to remind this honourable House that we are now going through the last quarter of the 20th Century. The Western World is far ahead of us in determining what the child of tomorrow would be in the Western World. Mr Speaker, Sir, this International Centre of Child Study is not meant, and certainly it is not the intention of the Movers of this Motion, if I got them right, to substitute the use of the centre as a kind of camouflaged subterfuge to sabotage the educational efforts that are being made in this country. The Centre, essentially, is a Research Institute. It is meant to serve, to my understanding, a number of purposes. One, the Centre will have to go into the question of the codification of marriage laws in Nigeria because we understand that the family is a very important factor in the development of the child, and stability in the home is a very important factor that leads to mental stability in the child. Without codified marriage laws in Nigeria it will be very difficult for us to realise what we are going to do with our children or what our children will look like.

No two children are the same, because there are no two families that are exactly the same. Nigeria's environment is unique. We cannot equate the Nigerian environment with the environment of the average child in England, in America, in Russia or other parts of the world. So, the International Centre for Child Study in Nigeria will be basically meant to siphon the experiences of those countries that have set up such centres in order to domesticate the results of their researches and make them available to the Nigerian environment.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to hope that the centre, when it is established, will address itself not only to the codification of marriage laws in Nigeria but it would also establish a very nationwide and

firm family code. We know, Mr Speaker, how brutal family life is in Nigeria. If we are to have polygamous homes, Mr Speaker, we must make sure that children born in such homes are not subjected unnecessarily to the traumatic effects of broken homes. We know what happens in Nigeria. You marry a wife, you do not like her and you sack her. I know there are areas in Nigeria where you sack your wife by a snap of the finger. What happens is that when you have children in these circumstances, these children are heavily traumatized and the effect of a broken home is something that a child carries with him throughout his life. I think the establishment of family code in this country would ensure that both partners, in any matters of relationship, know their rights and responsibilities and they know what would happen. They are made to be held responsible in the event of that marriage being broken up; they know where their responsibilities would begin and where they would end.

Mr Speaker, Sir, a lot has been said about the effect of the environment. Personally, I belong to a different school of thought. I do not necessarily share the argument that by putting some environmental input, you can make an idiot become a genius, and I do not also think that it will be the purpose of this Centre to go into the idea of saying, well, every child is the same. Of course, taking it at the base line, everybody has his own mental capacity. I think the Centre, essentially, will be aimed at the equalisation and optimization of the mental and physical developmental opportunities in the child. These are the sort of research activities that are likely to be embraced by this centre, and I believe that it will be a centre that will serve all of this country. The idea of whether a child in the far northern part where I come from, or in the far southern part will benefit is highly hypothetical. If the researches that are conducted in the centre are domesticated and not that researches are just done and kept in the books of libraries which would become irrelevant in a matter of years, if the researches are made available at this Centre and its findings are allowed to influence legislation in this House, in this National Assembly and other State Assemblies, I am sure the Centre would be of immense importance.

Mr Speaker, Sir, as to the wording of the Motion, I would have wished that professionals, by professionals I mean doctors, psychiatrists, psychologists and sociologists should be involved in this. I would suggest strongly that in tackling this Motion, the Committee on Veteran and Welfare Affairs should please co-opt Members of the Health Committee in drafting a comprehensive legislation.

Mr Speaker, I do hope that we are not going to have a one sheet report on this kind of Motion because I am fed up with this idea of having a one-sheet report after three months of Committee work. Either we do the Committee work or we simply fold up and say we are not going to do it. We are not going to accept one-sheet report. We should have a comprehensive report. This is the one and only National Assembly in this country.

Thank you, Sir.

**Mr Yusuf Ibn Muhammed (Moro)** : Mr Speaker, I rise to support the Motion. In doing so, I would like to speak in the area where the previous speakers had not spoken. It is very ideal to study a situation in America and the United Kingdom and so on, and try to bring their ideas to improve the conditions in this country. But, we have to look at the problems in Nigeria and the problems in the advanced countries and see whether we can apply the same method, perhaps, to solve these problems.

In the first place, due to ethnic differences and religious beliefs in this country, there would be a lot of problems in the establishment of this centre unless Nigerian approach is geared to suit Nigeria's problems. One of the problems of our children roaming about in the streets is first as a result of perhaps polygamy. Religiously or ethnically speaking, we have some people in this country who can marry as many wives as possible, and as a result they can give birth to as many children as possible. In doing this, one may not know that one is constituting a problem to our national economy. But, it is difficult, maybe, to legislate against this. So, in talking about the International Centre for Child Study, we must consider this aspect of the behaviour of Nigerians.

I think that the second problem which the committee may have to look at very critically is the imbalance of Western Education in this country. In some areas where children of the ages of five, six or even four years start going to Nursery Schools and Primary Schools, one sees that it is very difficult to find such children roaming about the streets, but in some other areas whether the children go to school or not, it is nobody's business but their own problem. As a result of this, this social problem continues to penetrate into the economy of this country, and this is leading to a lot of problems. You could see children at the age of ten or eleven smoking Indian hemp, drinking carelessly because their own way of life was not piloted right from the beginning.

Another problem, even if this Institute or Centre would be established at all, is the question of knowing the actual number of the children to be catered for by this Centre. Perhaps this is the only country where, since 1963, we have been unable to know the exact population of this country, and consequently it would be difficult to know the number of children roaming about, and perhaps the vagabonds and those children who smoke carelessly about. Without knowing the number of these children, how do we plan to improve their conditions? So, the Committee would still have to look into this population aspect of the matter in order to know how to prepare and cater for these children.

Another thing is the Nigerian mentality to situation like this. For instance, the aim of establishing the Remand Homes is to reform our children, but how many Nigerians today are making use of these Remand Homes which are scattered all over the States? So, a situation may arise, even if this Centre is established, where we may find that most Nigerians may not utilise it.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, Sir, as a suggestion aimed at solving this problem of children roaming about, I think there must be a legislation making at least the

[MR MUHAMMED]

primary education compulsory in the country so that if a child knows how to read and write, but he cannot further his education, he will be compelled to learn a craft or a trade so that his condition in life may be better.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to support the Motion.

**Mrs Biola Babatope** (Mushin Central II) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to support this Motion. Just as the establishment of the Institute of International Affairs helps most of us Nigerians to understand what is going on on the international scene, and Nigeria's relationship on such issues, I also believe that the establishment of an International Centre for Child Study will help to highlight the needs of children in Nigeria. I also believe that unlike the Institute of International Affairs, this new International Centre for Child Study should not be established only in the urban areas. As some of the Movers of the Motion have said, we have urban children and the children in the rural areas and both groups of children require some study. So, when this Centre is established, it ought to be decentralised so that we have Centres both in the capitals as well as in the rural areas. If possible, I would advocate that we have such Centres either at senatorial Districts or in the Local Government areas.

As of now, we have the Institute of Child Health which is a unit of the United Nations established at the Teaching Hospital Paediatric Unit. This centre focuses attention only on the health need of the children, but the needs of the children go beyond their health requirements. Some people have mentioned the emotional aspect of their needs, and also the nutritional aspect of their needs. This type of Centre will be able to co-ordinate the activities of the Units that take interest in child care.

In Lagos State, I know we have a Child Counselling Centre, the psycho-educational Counselling Unit. It is the only one we have in Africa, South of Sahara. Unfortunately, this Unit is being manned by a Pakistani. I believe that if the problems are peculiar to Nigerian children, then those at the helm of affairs should be Nigerians because it is only in that way that the needs which are indigenous to the Nigerian children will be adequately taken care of. With this type of Centre, the problem of looking after the children will have its emphasis shifted from the responsibilities of mothers alone. The States and the Federal Governments will be able to take more care of what was only the lot of mothers.

Let me focus attention on the care of the disabled children. Right now, it is being limited to charity organisations. You have the Wesley School for the Deaf and the Dumb ; you have the pacelli School for the Blind and a host of others. Rather than leave the needs of these children to charity organisations who make a lot of publicity from the suffering of others, I believe that if the State should take more interest in the child study, all these various problems which are peculiar to children will also be taken care of.

Just last year, we spent a lot of money and time celebrating the International Year of the Child, (IYC) but if this House can legislate on this Centre

for Child Study, then not only the pomp and pageantry of the celebration of last year will end our focus on the needs of children in Nigeria.

I wish that this House will whole-heartedly support this Motion so that we mothers in Nigeria will also feel that the Government is not only interested in Form M and importation in this country, but also interested in the needs of children. We believe that children are the fathers of tomorrow, and whatever we can invest on the care of children will go a long way into making this nation a better place for those that will come after us.

Thank you. (*Applause*)

**Mr Olusola Afolabi** (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, after listening to the various contributions on this Motion, I think it is time the question be now put. I accordingly move.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That in pursuance of Section 17 (f) of the United Nations declaration of the year 1979 as the International Year of the Child, this House notes with appreciation the declaration by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as regards the need to sustain children's welfare and hereby directs the Committee on Veteran Affairs and Welfare to seek ways and means of establishing an International Centre for Child Study in Nigeria as well as recommending other measures for the achievement of this objective.

**Mr Speaker** : May I know whether the Chairman of the Committee on Veteran Affairs and Welfare is here ?

**An hon. Member** : He is at a meeting.

**Mr Speaker** : I asked because some Medical Practitioners want to give evidence, so they would like to know him. His name is Danjuma Shuaibu.

#### The Federal Mortgage Bank

**Mr Speaker** : The Motion stands in the name of Dr Gordon Idang.

**Dr Gordon Idang** (Etinan II) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name—

That in view of the significant role which the Federal Mortgage Bank is expected to play in making available, by grant of loans, adequate housing accommodation for every Nigerian, this House directs the Committee on Housing, Community Development and Environment to investigate and report on the successes or otherwise of this Bank with a view to increasing the number of beneficiaries in all the States of the Federation including rural areas.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, is there anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr A. A. Inoh** (Ikot Abasi II) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr E. O. Echetabu** (Njikoka South) : I have a point to make.

**Mr Speaker :** Is that a point of order ?

**Mr Echetabu :** No, it is not a point of order. It is an Amendment under the Standing Orders 25 and 19 (g) of the Standing Orders of the House. I only want to add a few words.

**Mr Speaker :** Hold on. What exactly do you want, Mr Echetabu ?

**Mr Echetabu :** Orders 25 and 19 (g) of the Standing Orders.

**Mr Speaker :** Order 25 says :

*Notice shall not be dispensed with in the case of a Motion or in respect of any other proceeding for which notice is required except with the consent of Mr Speaker and the general assent of the Members present.*

**Mr Echetabu :** I am invoking that on Order 19 (g). This is a very important Motion that is why I want it. My Amendment is only an *addendum* to what is already on the paper.

**Mr Speaker :** No. You cannot amend it without notice.

**Mr Echetabu :** That is why I have asked you if you can suspend Standing Order 25 in view of 19 (g). You can suspend it entirely at your own discretion.

**Mr Speaker :** I can do that but it says with the general assent of the Members present. It depends on whether the Members present will like the suspension of this Order.

**Mr Echetabu :** Well, if I read the addition which I want to incorporate, then we will know whether the Members are ready to accept or not.

**Mr Speaker :** Okay, read it.

**Mr Echetabu :** All that I have said is, adding from line 3 *report on the composition of the staff, directorship of the Boards, shareholders of the same, ownership, present and past promotions in that Bank, whether or not they are tribal especially that of the appointment of the General Manager which is unjust and unfair and on the success or otherwise.*

I have an inherent knowledge. So, in the totality I am asking that the Motion should read—

That in view of the significant role which the Federal Mortgage Bank is expected to play in making available, by grant of loans, adequate housing accommodation for every Nigerian, this House directs the Committee on Housing, Community Development and Environment to investigate and report on the composition of the staff, the directorship of the Boards, shareholders of the same, ownerships, present and past promotions in that Bank whether or not they are tribal, especially that of the appointment of the General Manager which is unjust and unfair and the success or otherwise of this Bank with a view to increasing the number of beneficiaries in all the States of the Federation including rural areas.

**Mr Speaker :** Okay, let us first of all put the question whether Members want the suspension of the Standing Order.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I move that the Question be put

*Question put and negatived.*

**Dr Idang :** Mr Speaker, Sir, the primary concern, not only of the present Administration, but of all the recognised Political Parties in this country, is the provision of adequate and cheap accommodation to our teeming population. The social, economic and perhaps political problems posed by the shortage of reasonable living accommodation particularly in our urban areas, are very well known by Members of this august Assembly. Directly related to this problem perhaps is the need to expand and improve essential utility services such as water supply, electricity and sewage system. It is in the light of this problem that I now move this particular motion.

The Motion is very straightforward and non-controversial. I would like to begin with a very brief history of the Nigerian Federal mortgage Bank. The Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria was established in 1977 by the former Military Administration under Decree No. 7 of 20th January, 1977, following the dissolution of the Nigerian Building Society, an institution that was incorporated in December, 1956, and jointly owned by the Commonwealth Development Corporation, the CDC, and the Nigerian Federal Government.

The Mortgage Bank took over the assets and liabilities of the Nigerian Building Society and at the time of its establishment the authorised capital of the Bank was ₦20 million made up of 200,000 shares of ₦100 each. The Board of Directors of the Bank consists of the Chairman ; the Managing Director ; the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Finance or his representative ; the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Environment or his representative ; the Chief Federal Lands Officer, a representative of the Central Bank and four other Directors to be appointed by the Commissioner now the Minister of Housing and Environment. The Managing Director is the Chief Executive of the Bank, and is responsible for the day-to-day running of the Institution.

The functions of the Bank, as spelt out by the Decree establishing it, are five. Mr Speaker, Sir, to acquaint Members of this august Assembly with the importance of this Bank, I will crave your indulgence to read these five functions of the Bank—

(1) The provision of long-term credit facilities to mortgage institutions in Nigeria at such rates and upon such terms as may be determined by the Board and in accordance with the policy directed by the Federal Executive Council.

(2) The encouragement and promotion of the development of mortgage institutions at States and National levels.

(3) The supervision and control of the activities of mortgage institutions in Nigeria.

(4) The provision of long-term credit facilities directly to Nigerian individuals at such rates and upon such terms as may be determined by the Board in accordance with the policy directed by the Federal Executive Council.

(5) The provision, with the approval of the Commissioner, now Minister of Housing and Environment, at competitive commercial rates

[DR IDANG.]

of interests, of credit facilities to commercial property developers, estate developers and developers of offices and other specialised types of buildings.

Mr Speaker, Sir, in addition to these five functions the bank also has power to accept deposits and savings from institutions and individuals. It also has the power to invest in any company engaged in the manufacturing of building materials in an attempt to stabilise the prices of these building materials. The bank also has the power to issue its own securities, including bonds and debentures. And lastly it also has power to carry out research aimed at improving the patterns and standards of buildings in this country.

You will agree with me then that the bank can play a very significant role in our national development process. In consonance with our usual way of inviting foreign experts to run our essential services, at the time the bank was established in 1957, a firm of foreign consultants, the BMB of Poland was invited to manage the mortgage bank from July 1977 to June 1980. The BMB team, more or less, set up itself as a management board and was directly responsible for the running of the bank until June 1979.

According to the present Nigerian Managing Director of the bank, the BMB team was not adequately staffed. Secondly, the professional background and experience of some of the members of the team did not match our own responsibilities, and the team did not involve, left alone, train Nigerian in important functions of mortgage administration and mortgage banking.

In June 1979, the Federal Government then appointed the first Nigerian Managing Director and Members of the Board. It also increased the authorised capital of the bank from ₦20 million to ₦115 million to be made up of the Federal Government 60 per cent, the Central Bank 40 per cent. The Central Bank contributed the ₦16 million which made up the 40 per cent, but the Federal Government only converted the loan owed to it by the bank as its own authorised capital.

In addition to these functions, as I have already spelt out, the mortgage bank, in partnership with the World Bank, now has a responsibility to manage a programme of low cost housing for low income groups. This particular programme is, more or less, confined to eight States of the Federation.

The first of such programme which is styled the Pilot programme is in Bauchi State and it is to cost about ₦35.6 million. The Mortgage Bank is to contribute 20 per cent of the cost of this particular project while the World Bank is to contribute 80 per cent. The project is, more or less, to be provided in two phases. Phase one will consist of such programme in Lagos, Ogun, Benue and Imo, and the last, the second phase, will consist of such programme in Gongola, Niger and Ondo States.

Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members while I do not oppose such a very good programme that is aimed at improving the lots of the common man, I hope the Committee on Housing and Environment will look into the whole issue why that particular programme is confined to only eight States of the Federation.

There are also the basic problems encountered by the bank. First, there is the problem of inadequate capitalisation. The bank has not mobilised adequate resources to cope with the increasing demand for its own lending facilities. I have already said that the Federal Government only converted the loan owed to it by the bank as its own share; it was only the Central Bank that, more or less, contributed the ₦60 million.

Secondly, the interest as was charged by the bank until 1979, the interest of 3 per cent was quite low compared with the interest charged by other financial institutions in the country. Consequently, quite a number of people, more or less, applied to the bank for loan. In December 1979, the total applications received by the bank totalled about ₦400 million, compared with the ₦150 million which the bank had as its own authorised capital.

In addition, those of us who must have read *Business Times* will see that the customers of the bank have not paid their owed dues. The total loan owed now to the bank by its customers amount to about ₦5 million. This, more or less, affects adversely the ability of the bank to expand its activities to other areas. I think that the Members of the Committee on Housing and Environment will look into this particular problem, and know why most of the customers have not been able to pay their owed principals and interests to the bank so that the same facilities could be extended to other people.

There is also the problem of staffing. The bank, as you realise from the functions given to it and the powers enjoyed by the bank, is supposed to perform specialised activities in the areas of mortgage banking, building development and so on and so forth.

It is difficult for the bank to be able to retain or even to attract competent staff in the light of the Udoji wage level where you really have to pay people according to certain levels.

As such, you find that even though branches are established in almost all the States of the Federation, these branches are, more or less, mere application collection centres. All the applications would have to be routed to Lagos and then the decisions would have to be taken in Lagos. Until recently, the offices of the Bank were scattered in five locations, the distance of which ranged from five to ten kilometres. This, more or less, brought about not only serious delay in mail correspondence coming from the customers, and the branch offices, but in most cases resulted in loss of these letters, customers' passbooks *et cetera*, while in transit.

Although the Bank has now announced the formation of seven zonal offices, one in Port Harcourt, one in Enugu, one in Kaduna, one in Minna, one in Bauchi, one in Ikeja and one in Ibadan, it is still doubtful whether, in fact, the zonal offices would be empowered to approve the loans as the management of the Bank now claims. It all depends on these zonal offices being staffed by individuals of sufficient rank, maturity and experience to be able to perform these particular functions.

Recently, the bank has appointed six Deputy General Managers. I think it will be fair—

**Mr D. Princewill** (Degema I) : Point of Order !

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, what is your Point of Order ?

**Mr Princewill** : Mr Speaker, my point of order is Order No. 8 of the Standing Orders. There is no quorum in this House.

**Mr Speaker** : The Clerks should please check the quorum in the House.

*(Quorum checked).*

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, in the absence of a quorum of this House, the House stands adjourned till ten o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 12.25 p.m. without Question put pursuant to Order 8 (2).*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Thursday, 13th March, 1980

The House met at 10.30 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, I want to inform our hon. Colleagues who will represent us at the Zaire Conference that because of the problems we have with the Central Bank over their cheques, they could not travel this morning, but they have now been booked with Kenyan Airways so that they can travel tomorrow morning.

Committee Meetings

Members of the House Committee of the House of Representatives will meet at 11 o'clock this morning. I should make it clear that the House Committee is for the House of Representatives. We do not intend to have a Joint House Committee any more with the Senate. We shall have our own House Committee to look after our own affairs. The Senators have got their own four bed-room flats, let them have a Committee to look after those ones. From now on, our House Committee is only for the affairs of the House of Representatives. *(Applause)*

Members of the External Affairs Committee will meet at 10.00 a.m. and not 12.00. Members of the Finance Committee of the House of Representatives will meet at 10.30 a.m. this morning in Committee Room No. 4. Members of the Labour Committee are informed that they will meet at 11.00 a.m. The Minister for Labour is coming to the meeting.

Presentation of Bill

Hon. Members, the first item on today's Order Paper is Notice of Presentation of Bill.

**Mr M. A. Agbamuche (Oshimili) :** Point of order. Order 40 Rule 2 says—

*Any Member other than a Member of the Council of Ministers who wishes to move for leave to bring in a bill shall give notice of such motion by sending a copy of the provisions proposed to be embodied in the bill to the Clerk, who shall cause them to be published in three successive issues of the Official Gazette and shall send a copy of the first of such issues to every Member.*

Mr Speaker, I cannot recollect this procedure having been followed by the Movers of this Bill. That is my Point of Order. *(Interruptions)*

**Mr Speaker :** The point of order raised by the hon. Member is correct, but what I am trying to say is that in the new rules that are being prepared, this point has been taken care of, but that new rule has not yet been adopted. So, in the circumstances, the point of order is well taken.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Housing Scheme for Nigerians

**Dr Eze O. A. Nwala (Ikwerre/Etche II) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name and in the name of my other Colleagues—

That in view of the need to provide suitable and adequate shelter and accommodation for all Nigerians, and also considering the need to promote rapid rural development, this House directs the Committee on Housing, Community Development and Environment to seek ways and means of evolving a suitable National Housing Policy which takes adequate account of the rural areas.

I beg to move.

**Mr H. M. J. Wachukwu (Ukwa) :** I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I crave the indulgence of this honourable House to bring to the notice of the House that Government has evolved a National Housing Policy which many of you know very well.

**Some Members :** We do not know.

**Mr Afolabi :** I will now *try* to explain them. In the year 1980, it is the intention of the Federal Government to build 2,000 Housing Units in each State of the Federation. *(Applause)*

These 2,000 units in each State will be spread in many Local Government Areas so that the rural programme which I am sure many Members are crying for would be met. In addition, the Government is developing a lot of estates in various parts of the country. So, by the end of the Four-Year Programme, housing problem would have been solved in Nigeria. I am sure that the Government regards housing as a priority project.

With this remark, Mr Speaker, Sir, I think perhaps the Mover will consider it fit to withdraw this Motion. Thank you.

**Several hon Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Speaker. :** Dr Nwala may continue with his Motion.

**Dr Nwala :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I want the hon. Members to regard this as a very serious Motion, because we are sent here by the masses who are the electorate, and I represent the rural electorate of this country. One of the tenets on which I was elected was this adequate housing for the rural dwellers. So, in spite of whatever programme the Executive may have, this National Assembly has a right to discuss this problem which affects the generality of all Nigerians.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to refresh the memory of hon. Members to say that it is estimated that the total population of this country is about eighty million. Out of this eighty million, thirty *per cent* is urbanised, that is to say that twenty-four million Nigerians live within the urban areas, and fifty-six million of other Nigerians live within the rural environment.

Members will ask why I have taken time to compute these figures. It is just to show you that only a very minimum proportion or very minimal percentage of the population of this country live within the urbanised cities where most of the programmes to date on housing have been concentrated. So, in effect, there are other Nigerians who are being deprived of their legitimate rights to adequate and comfortable living space.

It is also a known fact that urban centres and cities are parasitic appendages to the rural environment or rural economy. It is also known that most programmes so far laid out by both the Federal Government and State Governments have concentrated or laid necessary emphasis on urban housing. Now, if we look at the Federal Mortgage Bank which is one of the agencies established by the Federal Government for providing adequate living space and adequate homes, we notice that the Federal Mortgage Bank has concentrated its efforts largely towards a certain sector of the Nigerian population, that is the middle and affluent class. By this definition, the majority of the rural inhabitants are excluded from benefitting from these programmes.

Now, Mr Speaker, Sir, if you will allow me to draw your attention to section 16 of the Constitution, we find that the economic and social objectives define the right of every Nigerian to a comfortable living space. Section 16 (d) says that *suitable and adequate shelter are to be provided for all citizens*. These *all citizens* include those citizens who reside within the cities and those citizens who reside largely within the rural landscape.

We know very well that these impressive programmes have largely produced what we may call satellite towns. Examples of this sort of development abound nation-wide. Take, for instance, here in Lagos we have the FESTAC Town, Eric Moore Town, Federal Government Building schemes in Victoria Island and Ikeja G.R.A., we also have Diobu G.R.A. in Port Harcourt, Independence Layout in Enugu, Trans-Ekulu Layout in Enugu and Bodija in Ibadan. You can name them. You will find that all the various housing efforts made over the last decade have been located largely in urban areas to the detriment of the rural dwellers. I think it is the duty of the National Assembly to bring out a very good and sound policy that will really be all embracing and include those people who live both within the urban as well as rural areas.

Now, one of the major facts of our national life is the preponderance or the drift towards the cities. Why do people have to come to the cities? Why do Nigerians have to leave their homes in the rural areas? They are coming to the cities because of the availability of better homes which have been denied them and, therefore, it is very impossible to ask people to stay in the rural backwoods where they lack essential facilities like decent homes, decent living spaces without drinking water, infrastructure, and no sufficient economic base to sustain them. You find that people are coming to the cities because of the bright light. Bright light includes glassy houses and glassy homes. Every Nigerian knows very well that he is entitled to a decent living. So, if this sort of rural urban migration must be averted, there has to be a policy that will

include rural inhabitants so that they will be accessible to decent homes.

Therefore, it then becomes imperative that a national housing policy must be devised so as to include rural dwellers who have been hitherto excluded from those facilities. And in doing so, we should not couch this rural housing scheme in the manner it is being operated within the cities. We find that most Nigerian cities cannot be labelled as good cities whereas elsewhere in the world, you find decent cities

If you look around all the major Nigerian towns with exceptions of maybe Kaduna, Port Harcourt, Enugu or Ibadan, where you may find decent neighbourhoods, most of the other areas are slums. We must not encourage this sort of housing scheme for the rural inhabitants to be located in such a haphazard manner. It must be approached within what I may call model village scheme. This implies that the necessary housing infrastructures must be installed, so as to make it possible that when you are entering any rural settlement in Nigeria, you will really feel proud of going there. So, in trying to fashion out a programme for rural housing, we must also think of a decent model.

We must also, in doing this, really bring the rural dwellers into the scheme. There has to be a conscious effort on the part of this National Assembly to evolve the rural housing co-operative scheme whereby rural co-operators can really benefit.

Now, I want to talk about some of the Agencies of Government that have been established to make housing available to Nigerians. I will talk about the Federal Mortgage Bank. Before you obtain a loan from the Bank you have to get a survey plan, you have to prepare architectural drawing, then you apply to the Federal Mortgage Bank for a loan. You have to pay the legal fees and the surveyor's fees before the loan is obtained. This runs into hundreds of Naira and not many rural dwellers can afford this. And even when your loan is approved you have to travel all the way to Lagos and this involves not only one or two trips to Lagos, but more than three trips, before you get any money to start anything. And most rural inhabitants of Nigeria cannot follow the rigorous process of the Federal Mortgage Bank. So something must be done. An alternative must be provided to make these facilities accessible to them.

Then there is the Federal Housing Authority, I want to know, over the last five years, how many houses have been built by the Federal Housing Authority for rural dwellers in this country. I bet you it is just nil. All their efforts so far are concentrated in urban areas. Take for instance the various State Housing Corporations of Nigeria, what do they do? So far, over the past ten years, their activities have been largely concentrated in urban settings to the detriment of the rural settings. I think this is a very unhealthy development in our national affairs.

The Housing Corporations even regard housing as an economic service. They never look at housing as a social service. Housing must be looked at both as an economic and a social service. There has to be a way of making the Housing Corporations really minister to the needs of the rural dwellers.



[DR NWALA]

Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not intend to flog this issue because this Motion is a straightforward one. I want every Member to support this Motion. The only thing we are asking here is that the Committee on Housing, Community Development and Environment should look into this problem of Housing and bring up a sound policy that will include rural dwellers in the various National housing scheme.

Mr Speaker with these few comments, I beg to take my seat. (*Applause*)

**Mr O. Afolabi** (Oyo East): Mr Speaker, I have listened to the last speaker and I can assure you that the government is taking action on all that he has said. (*Interruptions*) Mr Speaker, I would advise that the Motion should be suspended.

**Mr Speaker**: Mr Afolabi, the Clerk of the House has just informed me that there is an adjourned debate. I did not see it. So, please, in order to have a consistent record let us finish with the adjourned debate and then we can come over to the Motion just moved.

The Motion was moved yesterday. What of the amendments? Is Mr Echetabu here? Oh, he is not here. Well, the Motion lapses. Yes, let us continue with the Motion on Housing Scheme.

**Prof. Opeyemi Ola** (Ekiti West): Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to move, in association with my hon. Colleague, Dr Nwala, the Motion standing in our names.

In moving this Motion, I have to say that both Dr Nwala and myself are aware of the tremendous efforts being made by all levels of governments in the country, particularly the Federal Government Housing Scheme of the present regime which is aimed at providing at least two thousand Housing Units for each State of the Federation. I think this is to be complimented and to be praised. We have no intention of criticizing this Scheme nor to belittle what is being done. In addition, Sir, we want to pay compliments to the other State Governments, like the Lagos State Government, the Government of the late Audu Bako, the Bendel State Government and other State Governments in the Federation like Borno, where efforts are being made to provide accommodation to all categories of Nigerians.

The aim of our Motion is to supplement the existing ideas and policies on housing. In doing so, Sir, we are merely highlighting new dimensions of housing schemes in Nigeria. We are neither here to preach nor to criticise. In fact, Mr Speaker, I would say personally, I am not an authority in this field and therefore I am not in a position to lecture anybody. I am here to exchange ideas with my Friends and Colleagues of this honourable House.

Having said that, Sir, I would like to state that probably we need to say that the major theme of this our Motion is that it is good to have Housing Scheme in the major urban centres of Nigeria. That is so far the emphasis of the National and State Governments, but the thrust and the message of this Motion is this, that in addition to efforts being made in the urban areas, the State and National Governments should push their efforts to go into every

Federal Constituency of the nation, to go into your town and to your village so that the Housing Scheme does not remain a mere prestigious project that remains only in Lagos, Ibadan, Kaduna, Kano and Port Harcourt.

We want to say, Sir, that in spreading the fortunes of this country, or talking in commonsense terms, in spreading the national cake, the farmers and the workers of this country, both in the urban centres and the rural areas are entitled to be partakers. I would like to emphasise, for those who want to belittle us, those who want to criticise us as being unreasonable, that if you consider the millions of the farmers of this country, more than forty million farmers of this country, nobody can give us any reliable and recognised statistics that would suggest that there have been one thousand original and real authentic farmers that have benefitted from the scheme of anybody whether Federal, State or Local Government.

Given this condition, Sir, I think it is very reasonable for all of us who are patriotic citizens and populist supporters of the masses to advocate that we spread the Housing Scheme to reach this forgotten and underprivileged section of the population, namely the farmers upon whom Mr Speaker, Sir, we depend for our living and being as far as food and traditional roots are concerned. (*Applause*)

Having said that, Sir, I would like, Mr Speaker, Sir, with your permission, to remind us very briefly about the promises of independence twenty years ago when nationalist leaders like Azikiwe, Awolowo, Aminu Kano, Raji Abdalla and the late Tafawa Balewa made promises. Not only did they promise freedom and independence for the Nation but they also promised new dispensation of life more abundant so that all of us may be partakers and partners of the new opportunities of freedom.

But today what do we have? In spite of all the efforts, in spite of the oil boom, I would say, Sir, that the elitists' benefits of independence is the reality. In other words, instead of giving the fruits of the new dispensation to the masses and the common man, these fruits have gone to the elites, the new aristocracy. We are the people, the political class, the intellectuals, the managers, and the rich people—these are the people who have been the inheritors of the white man's mantle. We are the people that have inherited the fortunes, the offices, the houses, the castles and whatever you may be talking of in Nigeria. In contra-distinction to this, Sir, you have the poor masses, the rural proletariats and peasants, having nothing in terms of housing or anything.

In the middle you have the marginal class, those who neither belong to the top nor to the bottom, those who are struggling and who can slip to the bottom or mount up to the top at any time. So, in reality today you have a disappointed and disinherited class, what you call, the urban proletariats and the rural peasants, the urban poor and the rural poor who have nothing to show for independence except that we go to them every four years for our votes and they look to us as heroes of the new

[PROF. OLA]

independence. I think, Sir, if they look to us a heroes of the new independence, if they look to us a godfathers, it behoves us that we have something to show to these brothers, sisters and uncles who have not the privilege and the power that we have.

Mr Speaker, Sir, this is what I intend to say in terms of housing without going into any other thing. In terms of housing and accommodation in this country, what do you have? As they used to say, you have two cultures and two Nigerians—the culture of the aristocrats and the culture of the poor masses. I can hear an hon. friend wanting to know to which class I belong. Well I am in between. (*Laughter*) Now, Sir, when you look at housing and accommodation for the aristocrats, they are the people that have palaces, mansions and castles, not only in elegance of urban residential areas like Ikoyi and Victoria Island, but also in far off places like the Riviera in France, London, and so on.

In contrast to this, Sir, what do the poor people of this country have? Whether you are talking of Enugu, Port Harcourt, Jos, Kano, Benin, the poor of the city live in the slums or in extreme cases they live as shelterless people under the bridges, under the most appalling conditions. Even where they live in places like Ajegunle, they live in the most unsanitary crowded and very poor conditions, often without the most elementary service situations that are necessary for human beings.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I think with your experience of so much travel all around the world, you will note that some of the rural people in many parts of this country are next, as far as housing is concerned, to the cave man in the sense that when you talk of the urban areas you are talking of inadequacies, but in the rural areas, I want to submit that in most cases they have nothing at all. They live in mud huts like the cave men and I think this does not befit any decent nation. No Government whether Local or State or Federal will say that it has had any imaginative or concrete or creative or constructive programme to reach these rural masses. This, in essence, is the message of this Motion. We are presenting a Housing Scheme—

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II) :** Mr Speaker Sir, my point of Order is constitutional. I refer to Section 16 subsection 2 (d)

*that suitable and adequate shelter, suitable and adequate food, reasonable national minimum living wage, old age care and pensions, and unemployment and sick benefits are provided for all citizens.*

**Some hon. Members :** Sit down!

**Mr Bob-Manuel :** I read the Motion now—

*that in view of the need to provide suitable and adequate shelter and accommodation to all Nigerians and also considering the need to promote rapid rural development, this House directs the Committee on Housing, Community Development and Environment to seek ways and means of evolving a suitable National Housing Policy which takes adequate account of the rural areas.*

This Motion is writing another Constitution about Section 16, subsection 2 (d).

**Some hon. Members :** No! No!

**Mr Bob-Manuel :** So, he is only trying to aggravate the situation or do something else. The Executive have provided for shelter, they have provided for everything. What is contained in their Motion is already provided for in the Constitution. So, the Motion is not necessary.

**Mr Speaker :** Although I am of the view that the Section cited by the hon. Member from Degema (*Mr Bob-Manuel*) does not apply to this Motion, the only problem which I think Members will consider is that this House cannot do anything in vain. We cannot propose a Motion of legislation that will not be carried out. The purpose of this Motion is :

*this House directs the Committee on Housing, Community Development and Environment to seek ways and means of evolving a suitable National Housing Policy which takes adequate account of the areas.*

Where do we go from there?

**Some hon. Members :** A Bill.

**Mr Speaker :** That is what the Motion should have said. The Motion should have said, after evolving a National Policy or seeking ways and means, then to report to the House to propose a Bill. Hon. Members, this House cannot do anything in vain. The Motion is vague and is hereby disallowed.

#### Automatic Telephone Facilities in each Federal Constituency

**Mr Speaker :** The second Motion stands in the name of Mr G. N. Uwechue.

**An hon. Member :** He is not here. (*Motion lapses*).

**Mr Mutari Adamu (Dutse) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, the Motion in my name reads :

That in view of the need to encourage rapid processing of agricultural loans to farmers and to ensure that these loans get to the local farmers for whom they are intended, this House directs the Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Animal Science to investigate the existing system for granting these loans and to recommend measures for improving the system.

I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker :** Anybody to second the Motion?

**Alhaji Sa-idu Ibrahim (Kiyawa) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Murtari Adamu :** Mr Speaker, Sir, due to some reasons, one of which is that my co-Movers are not around, I would like to suspend the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** All right, you will meet the Business Committee to give you a new date.

**Mr S. A. Chaaha (Katsina-Ala) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am a co-Mover of this Motion and I am around, Sir.

**Mr Speaker :** The Principal Mover says he does not want it to go on.

**Mr Chaaha :** He said because we were not here but I was here.

**Mr Speaker :** I think you had better consult him so that you can have another date.

### Teachers' Salaries

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Chief Ogwe Kalu Ogwe.

**Chief O. K. Ogwe (Bende) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name and in the names of other hon. Members.

That this House views with great concern the undue delay in the payment of teachers' salaries, and the frequent exodus of trained and talented teachers to other professions, and the resultant negative effects on the standard and quality of education in our schools, and accordingly directs the committee on Education to investigate the cause or causes of these problems and recommend appropriate measures which the Federal Government can take to alleviate them.

I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, anybody seconding the Motion?

**Mr S. D. Kalgo (Bunga-Kalgo) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to second the Motion.

**Chief Ogwe :** Hon. Members, the aim of the Motion is to correct the educational imbalance. I am not a teacher but everyone of us has passed through one teacher or the other, and that is why we are all interested. The main substance of this Motion is—

**Dr E. C. Emekaekwue (Onitsha South) :** Point of order. Mr Speaker, Sir, Members of the House of Representatives, I stand up on a point of order which is constitutional. Although this is a matter that is in the Concurrent list, I am afraid that this House has no legislative power over the States as regards the payment of teachers, salaries. So, I am suggesting that this Motion be withdrawn.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Chief Kalu Ogwe, you know that the Federal Government has no jurisdiction over the payment of teachers' salaries in the States.

**Chief Ogwe :** Excuse me, Sir, the Motion is based on Section 18 of the Constitution, and if it is based on that relevant section of the Constitution which I have mentioned, the Federal Government has a right to do something.

**Mr Speaker :** Chief Kalu, you know, as I said earlier on, we cannot take a course of action that will lead us to nowhere. We cannot start debating this Motion and pass a Motion that the Federal Government should go and pay teachers' salaries in the States when we know that the Federal Government cannot do that. We know that the States look after the teachers and the schools within their jurisdiction.

**Chief Ogwe :** Excuse me, Sir, if I may add, Sir, I think the Member who raised the point of order has concentrated attention on Primary School teachers. By *teachers* we have included even the University teachers, and I think I am quite in order to move this Motion. What he said, although I thank him for mentioning that, is very irrelevant as far the Motion is concerned.

**Mr Echetabu (Njikoka South) :** On a point of order, Mr Speaker, Sir. There is a provision of the Constitution which also empowers us, although it is in the concurrent list, which means exclusive in a way, it is really a matter for each State Government to regularise their own transactions, so that this Motion can not see the light of the day.

**Mr E. N. Nweke (Nkanu) :** Another point of order, Sir, is Order 26 (4). This Motion is now dealing with teachers' salaries, but if this House will agree with me, about a few weeks ago, we passed a Motion here dealing with workers' benefits, and I am sure teachers are among the civil servants and workers. Therefore, I am contending that this Motion, Sir, should not come through at all.

Thank you, Sir.

**The Speaker :** Well, let us have mercy on Chief Ogwe Kalu Ogwe. (*Laughter*)

**Chief Ogwe :** Mr Speaker, I am used to forensic arguments.

**The Speaker :** You have received so many attacks, and as a matter of fact, the Motion is not a proper subject for this House. I think that in the circumstances, it will also fail.

### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this House do stand adjourned till 10.00 a.m. on Monday.

**Mr Aliyu Mahmud (Yola) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

### Improper Motions

**Dr E. J. Sowho (Ethiopia North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of this House, I would wish to comment very briefly that it is becoming fashionable for us to have Motions brought to this House that appear not to have been properly scrutinised by the Business Committee. Many of us leave our homes every morning to come here and do serious work, and if we are only to come here to sort out things that the Business Committee is supposed to have done, then, I think there is need for us to review the membership of the Business Committee to put in more efficient people.

I wish to emphasise that ending today, every single Motion brought to this House must have been properly studied by the Members of the Business Committee, looking at the matter constitutionally so that no points of order and no unnecessary arguments are brought up to throw it out for indecision and lack of proper research that ought to be done before Motions are brought to this House. I implore the Speaker to give a firm ruling on that because we do not want to appear to come here to play every day. Thank you.

### Conduct of Affairs in the House

**Dr J. S. Muhammed (West Ward) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, speaking on Motion for adjournment today, I would like to draw the attention of Mr Speaker and the whole House to the way we have been conducting the affairs of this House. To say the least, Sir, we have not been very responsible Legislators.

It is clear from what my distinguished colleague, Dr Sowho has said before, that the Committees, and the Business Committee at the top of that list, have not been doing their home work.

Secondly, Sir, on our part, it seems it is now the fashion that we come here and start late and we sit down and after just half an hour's debate, we go away for one reason or the other. Mr Speaker, Sir, the newspapers and the mass media generally have been looking at us in a very dark light, but I do not think that our own attitude has been helping matters greatly. There is no way a Public Relations Department, when set up, can help to salvage our reputation if we are not prepared to do our own home work. When you look at the Benches today, Mr Speaker, you cannot justify the fact that this is a National Assembly. This is the highest legislative body in the land that is supposed to over see the behaviours, the morals and Laws of this country.

Now, what right have we got to just point accusing fingers at the civil service, point accusing fingers at the other areas of the economy, when we come here and sit for only half an hour and we move? Some of us are now in the Bar, some of us are outside, smoking. Is this what we call the National Assembly? This is a disgrace. The sooner we realise that we are here to do the work, the better. We either do it or we get out and let those who can do the work come and do it. Thank you.

**Mr E. D. N. Uwandu (Mbaitoli)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I wish to speak on this Motion for adjournment and I must have to point out that for the past few days, we have not been conducting the affairs of this House in the appropriate way we should. Now, Sir, for example, it may reflect on the—

**Few Hon. Members** : Point of order ! Point of order !!

**Mr Speaker** : There is a point of order from Mr Olaleru.

**Mr I. A. Olaleru (Oyun)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of order is that the last speaker is not making a fair commentary about this House. That we have not been conducting the affairs of this House in a proper way is a slight on this Honourable House and a slight on the exalted Chair of Mr Speaker. So, I think the language is unparliamentary.

**Mr Uwandu** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I venture to accept, with respect, what the last speaker has said, but let us be sincere to ourselves, Now, I have to say something on Order—

**Mr Speaker** : There is another point of order from Mr Echetaabu.

**Mr E. O. Echetaabu (Njikoka South)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I think the speech on Motion for Adjournment by Dr Muhammed is a slight on this House. Dr Muhammed has not been in this House for the past two weeks, and yet he had the impudence of smearing the whole House, that we just come here and go away. (Applause) I would also point out that the makers of the Constitution know that there will be vagrancies and perhaps, conflicts and that was why they have made the Standing Orders for us to control and regularise our transactions.

We are not here for pulpit sermons and trying to curry favour with the public by playing to the gallery. The point of order is that we will not allow a Member of the House to come to the Floor of this House and smear our reputation.

**The Speaker** : Let Mr Uwandu finish his speech, please.

#### First Presidential Budget

**Mr Uwandu** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to say that we shall leave behind us the goodness or the badness of whatever must have happened. Let us concentrate on other issues.

Mr Speaker, Sir, we have heard that the budget may be coming out very soon.

The Head of State or the Executive are trying to prepare the Budget, and we have heard in this House that the honourable Speaker had some meeting with the Party Leaders of the House. I have to associate myself with one of my Colleagues who made some statements last few days in the person of the hon. Member for Kano Westward (*Dr Junaidu Muhammed*).

The Budget which may come to this House, under the first Presidential System of this country, has to go to different Committees : it has to be submitted by different Ministries to different Committees for them to look into this. I am not trying to foresee what is going to happen but I am trying to give a timely warning, so that nobody can blame this House for delaying any Budget in the first Executive Presidential System we are trying to experiment. So, I am advising the hon. Members and our honourable Speaker to convey this message to the appropriate quarters or to, the Executive President.

#### Even Development in Nigeria

In conclusion Sir, as regards the general development of the whole country, I wish to say, on this Motion for adjournment when we have a right to say anything we want to say, that we want even development in Nigeria. We want even development from the rural areas to the towns, to the cities, to the capitals and to everywhere. We do not want some people to come to the President or to come to the Ministries to ask for money through indirect ways. We want everybody to be treated equally ; we want the States to be treated equally, whether you belong to any-one or the other.

With these few remarks Mr Speaker I beg to take my seat.

#### Unfair Comment on Members

**Mr Bayo Akinbisehin (Ifesowapo)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, in contributing to this Motion for Adjournment, I would like to pass a few remarks on what some of our Colleagues have said in this august House. I would say, with respect, Sir, that it is not for some of us here to come and talk to the gallery ; not for some of us to come and show a holier than thou attitude. I am against what one of our friends in the Person of Dr Junaidu Muhammed said this morning. He has not portrayed us in good light. What we are supposed

[MR AKINBISEHIN]

to do is to give our contribution either in the committees or in the House here if given the opportunity. Dr Muhammed has been given all the opportunity and he has always contributed to debates in this august House, but what he does when a Committee is given to him or where he happens to be a Member, is what we do not know of. (*interruptions*) Please, I do not want an interruption. You must respect that the Speaker has recognised me.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would say, with respect, that we have come here to do our work. The mere fact that some Gentlemen go out to smoke or drink has nothing to do with the proper running of this House. When we have an interesting debate or something we can make a good contribution upon, and if given the opportunity by the Speaker, we would be here to give our sound opinions and contribution.

Mr Speaker has a lot of job to do. He has four hundred and forty-nine of us to take care of here. He cannot recognise more than one person at a time and invariably when we have Motions or Debates he cannot give more than twenty people a chance of talking. So, then what do we expect here? I think that we have got a system where we have our Committees where everybody has to contribute immensely and some of us who happen to be in some Committees are doing our best there. A Presidential System does not say that when you come to the Floor of the House you make noise or talk.

If you look round now, and you do not see some of our Colleagues some of them are probably busy in the Committee meetings. I have to say, with respect that those on the Committee on NNPC have been exhausted almost working everyday. The people in the Business Committee work almost everyday whilst some of our Friends who are talking now are away, gallivanting about. How many days have you been in this House? So, I would say with respect that I do not like that comment.

As for what happened this morning, I do not also share the views of the Members who left. If the Speaker takes a decision we have to abide by it. I also believe that we should, in this House come with Motions without sentiments, but with good faith. When you come with Motions, and you have good faith, and you bring out points and arguments to support your Motion or debate, I am sure reasonable people will support the Motion. I would not say because—

Mr E. O. Echetabu (Njikoka South); Point of order.!

Mr Speaker: Yes,

Mr Echetabu: Although the last speaker can say anything, I do not think he is here to teach Mr Speaker how to regularise the functions of the House.

Mr Speaker: Yes, round up.

Mr Akinbisehin: Mr Speaker, Sir, I am grateful that you gave me this opportunity, and I say that, as far as we are concerned, once the Speaker takes a decision, we have to abide by it. He is not a god, he can make his own mistakes, but we have to accommodate him.

Finally, Sir, I would say, with respect, that I support Mr Uwandu, especially when he talked about adequate provisioning and assistance for every State irrespective of whether I come from an oil State or from where we have groundnuts or from where we have crushing stones or cocoa. I would say that what we want is even development of this country, and when we get to that stage, everyone of us, I believe, will be happy. I must say that I have to thank the Head of State, who is the President, for giving Ondo State some money to rehabilitate the existing old roads.

We are still saying that we want more. He should let us have whatever we want, irrespective of whether we vote against him or not. We voted against him in order that he may be able to do well. In any case, we want more factories. (*Interruption*) We also want for Imo State but we want for Ondo State, to start with.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity.

#### Committee on Public Accounts

Mr Matthew Olubode Oni (Obafemi/Owode): Mr Speaker, about two or three weeks ago, a Motion was passed and referred to the Public Accounts Committee. When the Motion was passed, the Speaker promised that the Chairman of that Committee would be appointed, and that immediately the Chairman was appointed, the Committee would commence sitting. Up till today, we have not been able to do anything on that Committee.

Incidentally, I belong to that Committee, and the Motion is lying there unattended to. So, I would like to implore the Speaker to hasten action in such a way that we have a Chairman for that Committee so that we can do something on the Motion passed to us.

Mr Speaker: Which Committee is that?

Mr Oni: Public Accounts Committee.

Mr Speaker: It is a Joint Committee of both Houses.

Mr Oni: Nevertheless, I think something can still be done. It is not a Joint Committee; it is a Standing Committee.

Mr Speaker: Please, I am very sorry. The name of the Chairman will be given as soon as possible.

#### Presidential Grants

Mr Oni: Thank you, very much. Then, apart from that, Mr Speaker, I have been taking notice of something which has been going on in the country in the recent time, and I would like to make an appeal on it. Recently, I have been seeing that the President has been giving grants to various State Governments either for rehabilitation or for a call to come to their aid. Very unfortunately, Ogun State has always been neglected. (*Interruptions*)

Mr Speaker, Sir, incidentally, Ogun State has been forgotten for long. Ogun State is a young State created recently in the country, but no money has been given to her to aid her in springing up.

Very fortunately, this is the only opportunity where-by we can make an appeal to Mr President and we do trust that he will listen to our appeal.

Mr Speaker, I would like the Executive to do something. Thank you, very much.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you. Let us hear what the hon. Member for Oju (*Mr David Agi*) wants to say.

### The Business Committee

**Mr David Agi (Oju) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I have three points on my contribution to the Motion for adjournment. The first one is on the Business Committee of this honourable House. It appears to some of us that the Business Committee is fast becoming a havoc committee. My reasons are these. They have not, to me, been deliberating on what Motion proposals that come before them as impartially as they ought to do, and this is why biased Motions have been coming to the Floor of this honourable House as unfinished materials. This has made—

**Mr E. N. D. Uwandu (Mbaitoli) :** Point of order.

**Mr Speaker :** There is a point of order.

**Mr Agi :** But there is no point of order on Motion for adjournment.

**Mr Uwandu :** May I refer the last speaker to Order No. 26 (6) :

#### *Rules of Debates :*

*No Member shall impute improper motives to any other Members.*

In fact, the speaker is imputing improper motive on the Committee.

**Mr Speaker :** Say, the honourable Member from Benue State and not Mr Speaker, so that the record will be correct.

**Mr Uwandu :** I am sorry, Sir. The hon. Member from Benue State in his speech, Mr Speaker, Sir, is imputing improper motive to other hon. Members of this House in the Business Committee.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, the hon. Member for Oju (*Mr David Agi*), please do not impute improper motive, go on.

**Mr Uwandu :** I am not a member of that Committee anyway.

**Mr Agi :** Mr Speaker, I am sorry if I am thought to be imputing bad motives. I apologise for that. What I was trying to say is my own opinion, and I am free to express it. The Business Committee is not really disposing of Motion proposals coming before it as impartially as it ought to. (*hear! hear!*) This is why, when Motions are taken either based on lobbying by the promoters, they come here as unfinished materials. In this regard, I would like to remind this honourable House that when the Speaker of this honourable House was away on a trip to the United States, the House was informed by the Deputy Speaker, if I am correct, that on the return of the Speaker from his trip, the Business Committee would be reorganised, and he spoke to the effect that henceforth, all Motions will go

to individual Committees where they will be properly and adequately scrutinised, and then when they are passed by the various relevant Committees, they would then go to the Business Committee for merely fixing it on the day schedule. (*Applause*)

Now, I very much think that the earlier the Speaker takes a decision on this, the better so that the Business Committee does not become a *receive and kill* house. The power so much concentrated on it now should be dispersed so that they will concentrate on receiving from the various Committees of the honourable House what they have passed as genuine Motions and their business becomes fixing up these Motions as they should be scheduled for each day.

The second point, Mr Speaker, Sir, is—

**Mr E. O. Echetabu (Njikoka South) :** Point of order.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, let us hear the point of order.

**Mr Echetabu :** My point of order is that Sections 52-58 of the Standing Orders of this honourable House have made provisions for Committees, and if the Business Committee is one of them, he cannot tell us that the duty of the Business Committee should be delegated to other Committees. (*Interruptions*) That is the order.

**Mr Speaker :** Let us hear the hon. Member from Benue State.

**Mr Agi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, the second thing I want to talk about is that there is a dangerous tendency in this honourable House for hon. Members to bring all manner of Motions to the Floor of this House, all in the name of trying to make a catchphrase, or play to the gallery. This has resulted in Motions coming to the Floor of this honourable House without their Movers taking care of the provisions of the Constitution. What really should obtain, Mr Speaker, Sir, is that we should really know quite distinctly the Legislature's executive powers from the main Executive. I beg to quote from my briefs :

*Where there are specific constitutional provisions on any issue in the Constitution, we can only move the State Executive.*

By that I mean the Federal Government.

*Or the main Executive to action by promoting a Bill on the particular matter.*

We cannot ask or call upon the President or the Presidency of this Nation to do anything which is provided for in the Constitution without passing a Bill to that effect. Doing that is amending the Constitution by raping. It would be in the interest of hon. Members to always make sure that they bring Bills.

**Lt.-Col. P. C. Amadi (Owerri North) :** Point of order.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, your point of order.

**Lt.-Col. Amadi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not understand what the hon. Member from Benue State is talking about. I want to direct him on one thing. He is trying to draw a line of demarcation between what he calls the Executive Powers and the President. In our Constitution, the President

[LT-COL. AMADI]

represents the Executive and has all the Executive Power. There are three Legislative Arms of the Government—the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary. Which one is he talking about?

**Mr Agi :** Which Order are you pointing me to ?

**Lt-Col. Amadi :** We do not want to come here and play to the gallery or to whip up sentiments because of one thing or the other. We are talking of the Business Committee. Let us remember that all the facets of the political parties are represented in the Business Committee, and things should be done properly. If there is any dissension within the Business Committee, the Business Committee should report it to the whole House and not that the people who do not belong to that Committee should take it upon themselves and try to paly to the gallery and whip up sentiments.

**Mr Agi :** Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir. In rounding up, I would like to note that I am not playing to the gallery.

**Mr Speaker :** Please address me here.

**Mr Agi :** What I have all along been saying is that we in this House should realise that our own Legislative Powers are distinct from the power of the Executive, and for those of you who do not understand the difference, you better study the Constitution so that you do not confuse the two. It is because people are confusing the two that we are having problems in this House.

#### Public Accounts Committee

Finally, Mr Speaker, I want to talk on the Public Accounts Committee, which some time the Speaker informed the House that he was going to make statement about. Up till now we do not know what has happened to this Committee.

**Mr Speaker :** We just talked about it now.

**Mr Agi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to wind up.

**Mr Speaker :** You have finished. Yes, hon. Member for Okehiadavbi (*Mr Jimoh*)

#### Ibadan University Students' Rampage

**Mr Damisa Jimoh (Okehiadavbi) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, in contributing to the Motion for adjournment, I would like to mention briefly something about what happened at Ibadan University recently in which students of that university burnt down some valuable assets of this country worth about ₦2 million. Yesterday, this House moved a Motion seeking to take care of our children. If we are to take care of our children and the youths turn round to destroy the Nation's properties when they are expected to be leaders of tomorrow, I wonder, Sir, what type of leaders we shall have in this country.

I could remember that during the Military regime, the Military authority ordered that our students be shot in one of their demonstrations. Most of us who had brothers, sisters, sons and daughters in these universities cried out, and we were very touched by the outcome of such directive.

Recently, the students again took the law into thier hands and burnt down valuable assets worth

about ₦2 million ; and we say that our economy is in red. If our students in the universities have decided to destroy our properties because they have one thing or the other at stake, this action of the students, as I see it, is an act of provocation and sabotage.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I think I have prepared a Motion which will soon come to this House, that in any university where students demonstrate and destroy properties, it would not be necessary to ask them to pay for invariably, it is I or you who will pay because they have no jobs. What we shall do, Mr Speaker, Sir, is to convert them. Let us acquire some acres of land, take them to the farm for the next two years, and close down the university, until we recover our ₦2 million. Unless we do this, they will not realise what they are doing. I come from a remote village. I know that my breakfast costs me roughly 20k, and the students in the university on whom the tax payers spend their money now decide to enjoy all facilities on the mere excuse that taxi cabs are not allowed in their campus. They therefore, took the law into their hands and destroyed our properties.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I think it is high time this country took note of this proposed action in any university in this country. Any of our students who take the law into their hands and destroy these valuable properties, will have their university closed down completely for two years and they will be taken to the farm. (*Applause*)

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order !

#### Thanks to the President

**Mr Stephen Alete (Ikwere/Etche I) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I want to take the opportunity, under this debate on Motion for Adjournment to express my thanks to the President of this country for giving the victims of the oil spillage ₦2 million donation. (*Applause*) Even though that amount is incredibly negligible, we have to be thankful for little mercies. Having said that, Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I would like to make a request through this honourable House to the President. My request is to suggest to the President that this ₦2 million should be made available to the Rivers State Government to be disbursed to the victims.

I will give reasons for this request. What I am suspecting, Mr Speaker, Sir, is that if this relief operation with the sum of ₦2 million is done from Lagos here, the administrative cost of this operation alone, I am afraid, might even swallow up to half of this amount.

Again, I would like to say that the needs of these victims are mostly local needs, and as such, it would be better and cheaper to procure these things at the local level. I would suggest that, as we do know Nigerian ways of doing things, the award of contracts for these materials will be manipulated here in Lagos with the attendant inflationary additions made on top of them. What I am fearing is that by the time the relief gets to the victims, the value of it might not be up to half a million naira.

So, I am suggesting that it might be necessary for the President to order that this ₦2 million should be made available to the Rivers State Government

who know these people and their local needs, so that these needs could be so disbursed that the people will get the value for this ₦2 million.

With these few words, I beg to take my seat.

#### Burning of siezed Contraband Goods

**Mr K. R. Obioha (Ideato)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I had information about an impending wastage. A good citizen informed me that a big stock pile of confiscated goods at the customs warehouse comprising of textiles worth millions of naira may be burnt. There was a decree promulgated in 1976 that stipulated the burning of seized lace materials. I think that, taking into consideration the vanities of the individual Nigerian, the seizure of these lace materials is good. But, I think, however, that it would be a huge waste to burn them away. I do not think that Nigeria can afford to burn away millions of naira which we need in all facets of our economy.

I wish this house to use this opportunity to convey to the President that an auction sale should be conducted over these lace materials so that the money received from the auction sale could be paid into the coffers of the Federal Government.

I think this matter is not a matter that needs much argument. What is important is that the people who have imported these lace materials have used Nigerian resources in importing them. The least the Government can do after this seizure is to auction these materials and retain the money. We shall also encourage the Customs officials and commend them for their vigilance in making the seizure possible. But, please, the burning of these lace materials is hurting the minds of millions of Nigerians.

Some people have the opinion that these lace materials should be given to the destitutes. I disagree with this point of view. The reason for disagreeing is that we should get the money from those people in Nigeria who like to exhibit their vanities. Instead of giving the materials to the destitutes, we can realise millions of Naira which can then be given to the destitutes to meet their real needs. Their real need is not to wear lace materials.

With these few points, I thank Mr Speaker for the opportunity.

#### Students Behaviour

**Mr J. U. Uyeh (Vandeikya East)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to associate myself with the views expressed by the hon. Member from Kwara State as regards the behaviour of our students.

The attitude and behaviour of our students are unbecoming. I think that part of this should be blamed on us, the parents and guardians. I want to seize this opportunity to appeal to this honourable House that our attention should be drawn very strongly to the behaviour of our students.

Mr Speaker, Sir, there are many of our students who live in wretched and poor houses. In their houses, they do not eat the type of food they are being given in their respective institutions of higher learning, where they eat their three square meals daily. Many amenities are given to these students

in their respective institutions of higher learning, including meals which are served three times daily; everything is given to them free of charge and they forget the conditions of living of their poor families. But once they are unhappy about anything, they would resort to rioting. This is very uncalled for, especially now that we are in a civilian regime. Nobody is happy about what happened to students last year.

I am now calling upon the hon. Members of this House, who are the Leaders of this country, to use their initiative to appeal to our students. We, the parents and guardians, must show our concern in respect of the behaviour of our students. Their behaviour is very unbecoming. We must work towards bringing about peace and unity in our institutions of higher learning.

With these few remarks, Sir, I beg to associate myself with the views already expressed.

#### Construction of Airports

**Mr T. N. Ochiama (Ikeduru)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Colleagues, in fact, I want to emphasise the importance of the construction of Airports in some of the newly created States, with particular reference to Imo State.

Mr Speaker, Sir, you will find out that if anybody is travelling from here to Imo State by air, undoubtedly, he has to stop either at Enugu Airport or at Port Harcourt Airport which are the nearest Airports to Imo State. With the research I have carried out so far, it was revealed to me that a token amount of about ₦25,000 was given to these newly created States for them to take off. I also went to the Federal Minister of Aviation to find out if any other supplementary funds would be given to these States. To this, he said, yes, and that another amount, about ₦25,000 has again been approved to all these States including Imo State, for them to take off.

I remember some time ago, I read in one of the dailies that any State that wanted to build an Airport was free to do so, provided that that State was going to construct that Airport according to the specifications of the Nigerian Airport Authority.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to inform you and all hon. Members that the amount so far provided is extremely inadequate. The provision of Airports in the States should be completely the responsibility of the Federal Government and not that of the State Governments. As much as I know, Mr Speaker, if the President of the Nation or any of the hon. Members here or anybody else in this country, wants to travel by air to any of these newly created States which have no Airports, he would be taking the risk of probably landing at any other State that has an Airport from where he would go by road to his destination. I am saying that this honourable House should urge the President or the Executive to take the responsibility of constructing proper Airports that are capable of taking at least the 737 aircraft.

Mr Speaker, I think it would be very convenient for us to minimise unnecessary accidents and inconveniences of travelling from our States to other States in order to board an aircraft.



MR. [OCHIAMA]

With these submissions of mine, I beg to take my seat.

#### Killing of Motions

**Mr D. A. Zubairu (Jamaia-North)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I stand up to contribute to the Motion on Adjournment. In doing so, I shall make references to what has been happening in this House.

Excellent Motions had been tabled in this House which should have been useful to the economy of this particular country. People have used either political Motions or self-designed Motions to kill these excellent Motions absolutely. It is time for everyone of us here to realise that we have made a bundle of promises to the electorate before coming to this honourable House. Whatever happens during the four years that we are going to stay here would either be to our credit or to our discredit ; but this would all depend on the contributions we have to make.

So, I want every Member, irrespective of his political affiliations, personal sentiments or personal connections with any other person, to join hands and support all Motions that would help the generality of this country. It is not safe to design Motions to the advantage of some particular individuals but to the advantage of almost everybody.

Therefore, I want to make the point quite clear to the Executive of this country that the Executive cannot take Members of this honourable House for a ride. If the Executive is trying to bring a Bill, the Executive should not by-pass us. After an hon. Member must have worked for days upon days on a particular Bill, and the Bill is about to be presented to this House, it is at this point in time that you would find the Executive cleverly bringing in another Bill into this House, especially if the Bill concerns his Ministry, thereby killing the Bill of the other hon. Member.

Mr Speaker, Sir, we do not want such phenomenon to repeat itself any longer as has happened before. With this little contribution, Sir, I beg to take my seat.

#### Distribution of Fertilisers to Farmers

**Mr Barde Gadaka (Fika South)** : Mr Speaker, in support of the Motion for adjournment, I wish to comment on the poor conditions of farmers in rural areas. It is abundantly clear to most of us here, if not all, that a greater percentage of the Nigerian farmers live in the rural areas. It is, therefore, undisputable that this large number of farmers need special attention and encouragement especially in the field of agriculture. But to their disappointment, throughout the last decade, the distribution of fertilisers was not commendable because the fertilisers were distributed in the urban centres and it was the lot of the farmers from the rural areas to travel very far distances before they got their fertilisers.

The usual way of distributing such fertilizers by the Ministry of Agriculture is to supply large quantities of fertilisers to the urban centres where there is less demand, and then supply lesser quantities of fertilizers to the rural areas where there is high demand. I am, therefore, appealing to the Ministry of Agriculture in particular, and the

National Council on Green Revolution in general, to improve upon the distribution of fertilizers and to supply enough fertilizers right to the interior of the rural areas, especially where there is high demand.

With these few comments, I support the Motion for Adjournment. (Applause)

#### Working Method in the House

**Mr Isaac Ayodeji Oleru (Oyun)** : In the contribution to the Motion for Adjournment, Mr Speaker, I would like to say a few things on the work of this House on which many hon. Members had spoken. Many Colleagues of mine spoke this morning about the fact that this House is not doing its business. I want to disagree very sharply, Mr Speaker.

I want hon. Members to know that this Government, which is a new experiment in our country, is a government run especially by Committees. I do not want hon. Members to lose sight of the fact that the whole of Friday had been devoted to the work of various Committees of this House ; so that if the whole of Friday is being devoted to the various Committees of this House, I do not see why Members should comment adversely on the workings of this House.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, if Friday alone is not enough, I think that this House has the right to devote more days of work to the various Committees of this House. If you will note, some of the various Committees of this honourable House are over-stretched with work, and some of them have to meet for hours and hours in a day. So, the public should not be given the impression that we only come here and bebate for thirty minutes or one hour and go to our individual flats and rest. This impression is wrong and I do not want any hon. Member or people in the Gallery to go away with this impression.

Thirdly, I think the activities of our various Committees, Mr Speaker, are being shrouded too much in secrecy. For instance, I would urge the Committee Chairmen to invite the news media to know most of the activities that are going on in the various House Committees. For instance, the Committee on Education should let us know what it is doing for the Nation. There are some areas in which this Nation would like to know something which actually concerns their interest. For instance, Committees like NNPC investigating the loss of a colossal sum of ₦2.8 billion should invite the Press to know what such Committee is doing to find out the money in this country, because the masses of this country are really suffering.

Finally, Mr Speaker, we are running an open Government, and if we are running an open Government, the public and everybody else in this country is supposed to know what is going on inside the government of this country.

Mr Speaker will note from the new experience he has just shared with us on his return from United States, that he told us how the various Committees are being worked. They make the public know what is going on in the various Committees. Some of these Committees are even nationally televised so

that the public will know what are actually going on that really affect their welfare and the welfare of the government of the Nation.

So, Mr Speaker, I would like to say that our various Chairmen should please not shroud the activities of their various Committees in so much secrecy. Thank you.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member from Kwara State, I do not know if you have seen your Leader this morning, because this point has been taken up in the Party leaders meeting, that we shall devote more days for the work of the Committees and we shall reduce Motions completely because there is no point bringing a Motion that will be ineffective. So, we decided that Motions will come once in a fortnight. (Interruptions)

**Mr Olaleru :** Thank you very much. I am happy that I am in tune with you.

**Mr Speaker :** We do not want Motions simply because somebody wants to say something. All that we shall do now is that if you have an important Motion, I would scrutinise it myself and agree that it is a matter of national importance, then that would be raised and debated upon. Every other subject such as wanting to build houses or railways would come by way of a Bill.

**Mr Olaleru :** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Olumuyiwa Akinboro** (Okeona/Owu/Gbagura) : The first point I want to make is in respect of the observations that have been going on since morning ; that is, the way we work here. Some people seem to have the impression that we come here and we do not stay until five o'clock, therefore we are not doing our work. I want to say that that is very wrong. We act here on a programme fixed for the day. We act like a court of law. When the court sits, and it finishes its job by ten or eleven o'clock, then it rises for the day. Similarly, we have a programme which we follow every day.

I want to say with respect, Sir, that I agree with the Speaker in all his rulings this morning because most of the rulings had served the cause of saving us unnecessary embarrassment. I do not see anything wrong if a Member of this House calls the attention of the hon. Speaker to an improper, irregular or a vague Motion and the Speaker upholds him. I think that he is just doing his job in the way he is expected to do it.

You will see from what has happened this morning that the Motion that has been overruled and thrown out, as some Court can do in dismissing an action or striking out useless actions, has given us the opportunity of contributing to this Motion for Adjournment, and many people this morning have said very important and useful things. I think today, we have performed better than if the Motions had gone on—Motions that will serve practically no useful purpose, Motions that are basically unconstitutional, Motions that are really very vague. Invariably, one cannot always get up to say these things. The hon. Member for Oyo East (*Mr Afolabi*) has in the last few days called our attention to some of these Motions, to

the extent that some of them have had to be withdrawn or the Movers have been advised to reword them. So, I would say, Sir, that what has happened this morning is very proper and it has gladdened my own heart and I think the Speaker should be congratulated for this.

#### Oil Spillage Relief Fund

The next thing I want to speak on is in respect of these oil spillage areas. I join others who have expressed thanks to the President for coming to the aid of the people.

I would also suggest, Sir, that those of us here, if only to improve our public image should try to do something about it. I would say that it seems to me proper if we decide in this honourable House to contribute something and get the Leader of the House to take this money to the Governor of the Rivers State, and then the Press can be invited. You see, we cannot abandon these people in their hour of need. Most of the money that we use in this country comes from these areas, and I do not think that we should just sit down here and do nothing about it. Sir, I would say that, with due respect, if the Speaker agrees, I am prepared, on my own, to contribute my widow's mite of ₦50.00 even now on the spot. If this House thinks it proper, maybe a book could be opened and the names of donors could be written down so that we really know how much we collect.

The next point, Sir, is that I would like to appeal, through this House, to the *Daily Times* in particular to open up a country-wide campaign for contribution to aid these victims. The other time, Sir, if I remember very well, this sort of thing happened in the North, this drought disaster, and the *Daily Times*, through Alhaji Babatunde Jose then, performed wonderfully well, and a lot of money was collected. As a matter of conscience, everybody in this country should do something to help the victims of the oil spillage areas, and every kobo that everybody contributes would go a long way to help them. This House should throw its weight behind the public and lead the public to get something contributed towards relieving the sufferings of these people. Thank you, very much, Sir (*Applause*).

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you.

#### National Flag

**Mr A. Ukpanah** (Ukanafun II) : I want to contribute on this Motion for Adjournment by mentioning a very simple point and a very simple matter that has eluded Nigerians all along. Even in this National Assembly Hall, we do not have the Nigerian Flag—conspicuously displayed, and I am not sure that the big emblem behind Mr Speaker is the white, green, white ; it is not. And the same thing has happened in all the government offices in the federation.

As Mr Speaker knows, we are operating a new system of Government. And whatever happened when we were operating a Parliamentary System should be discarded. It is my view, and I strongly

[MR. UKPANAH]

suggest to this Honourable House to recommend to the Executive or to the Federal Government to make it mandatory that highly placed government functionaries—the President, the Governors, the President of the Senate, the Speaker, the Deputy President of the Senate, the Deputy Speaker, the Ministers of State or the Commissioners, should have the National Flag of the Nation conspicuously displayed inside their offices. It would be appreciated that even Christians and Muslims alike have symbols which they look up to. The Christians have a cross to look up to, and the Muslims have the moon and the star. These are usually well displayed in their places of worship, and these have very psychological impact.

We have talked about disturbances of students in this country. I am very sure if the Trenchard Hall in Ibadan University had this National Flag well displayed inside and in most of the Professors rooms and even in their lecture halls, this would have had some psychological effect on them. I do know that school children are made to recite the National Pledge but they recite them like parrots. If the National Flag is well displayed on the tables of the Headmasters in schools, Nigerian children would learn to look up to the National Flag as a sacred symbol. This is my contribution.

#### Students Unrest

**Mr E. O. Echetabu** (Njikoka South) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, of this House, I would like to make reference to the atrocities committed by the students of Ibadan University. I think that must be greatly deplored because the tax-payers' money had been laid waste. I would also like to draw the attention of Members to the fact that quite recently Radio Lagos referred to the University of Ibadan as University of Ibadan, Oyo State. I would like this House to write that Radio Station that it is the University of Ibadan, Nigeria and not University of Ibadan, Oyo State.

**Mr Speaker** : There is a point of Order.

**Mr J. O. Iwuagwu** (Mbano West) : My Point of order is Order 8 (1) Mr Speaker, with your permission, I read :

*The quorum of the House shall be not less than one-sixth of all the Members of the House.*

**Mr Speaker** : We are already rounding up. After the hon. Member for Njikoka South (*Mr Echetabu*) has finished, the Question will be put.

**Mr Echetabu** : Thank you, very much, Mr Speaker; for the protection. The hon. Member for Mbano West (*Mr Iwuagwu*) has nothing to say, that is why he is pointing me to order. Mr Speaker, there is also the remark of Lagos University as Lagos University of Lagos. I want these things to be corrected to ensure that Federal Institutions are not usurped by any one State or the other. This has happened in the case of the General Hospital in Lagos, the Island Maternity Hospital, Lagos and the Massey Hospital. These are Federal Institutions, and because they are in a State does not give their assets and liabilities to that State except there is a formal transfer.

#### Oil Spillage Areas

The oil company, Texaco must be made to pay huge compensation to those victims in the oil spillage areas. I want to make reference to what the last Speaker said about the contributions spear-headed by the *Daily Times* under its former Chairman, Alhaji Jose, to the drought victims in the North sometime ago. He did that because he wanted to keep his post as the Chairman of the *Daily Times*.

**Mr Speaker** : There is a point of Order.

**Mr Fola Omidiji** (Egba Alake) : The hon. Member for Njikoka South (*Mr Echetabu*) is imputing motives in his speech.

**Several hon. Members** : What order ?

**Mr Speaker** : Mr Omidiji, please leave that. The hon. Member for Njikoka South (*Mr Echetabu*) please continue.

**Mr Echetabu** : Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the protection. Truth is always bitter. When I come to this House, I do not take myself as an individual, but as a Nigerian. And when I speak the truth, it should be taken in good faith. Quite recently, somebody again, from the UPN side of the House, made a remark that he wants the wealth of this country to be evenly distributed. May I ask, how many ambassadors come from one ethnic group? How do you distribute the wealth of the organisations and parastatals of this country?

How much money had been lobbied into one particular geographical region or states as opposed to others and where does the wealth come from? When you had cocoa it was all spent in one region. What happened when tin, coal, bauxite and groundnuts were the essence of the commodities for the economic upbringing of this country? You had more, yet, you still want more, and you want more and you call yourselves Nigerians.

**Mr Speaker** : There is a point of order.

**Mr Bayo Akinbisehin** (Ifesowopo) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I refer to Order 16, which says—

*By the indulgence of the House, and the leave of Mr Speaker, a Member may make a personal explanation although there be no question before the House ; but no controversial matter may be brought forward nor may debate arise upon the explanation, the terms of the proposed statement shall be submitted in extenso to Mr Speaker when his leave to make it is sought.*

I am making a point of explanation in respect of what—

**Several hon. Members** : No ! No !

**Mr Akinbisehin** : The hon. Member for Njikoka South (*Mr E. O. Echetabu*) is trying to mislead this honourable House.

**Mr Speaker** : Please round up, Mr Echetabu.

**Mr Echetabu** : If we are going to follow up naming Federal Universities after the States, then we shall have 19 Federal Universities all belonging to each State. I think enough is enough. One side should not have the whole benefit of the country and then come here to be the first people preaching *holier-than-thou* attitude.

### Federal Mortgage Bank

Lastly, I am coming to the issue of the Federal Mortgage Bank. This Bank was known as Nigerian Building Society and the four Eastern States were the Shareholders. Now, the Directorship of that Mortgage Bank, which had been converted to Federal Mortgage Bank, is 95 per cent ethnicity of a geographical grouping. Staffing is also the same. With a capital of ₦600 million by the Nigerian Government to build houses throughout the 19 States of the Federation, this whole money is being lumped in one-sided area of the country. The General Manager of this Bank who is a Lawyer of twenty-three years standing, and who has risen from the scratch as a solicitor dealing with the Mortgages, assignments, deeds of releases, the banking knowledge the securities, the inventories and the administration, and who was four years substantive manager, was just erupted like a vulcano on the altar of tribalism because the man who appointed him came from Ado Ekiti, and appointed an Ado Ekiti man just to take up the job. Do you want me to call names ?

**Several hon. Members :** Fire on ! Fire on !

**Mr Echetabu :** We want the whole Board of the Federal Mortgage Bank—

**Mr Speaker :** There is point of Order

**Mr Fola Omidiji (Egba Alake) :** My point of order is Order 26 (2). I think the hon. Member on the Floor of the House is introducing irrelevancies into his statement.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No ! Sit down !

**Mr Fola Omidiji :** The Federal Mortgage Bank is owned by the Federal Government. He is also introducing what may divide this country. We should continue to do those things that will unite us and not things that will divide us. His reference to the Federal Mortgage Bank and the Managing Director are things that can divide this country. (Interruptions)

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order ! Please sit down hon. Members. Hon. Members, when somebody is speaking please allow him to finish except I ask him not to ; and when there is a point of order, that person must be allowed to make his point of order and we all wait for the ruling. Please Mr Echetabu, round up what you are saying.

**Mr Echetabu :** I am just rounding up this Motion by saying that the Board Membership of the Federal Mortgage Bank should be reconstituted so that every State will have equal benefit, and also that the Directorship or the General Managership of that company must really be advertised in the newspapers according to the Asabia Commission Report which says that no post should be filled through the back-door. What now happens there smacks of nepotism, political jobbery, and favouritism which we in this legislature will not condone. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I have known my hon. Friend and my learned Friend for many years at the Bar, he is still the same. Before moving that the Question be now put, I just would like to remind hon. Members that Committee Meetings are there tomorrow, and that we should all try to attend the various committees. I respectfully move that the Question be now put.

*Question that the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That the House do stand adjourned till 10 o'clock on Monday morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 12.31 p.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

*Monday, 17th March, 1980*

*The House met at 11.10 a.m*

**PRAYERS**

(The Speaker in the Chair)

**ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Members Accommodation**

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, I understand that Members have been subjected to terrible inconveniences in the Flats along Badagry Road due to lack of water for two days now. This is most unfortunate and I do not see why this sort of thing should happen. I think it would be better for Members who wish to move over to Victoria Island to please collect their keys and move over there. Please, anybody who wants to move over to Victoria Island now should check up with the Chairman of the Housing Committee who will give directives as to the keys and other details. I think it is better to move over to Victoria Island straightaway instead of staying at Badagry Road without water. I do not know what you are waiting for.

**Committee Meeting**

Hon. Members, there will be an urgent Joint Meeting of the Remunerations Committee at one o'clock in the Senate Chambers.

Hon. Members, please take your seats. I have received a copy of the Recurrent and Capital Estimates of the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1980. It is here with us now and for that purpose, I would request a meeting of the Party Leaders in my office. I am also asking the Chairman of the Appropriation Committee and the Chairman of the Business Committee to join in the meeting this morning. Because of the pressure of work we are going to have in respect of the Estimates, I would, if that is the view of the House, request that this House adjourns straightaway to enable the Party Leaders to meet and plan out the approach to the Estimates.

Hon. Members, the copies of the Estimates will be distributed to Members after the President has made a formal presentation of the Estimates.

**Several Hon. Members :** No ! No !

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr Speaker :** Please, move that the House be adjourned.

**Mr O. Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I move that this House do now adjourn till ten o'clock tomorrow morning.

**Mr Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Nuhu Poloma (Tangale-Waja North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That this House do now adjourn till ten o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The house adjourned accordingly at 11.15 a.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Tuesday, 18th March, 1980

The House met at 10.25 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, we have with us today in the Gallery the Members of the Finance and Appropriations Committee of Bauchi State House of Assembly. They would be attached to this House for the rest of the week to observe our Procedure on Budget and Financial Matters. Hon. Members from Bauchi State, you are welcome.

Hon. Members, you know that today we are going to have a Joint Sitting of the National Assembly and, as usual, the Sitting will take place in this Chamber. Unlike previously, Members will remain in their positions, when the Senators come in. They will look for seats anywhere and sit down. I understand that our hospitality has been misunderstood, and it is, being taken as a sign of one House being superior to the other. (*Interruptions*)

Order ! Order !

As I have always said, this is the National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and we are all Members of the National Assembly. No Member is, in any respect, superior or greater than the other.

In addition to that, hon. Members, I did not want to say it initially, but I think I have to say it. A most disgraceful thing happened yesterday. In my absence, I understand the President of the Senate and some officials came into the Chambers in order to organise for the sitting today of the Joint Session, and they decided, in my absence, that the President of the Senate will occupy my position, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria will stand somewhere there and the Speaker of the House of Representatives will go and find a seat anywhere.

Several hon. Members : No ! No !

Mr Speaker : Order ! Order !

So, I have directed the Sergeant-at-Arms that I will remain in my Seat today.

Order ! Order ! Gentlemen.

PAPERS

On Order Paper for today Tuesday, 18th of March, 1980, the first item is the Draft Recurrent and Capital Estimates of the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for 1980, to be laid on the Table.

I presume that Members have all got their copies.

Several hon. Members : Yes.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Joint Session of the National Assembly

**Mr Speaker :** We go straight to the Notices of Motions. The first Motion concerns Joint Session of the National Assembly.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name.—

That this House do meet with the Senate in a Joint Session this Day at Three o'clock in the afternoon to receive the Budget Message of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion ? Yes, Mr Yahaya.

**Mr A. B. Yahaya (Ilorin East) :** I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Mr Afolabi, throw some light on it.

**Mr Afolabi :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, as you are all aware, under the provision of the Constitution, the President is expected to lay his Budget Proposals to the National Assembly. The purpose of this Motion, therefore, is to allow this House to meet with the Senate in a Joint Sitting so as to be able to receive the President.

I am sure that the Motion is not controversial and it deserves the support of everybody. I therefore, urge Members to give it their full support.

**Mr David Adelu (Ibadan East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to support the Motion, but in supporting the Motion, I beg to emphasise that if we want the present civilian Administration to succeed, this august House must not in any way be relegated or made subordinate to any other House ; and in conformity with the wishes of the Nigerian Electorate, we, Members of the House of Representatives, bear the brunt of representation, and we are the true representatives of the masses of the Nigerian public. We, therefore, are co-Legislators, co-Administrators, and in furtherance of our wishes to make Nigeria great, we must go together, act alike, not one being father and the other being son. Equality and egalitarianism must be the order of the day. Thank you.

**Mr John L. Laven (Lang Tang) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, in supporting this Motion, I have a question to ask, and that is on the timing of this important occasion. A President is coming to address a whole National Assembly. I would consider that Mr Speaker is in the picture about the arrangements and the timing of his arrival here.

If it was the other House which had fixed 3 o'clock I would not take it kindly, if you are in the know, then it could have been an oversight, on the part of Mr Speaker, that the timing should have corresponded with our meeting and not the other side's. A President is coming to address a whole National Assembly at 3 p.m. in this venue ; the budget itself is a sort of a burden on him, let alone the timing of presenting such a budget.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I support the Motion but next time, Mr Speaker, should stand firm as he did this morning.

**Alhaji A. Tuggar (Gamawa):** Mr Speaker, Sir, it is with some kind of mixed feelings that I rise to speak in support of this Motion. I would not want us to say that we are inferior to any other Legislature in this country, but at the same time, Sir, I would like us to take note that under this new Constitution that we are trying to operate at the moment, both the Senators and the Members of House of Representatives stood for election and they were elected duly by the same electorate. At the same time, the Chief Executive of the country was also duly elected by the same electorate. So, I think we would be treading on dangerous grounds if we emphasise so much that we were elected, trying to forget that the Members of the Senate were also elected and the President was also elected.

Coming down to what Mr Speaker has said this morning, I venture to say, Sir, that, regarding the fact that there will be a joint session and that some Members of the Senate or the President of the Senate's representatives came here to make arrangements for seats and so forth which gave rise to some flare-up demonstrated in this Chamber by the honourable Speaker, I would suggest that on this kind of issue, Sir, two wrongs do not make a right. You should have had time, Sir, to have a word with the President of the Senate and he might then tell you—

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II):** Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of order is order 26 (2). The hon. Member should confine himself to what we are talking about, and that is about the Motion.

**Alhaji Tuggar:** Mr Speaker, if I do understand the Motion, I think it is having to do with the joint session of the National Assembly, and I have been talking, all along, about the joint session of the National Assembly.

I still have to say, Mr Speaker, Sir, that with the press here and the gallery wide open, I do not think that, even if there were moves by the Senate in this Chamber yesterday to arrange how the session will take place, two wrongs do not make a right and therefore, Mr Speaker, should have had time to discuss this issue with the President of the Senate; but not for us here, in the public, to castigate and asperse bad views on the Members of the Senate. I do not think that is right, and it does not help the relations between the two Houses of this National Assembly.

**Mr Abrose Gapsuk (Shendam East):** Mr Speaker, Sir, my honourable Colleagues, it is with the deepest feelings of regret that we would allow the authority of this very honourable House, which the Speaker symbolises, to be corroded by our Colleagues in the Senate. I have gone through the instrument of our deliberation, which is the Constitution, and I have agreed that in a joint session of the National Assembly, the President of the Senate is the Chairman, but he is not to come and dictate to the Speaker as to what corner to go and hide himself like a cockroach. I feel it is to this point that I would want to draw the attention of our Colleagues. We are

not saying that the President of the Senate will not preside, but that we should be treated with reciprocal respect, and this is the point I wish to explain. Thank you.

**Mr Nuhu Poloma (Gangale-Waga North):** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion with a few reservations. The first reservation is, that we are going to be addressed by 3 o'clock when, in fact, normally we should have been addressed in the morning. This leaves much to be desired. The next reservation is that, for the President of the Senate to have come here with some Senators to arrange seating positions to the detriment of this House is catastrophic and disappointing. Mr Speaker, Sir, the Senators, through various activities, have acted in a way that left much to be desired as far as Members of the National Assembly are concerned. We have read in various newspapers in this country the role of Senators in terms of interference in contracts, distribution of cards, and now they are coming to interfere with this House. We cannot take it any longer.

**Some hon. Members:** Fire!

**Mr Speaker:** Please, round up.

**Mr Poloma:** So, Mr Speaker, Sir, the Senators should know that the Constitution has not empowered them to be superior to this House in any way. With these few words, I beg to take my seat. *(Applause)*

**Mr L. F. A. Akinbisehin (Ifesowapo):** Mr Speaker, Sir, in contributing to this Motion on the Floor of the House this morning, I will with humility, with due respect and with all responsibility, say that I share the sentiments expressed by the Speaker this morning. But, whilst sharing his views, I would, with respect, say that we have to watch our steps. I believe that we should regard the Senators as our guests today and that we should try as much as possible to give them room.

**Several hon. Members:** No.

**Mr Akinbisehin:** We are not saying that they are superior to us, and in this regard I would refer to the Constitution. I would refer to Section 48 of our Constitution which says:

*There shall be a National Assembly for the Federation which shall consist of a Senate and a House of Representatives.*

**An hon. Member:** Point of order.

**Mr Speaker:** There is a point of order.

**Chief Stephen Ipoku Alete (Ikwere/Etche I):** Mr Speaker, hon. Colleagues, my point of order is Order 26 (4). To my mind, the issue of the seating arrangement has been ruled on by the Speaker, and we are not allowed to go back on what matter we have already concluded.

**Mr Akinbisehin:** Thank you, very much. I am not trying to go back on what the Speaker has said, but I have referred to Section 48 of this Constitution which says that there shall be a National Assembly

comprising the Senate and the House of Representatives. No one is superior to the other. There is no doubt about that, and we are not conceding that we are inferior or that we are junior to anybody. What I am saying is that, as a landlord, if you have a guest you can accommodate him, but it is not for the tenant to come and dictate to you.

**Mr Mohammed Tudun Wada (Waje) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, my understanding, at this present moment, is that it is a very solemn moment of re-appraisal, and it is in that light, Mr Speaker, that I would like to associate myself with the declaration. Mr Speaker made this morning, and to associate myself with the sentiments expressed by my Colleagues. I understand, as our hon. Colleague and Friend Alhaji Abubakar Tuggar tried to point out where it is heading to, it is understandable and clear that there are some issues we would like better handled in another way. Under an ideal circumstance, it would have been better to handle this issue in another way. But I would like to submit that, at times, it is better to have once in a while an inner look at ourselves even if it is going to amount to self-castigation, because I believe, Mr Speaker, that is the only way that we can effect a proper redress in the manner and approach we take towards each other.

This, Mr Speaker, is the National Assembly. The House of Representatives is a part of the National Assembly. To constitute the National Assembly you have to have two Houses, and the Constitution has clearly indicated the concurrence of the two Houses before any legislation can become a law in this country. Mr Speaker, it is, therefore, pure foolery to attempt to indicate that one House is superior to the other. It is in fact my conclusion that it is completely unnecessary for the Members of this House to even cry out that the Senators or anybody should think he is superior to us, because I think it is just a matter of action. A Bill that comes before the National Assembly passes through the Houses separately, and therefore that is a clear indication of the separate and equal powers of the two Houses.

Now, Mr Speaker, it is true that the sitting of the National Assembly is normally presided over by the President of the Senate, and we are operating a Presidential Constitution which, by the present standards, it is the vogue to make America as a reference point because it happens to be probably the single country that has so much in common with the Constitution we are today operating. I believe that the President of the Senate has visited the American Congress both privately and officially, and if he has actually looked clearly and thoroughly through how they conduct their proceedings, especially the proceeding of the Joint Sittings, he would have observed and understood that at any time the President of the United States addresses the American Congress, the President of the Senate who even in America is also the Vice-President of the United States sits side by side with the Speaker of the House of Representatives. I would like to suggest that, even in the American system, the Speaker of the House of Representatives is much more important in terms of lineage towards the pinnacle of power in America than the President of the Senate.

So, Mr Speaker, I quite share the views that there are some issues we would like to handle away from the eyes of the public, but we cannot run away from the fact that we are public men. We are public servants, and therefore we have to bring some issues to the public so that the public understands what is happening inside, so that those people who are doing these things behind the eyes of the public would think twice when next they want to foment this kind of disaffection. Mr Speaker, I beg to sit.

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you. Gentlemen, let us finish the matter.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I respectfully move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That the House do meet with the Senate in a Joint Session this Day, at Three o'clock in the afternoon, to receive the Budget Message of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

#### Appointment of the House Budget Committee

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, the next Motion is, Appointment of the House Budget Committee, standing in the name of the hon. Member for Oyo East (*Mr Olusola Afolabi*).

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members I rise to Move the second Motion standing in my name, but before doing so, I would like to draw Members attention to the yellow paper. The correct Motion is the one on the yellow paper, it is not the one on the Order Paper. Mr Speaker, with your permission, I would like to move—

That in order to facilitate the examination of the Budget proposals of the President of the Federal Republic for the Financial Year 1st April-31st December, 1980, the House do appoint a Budget Committee, the composition of which shall be, Mr Speaker as Chairman; the Deputy Speaker as Deputy Chairman; the five Party Leaders (including the Leader of the House); the Party Whips; Chairmen of the Standing Committees of the House; Chairman of the Business Committee; five Members of the Committee on Finance; and seven Members of the Committee on Appropriation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to Move.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, anybody seconding the Motion?

**An hon. Member :** Point of order.

**Mr Speaker :** You are raising a point of order when a Motion has not been seconded. Let the hon. Member for Ethiopie South (*Chief P. A. Gbinije*) second the Motion, please. He is a Chief. (*Laughter*)

**Chief P. A. Gbinije (Ethiopie South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Mr Afolabi, would you like to throw some light?



**An hon. Member :** Point of order.

**Mr Speaker :** Please, the hon. Member for Oyo East (*Mr Ohusola Afolabi*), throw some light on the issue. The hon. Member making a point of order, you do not want the Committee on Budget or do you want all of us to discuss the Budget ?

**Mr Afolabi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, the purpose of the Budget Committee is not to arrogate to itself the powers of the hon. Members of the House of Representatives. This is a body which is being set up to look at the Budget proposals and present it formally to the House. In fact, it does not perform the functions of the Appropriation Committee. I want to bring this out. The Appropriation Committee is there to appropriate or to allocate funds, but the Budget Committee is going to examine the Budget and it is going to take into consideration all the necessary measures which the Government is going to present to us. The whole idea of this Motion is to have a body which can then go, in detail, as it were, to look into all these proposals. The composition of this Committee has taken into account all the various interests that are involved in the Budget proposals.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Afolabi :** This is a Government Budget, and it is only obvious and normal to have the Chairmen of Committees whose Departments and Ministries are going to be discussed to be in this Appropriation Committee. I do not see any reason or anything that is wrong with it.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Afolabi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am sure that hon. Members will see the need to have this Committee, and I pray that the House do support this Motion. Thank you, very much.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, please, let me throw some light on this matter. The problem we have here is that we are trying to operate a Presidential system with Parliamentary procedure. That is why, you will notice that even in our Rules, there is no provision for Budget Committee. Many of us went through the American Rules and discovered that there is a necessity, for the proper scrutiny of the Budget, to have a Budget Committee. The duties of the Appropriation Committee is quite distinct from those of the Budget Committee. The job of the Appropriation Committee is to do the actual allocation of funds in the estimates to various projects, and what the Appropriation Committee will do is to liaise with the Standing Committees in the allocation of these funds. The Budget Committee itself will sit down and scrutinise the Budget, with the membership of the Appropriation Committee and the Chairmen of the Standing Committees who will in turn carry back the message of the Budget Committee to their various Standing Committees. In order to expedite action on the Budget, we thought that the number should be up to 50 so as to enable us appoint Sub-Committees of the Budget.

As you all know, this is the first Budget we are going to handle and it is extremely necessary that it is thoroughly scrutinised, and the best job done for the nation. I think it is better to throw this type of light.

**Alhaji Isa Aliyu (Makarfi) :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think I have to oppose this Motion. (*Applause*) The fact is this, Mr Speaker. The Budget is the most important issue of this honourable House and, of course, I have seen no reason at all—

**An hon. Member :** Point of order.

**Mr Speaker :** The hon. Member for Makarfi (*Alhaji Isa Aliyu*), finish what you are saying.

**Alhaji Aliyu :** This Budget Committee will be appointed comprising certain people from one or two political parties, and they will dictate the interest of the Government or the Executive to this honourable House. If the Budget Committee is necessary, I will recommend either one or the other of two things—either the Committee of the whole House or—

**Mr Speaker :** The hon. Member for Makarfi (*Alhaji Isa Aliyu*), you were present when the decision was taken and you did not say anything ?

**Alhaji Aliyu :** Yes, I was there.

**Mr Speaker :** You represented your party when this decision was taken, you said nothing and you come here to criticise the decision which you were a party to. You are not a gentleman at all. Sit down !

You were there, you said nothing and you come here to criticise, yet you call yourself an hon. Gentleman.

**Mr A. B. Yahaya (Ilorin East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I think this Motion is not controversial in any form. There is an absolute necessity to have a Budget Committee, because the duties of a Budget Committee are quite distinct from the duties of the Appropriation Committee. What this Motion seeks to achieve is not to take over the duties of the Standing Committees ; it is to be able to have a meeting of minds of all Chairmen of Standing Committees who are representatives of their Committees, as well as the various Party Leaders, the Party Whips, Members of the Appropriation Committees and Members of the Finance Committee. In fact, it has taken care of everybody who will be involved in the Act of the Budget.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Speaker :** Please, round up.

**Mr Yahaya :** We must not forget here that the issue has nothing to do with political parties. It is an issue which affects this House as a whole, and care has been taken to select Members who are going to be represented or who are going to form the body of the Budget Committee. Essentially whatever the Budget Committee decides upon will be brought before this House for a final decision to be taken. This is the whole idea behind having a Committee.

Hon. Members, I do not think this is controversial. I would seek that you support this Motion. (*Interruptions*)

**Alhaji Yinusa Paiko** (Minna South) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, Sir, I rise with reluctance to oppose this Motion. (*Interruptions*) Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not intend to fight anybody, I know that. The point is that, Mr Speaker, since our inauguration here in October and our settling down to do our work, I believe and honestly so, that among all the Parties there has been unfortunately a trend whereby the Leadership of each of these parties has not only succeeded in keeping their followership strictly behind them.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, there is already an environment, a background and a predisposition to suspect and to distrust anything which seems to have the colour of trying once again to keep the body and the generality of this House away from certain decision-making activities. (*Interruptions*) These proposals, I believe as Mr Speaker said, may exist in America. All these they had up to two hundred years of operating this type of Constitution, yet they have not found it necessary and useful. We are starting our very first year and I believe we have a duty and a right to make some of the mistakes as these people made, and learn by these mistakes. It may well be that in our own circumstances here, our conditions of life, our system of Government, may help us to avoid these mistakes that necessitated the creation of the Budget Committee in the US system. What one has to ask the Movers of this Motion is really to give us a much clearer definition or distinction between the term *Budget* and the term *Appropriation*. (*Applause*) I am very simple and very nearly illiterate in terms of English Language. But, my understanding of what the Budget Committee is to do is not to write the Budget proposals here. It is to study these proposals and work through them item by item to determine which ones are good for the country ; and which ones are not and which ones are too much and which amounts are too little. The term to appropriate as far as I understand is to grant money.

Now, I cannot see any of us here who has the key to the Federal Treasury or who has the key to the Minting Company along Victoria Island, for him to go there physically to appropriate this money to anybody.

So, really speaking, the terms *Appropriation* and *Budget* in the context in which we are discussing them here, amount to nothing, if I may say, but a play on words. These two people would precisely do the same thing. They would go through these documents and study each item in them and make up their mind about appropriating anything.

My suggestion, hon. Members, is that to begin with, let each Standing Committee Members look at the items within this document which specifically concerns them. There are twenty-five Members here. (*Applause*) On each of this Committee, Mr Speaker, Sir, there are twenty-five Members at least. (*Applause*)

**Mr Speaker** : Order ! Order ! Yes, go on.

**Alhaji Paiko** : I believe that that body is not too large a body for them to take too much time and further delay the final processing of this vital

document. Once they have finished their work, I believe that there would be a need then for a body to look at the several recommendations that they have brought. It is quite possible that we may not be able within this large body to reconcile whatever the differences there may be. If such happens to be the case then, I would be the first to support an idea of the kind of the co-ordinating Committee, call it anything, but it is not certainly the Budget Committee. I prefer the term Co-ordinating Committee, that is, if and when the need for such a body is found necessary after the Standing Committee shows the things in detail. That is my contribution, Mr Speaker, Sir.

Yes, hon. Member for Oron II (*Mr Etienam*).

**Mr Edet B. Etienam** (Oron II) : Mr Speaker, Sir, in supporting this Motion I want to make— (*Prolonged interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker** : Order ! Order !

**Mr Etienam** : I would like to make one explanation. (*Interruptions*) I have an Amendment. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, Alhaji Ibrahim.

**Alhaji Idris Ibrahim** (Minna North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, in connection with the Motion on the Floor of this House, I believe the observation made by the last speaker is very valid. (*Applause*)

The Motion, as it stands on today's Order Paper, would seek to usurp the responsibilities of the Appropriation Committee. Therefore, the Standing Committee are already there. Each of these Standing Committees should look through the areas that concern it. If there is going to be any other Committee here, this Committee would solely be responsible for the co-ordination of the work of the Standing Committees of this House.

Therefore, in this circumstance, I would seek the indulgence of the Speaker to ask that this Motion be withdrawn. I seek for the withdrawal of this Motion. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, thank you. Yes, Mr Afolabi. (*Interruptions*)

**Several hon. Members** : Shame !

**Mr Olusola Afolabi** (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, having listened to the various arguments in respect of this Motion, the Motion is hereby withdrawn. (*Interruptions*)

*Motion by leave withdrawn.*

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, we shall now go to the third Motion on the Order Paper for today.

#### Dredging of Rivers Niger and Benue

**Dr E. Y. Atanu** (Idah South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name and those of six other Members of this honourable House.

[MR ATANU]

That in view of the inadequacy in the country's transportation system, but in view also of the fact that the country is well served by two important rivers—Niger and Benue—and considering the immense benefits that can be derived from the proper utilization of these rivers in a co-ordinated river system, including transportation of large consignment of goods at any given moment, this House directs the Committee on Transport to seek ways and means of dredging and deepening the rivers—Niger and Benue starting from the Atlantic Coast to Kainji Dam on the River Niger and to Yola on the River Benue, within the next National Development Plan period. I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker** : Is anybody seconding the Motion ? Yes, Mr Damisa.

**Mr Damisa Jimoh** (Okehi Adavbi) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : Dr Atanu, now, you have moved the Motion ; the Motion is now before this House. If you do not mind, I would suggest that all hon. Members here should now be allowed some time to go through the Estimates given to them this morning in order to enable them follow the President's speech which shall be made this afternoon.

**Dr Atanu** : Judging from the mood of the House, I think that would be the appropriate thing to do now.

**Mr Speaker** : Since your Motion is now with us, Dr Atanu, you can go on with the Motion subsequently.

**Dr Atanu** : Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker** : Yes, Mr Afolabi ?

**Mr Olusola Afolabi** (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the House be suspended till three o'clock this afternoon.

*Sitting suspended* : 11.25 a.m.

*National Assembly Assembled* : 3.05 p.m.

#### VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT HIS EXCELLENCY, THE PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE FEDERATION

(The President of the Senate in the Chair)

**The President of the Senate** : Hon. Senators and Members of the House of Representatives, the Leader of the Senate (*Senator Sola Saraki*) may now speak.

#### NOTICE OF MOTION

##### Joint Session of the National Assembly

**Senator Sola Saraki** (Ilorin Asa) : Mr President, Sir, Mr Speaker, hon. Members of the National Assembly, I rise to move—

That the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federation, in exercise of his right under Section 63 (1) of the Constitution, be admitted

to attend and deliver to the Joint Session of the National Assembly his Budget Message this Day, Tuesday, 18th March, 1980 at Three o'clock in the afternoon.

**Mr Olu Afolabi** (Oyo East) : I have the greatest pleasure to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federation, in exercise of his right under Section 63 (1) of the Constitution, be admitted to attend and deliver to the Joint Session of the National Assembly his Budget Message this Day, Tuesday, 18th March, 1980 at Three o'clock in the afternoon.

*At 3.11 p.m. His Excellency, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federation entered the Chamber.*

THE SERGEANT-AT-ARMS (*Standing on the Uppermost Step*) :

The President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

#### ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY, THE PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER-IN- CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE FEDERATION

*Mr President of the Senate,*

*Mr Speaker of the House of Representatives,*

*Honourable Members of the National Assembly.*

*I take the liberty of Section 63 (1) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1979, to address this august Assembly in connection with the first Budget to be prepared by my Administration since it came into office five months ago. I attach the greatest importance to this historic landmark in the political evolution of this country under our new democratic system. My presence here is also in pursuance of my declared policy of constant consultation between the Executive and Legislative arms of the government for the smooth and efficient conduct of Government business and in the overall interest of the people of Nigeria who elected us to serve them. As we approach the next financial year, you may wish me to brief you once again on the state of the nation's economy and to give you a preview of the fortunes and prospects of this nation in the next nine months as a background to the budget proposals.*

*It is common knowledge that the agricultural sector, which was the mainstay of the economy up till the mid-sixties, has been declining in recent years with the production of several important commodities such as yams, maize, millet, palm oil, groundnuts and cotton either falling off or stagnating. This has resulted in high prices in the markets, and Nigeria is now an importer of food. As you are aware, the fortunes of our economy are now determined by developments in a single sector, namely, petroleum, which yields the bulk of our Government revenue and foreign exchange earnings. The large increases in Government revenue from petroleum have facilitated a sharp rise in the level of Government investment and expenditure*

especially since 1975, when the nation launched an ambitious Development Plan, which in turn brought about rapid increases in domestic prices and the level of imports. Consequently, public spending has consistently outstripped revenue since 1975, resulting in overall budget deficits and necessitating increased borrowing both internally and externally.

As at 30th September, 1979, the last day of the military regime, the overall financial position of the Federal Government showed a deficit of ₦1.4 billion (₦1,403,621,928). The Federal Government was not alone in this dilemma. The State Governments were in the same predicament and were likewise unable to meet their contractual obligations and, naturally, this affected the performance of the economy generally both in the public and private sectors.

On the external front, our debt rose sharply from about ₦54 million in 1975-76 to ₦364 million in 1978-79. The petro-naira syndrome precipitated the salaries and wages revision commonly referred to as Udoji Salaries Awards which, by injecting too much money in the economy without regard to the real resource base, resulted in rapid increases in domestic prices and general economic dis-equilibrium. When a few years later there was a fall in petroleum prices, the nation, faced with the economic realities, was forced to take drastic measures to restore sanity in the system. The measures include wages and dividends restraint, import restrictions, price control, severe reduction in public expenditure and the introduction of form 'M'. Some of the effects of these measures are increasing unemployment, under-employment, cut-backs in investment and declining productivity. The government also resorted to systematic cut-backs in the fringe benefits enjoyed by workers in the public sector, resulting in low morale and strained industrial relations.

May I now turn to the 1980 Budget Proposals.

The fore-mentioned economic and financial situation of the country and the priority programmes of my Administration have jointly dictated the tone of the 1980 Budget proposals. These proposals have been guided by the following considerations :—

(a) As a result of the change in the period of the Financial Year to 1st January to 31st December, the next fiscal year will run for only 9 months from 1st April to 31st December, 1980.

(b) The life of the present National Development Plan has been extended to 31st December, 1980 and as a result,

(c) proposals for Capital Estimates have been restricted essentially to on-going projects except for :

(i) projects of strategic importance needed to make existing investments operational ; and

(ii) the priority programmes of my Administration in the sectors of Agriculture, Housing, Education, Health, Industry and the new Federal Capital.

(d) High priority has been placed on projects that will result in economic self-reliance, and increased food and raw materials production.

(e) Appropriate fiscal and monetary measures are being proposed with the aim of maintaining economic stability, building up healthy external reserves and further reducing the rate of inflation. This includes a review of the Comprehensive Import Supervision Scheme Agreement to exclude industrial raw materials and spare parts from pre-shipment inspection and the decentralisation of the processing of Form "M" itself.

I also intend to relax existing import restriction measures on selected items without jeopardizing our policy of encouraging and protecting domestic industry.

The new monetary and banking guidelines to be issued to the Banking institutions are designed to ensure that more funds are available for the preferred sectors, i.e. Agriculture, Housing and Industries, especially small scale industries.

However we need to bear in mind that our economic objectives cannot be achieved unless we have industrial peace and harmony. My Administration wishes to pay tribute to the workers of this country and to the generality of our fellow citizens, who through restraint, sacrifice and honest labour, have saved the national economy from the dangers that threatened it before the imposition of certain restrictions. We will ensure that the gains made over the last three years as a result of these restrictions are not undone through hasty measures. This administration will ensure that the economy would, in the new position of strength, receive the necessary encouragement to consolidate and attain new strides to the benefit of all. While the fight against inflation continues, the bottlenecks to increasing productivity will be removed and enterprise and effort will adequately be rewarded. Accordingly, the existing policy of wage freeze will be replaced with guidelines for a return to a free collective bargaining within certain limits for wages, salaries and fringe benefits. In order to ensure that this does not give rise to another round of inflationary pressure all negotiated salaries, wages and fringe benefit increases will be related to increases in productivity within the given industry.

#### Adjusting Salary Scales

With effect from the 1st of April, 1980 salary scales for public employees will be adjusted in fulfilment of our electoral promise to improve the lot of Nigerian workers in such a manner that the lowest paid worker will be able to receive a hundred naira per month. Salary scales between grade levels 01-06 will be appropriately adjusted on a sliding scale in order to uplift the standard of living of officers on those grades. In addition, my Administration has decided to restore bicycle and motor-cycle loans to eligible public servants on the terms and conditions existing before the abolition of the loans. In addition, Government has decided to grant motor vehicle advances to eligible public servants through banks and these loans will be guaranteed by the Government. In that connection, Government will direct banks to grant the loans at not more than half per cent above the minimum lending rate and without requiring borrowers to make any deposit.

With regard to the private sector employees, Government has approved the grant of vehicle advances on the same condition as in the public sector. Furthermore

transport allowance would be paid to workers on Grade Levels 01-06 at the rate of ₦10 per month.

### Prices

In the area of Prices, my Administration recognizes the ineffectiveness of some of the existing measures aimed at price stabilization. We believe that the lasting solution to escalating prices lies in increased production and efficient distribution. A package of positive incentives have been worked out to induce increased productivity and output. However, the success of this initiative depends to a considerable extent on the co-operation of manufacturers and employees. A more flexible and effective machinery for ensuring price restraint will have to replace the Price Control mechanism and the Price Control Board will accordingly be abolished from 31st March, 1980, to be replaced by the Price Intelligence Agency, an arm of the Productivity, Prices and Income Board. The activities of the Agency will be limited to price monitoring and intelligence. The new arrangement will enable price revision to be undertaken through consultation and mutual agreement.

The distributive system will be improved through minimising the role of middlemen, and through the establishment of manufacturers' depots as outlets for consumer goods in urban and rural areas. Through these and other measures, my Administration will ensure that price movements are normal over the next financial year and beyond.

### 1980 Estimate Proposals

Honourable Members, the various programmes of my Government based on the consideration and objectives I have outlined have been translated into concrete and costed projects, details of which are contained in the draft 1980 Estimates copies of which have been presented to you for consideration.

### Revenue

The total Federally-collected revenue for the 1980 fiscal year has been estimated at approximately ₦11.859 billion.

### Oil Revenue

Oil revenue accounts for ₦9.918 billion of the estimated total Federally-collected revenue of ₦11.860 billion. The fortune of the economy is therefore closely linked with developments in the oil industry. In this regard, Honourable Members may wish to be informed that between April, 1979 and February, 1980, oil prices increased from an average of \$19 per barrel to \$34 per barrel, an increase of 80 per cent within a period of ten months. These represent a price level and a rate of increase which are difficult to sustain in the face of evident stockpiling by our trading partners, and other unpredictable factors in the international economic scene.

### Non-Oil Revenue

Non-oil revenue from Customs and Excise, Companies Tax, Rents, Interests and Repayments, Earnings and Sales depend largely on the fiscal policies of Government as well as on the efficiency of the efforts of the various revenue collecting agencies. The total revenue expected from the non-oil sector for 1980 is ₦1.926 billion. Details of this are contained in the draft Estimates.

### Revenue Allocation Formula

Section 272, Part III of the Constitution stipulates as follows :—

"Pending any Act of the National Assembly for the provision of a system of revenue allocation between the Federation and the States, among the States, between the States and Local Government Councils and among the Local Government Councils in the States, the system of revenue allocation in existence for the Financial Year beginning from 1st April, 1978 and ending on 31st March, 1979 shall, subject to the provisions of this Constitution and as from the date when this Section comes into force, continue to apply.

Provided that where functions have been transferred under this Constitution from the Government of the Federation to the States and from the State to Local Government Councils the appropriations in respect of such functions shall also be transferred to the States and the Local Government Councils, as the case may require".

The system of revenue allocation in force in 1978-79 has been applied in the sharing of the estimated total Federally-collected revenue of ₦11.859 billion as follows :—

Statutory Allocation to States	₦2,541m
Federally Retained Revenue ...	₦9,040m
(Including Non-Statutory Allocation to States) ...	590m
Local Government Grants ...	278m

Having regard to the amount of Federally retained revenue of ₦9.04 billion and in view of the magnitude of contractual commitments for on going capital projects, my Administration has proposed to peg Recurrent Expenditure at ₦3.70 billion and to spend about ₦7.623 billion to execute capital projects. The details of the financial appropriation required is contained in the Appropriation Bill before you which seeks authorisation to issue nine billion and forty million naira from the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the service of the Federation for the period of nine months commencing on 1st April and ending 31st December, 1980.

### Financing of Capital Expenditures

Recurrent expenditure is normally financed wholly from the Recurrent Revenue with the balance of the revenue passed to the Capital Development Fund to help finance the Capital Expenditures. Therefore, if the Recurrent Budget of ₦3.700 billion is financed from the Federal Government retained revenue of ₦9.040 billion which I have indicated there will be only ₦5.340 billion Recurrent surplus to finance the Capital Budget of ₦7.623 billion. We are thus left with a resource gap of deficit of ₦2.283 billion.

### Bridging the Resource Gap

I have proposed in the Draft Estimates to bridge this resource gap through :

- external loans to finance some specific projects ;
- internal loans ; and
- the reservation of 20 per cent Capital project expenditures not financed by external loans.

The projects to be financed by external loans are listed under Head 214 of the Draft 1980 Estimates. These amount to ₦1.065 billion. The project-related external loans will accrue to the Federal Government from the International Capital Market sources, the World Bank, and other multinational financial institutions and bilateral (Government to Government) sources. Each of the three main sources of external loans has its own peculiarity, the details of which I need not bore you with in this address.

I may also mention here that my Administration is revising the guidelines to State Governments on external borrowing. Before these are finalised, they will be discussed at the National Economic Council.

In the final analysis, the total level of external borrowing of any nation is constrained by its ability to service the contracted loans and amortize the principal sums as and when they fall due for payment. That is why foreign loans should not be seen as an unqualified blessing. Our unfunded external loans rose from ₦354 million in 1975-76 to ₦1,598.3 million as at October, 1979, an increase of 35%. On the basis of existing commitments and the loans already guaranteed by the Federal Government for its parastatals and the State Governments, our external commitments are already quite heavy. The heavy burden of loan repayment which will fall on the Federal Government in the 1980s will be aggravated by the fact that many of the projects are infrastructural in nature and therefore not directly revenue-yielding. This picture dictates caution in our external borrowing. It is on this consideration I propose to limit our external borrowing in 1980 to ₦1.065 billion and even then insist that such loans are tied to specific viable projects.

### Internal Borrowing

Internal borrowing is generally constrained by the degree of liquidity in the banking system and the level of inflation acceptable to the Government. The indications are that the degree of liquidity in the banking system is just about adequate. The Central Bank has produced a projection of the rates of inflation that is expected to be generated by various levels of internal borrowing. The previous Administration had progressively reduced the rate of inflation in this country from 35 per cent in 1975-76 to about 12 per cent in 1979-80, and to keep the rate of inflation under control is one of the main programmes of my Administration. To this end, we have decided to limit internal borrowing to finance Federal Government capital projects to only ₦54 million in the 1980 Financial Year. However, in order to assist the State Governments, additional internal loans of ₦300 million in the form of Development Loan Stock will be raised for on-lending to the States.

### Reservation of 20 per cent of Capital Expenditures not financed by foreign loans

The external loans of ₦1.065 billion and internal borrowing of ₦54 million will reduce the uncovered resource gap from ₦2.283 billion, which represents approximately 20 per cent of the capital provision for projects being wholly financed by the Federal Government. As this amount will not be available for spending, Ministries will be given authority to

incur expenditure only up to 80 per cent of the provision made for projects under that category. The remaining 20 per cent will have to be reserved pending improvement in the revenue expectation. Exceptions will however, be made for certain items of expenditure such as international obligations or outstanding debts. Monitoring the 20 per cent reservation proposed calls for discipline and accordingly, necessary steps will be taken to improve budgetary control and monitoring.

Mr President of the Senate, Mr Speaker of the House of Representatives, Honourable Members of the National Assembly, I am constrained to draw attention to the fact that our new Constitution has created new bodies and institutions, the smooth running of which will cost this nation a considerable financial outlay. By comparison, I would say that the Presidential System will prove much more expensive than the parliamentary system mainly because of the principle of separation of powers which discourages the use of "pooled" resources—both human and material. For example, the National Assembly, the restructured Office of the President, with the various statutory bodies operating under them account for ₦382 million in the Recurrent Expenditure alone. It is pertinent to explain, however, that the provision of ₦293 million under the Presidency is intended to cover the needs of erstwhile Expenditure Heads for the State House, the former Cabinet Office, the former Ministry of Establishments (including ASCON), and the former Ministry of Information (including NTV, FRCN and NAN).

### Agriculture

I have, on many occasions, reiterated the irrevocable commitment of my administration to the goal of self-sufficiency in food production which is the reason why I approved soon after my assumption of office the purchase and distribution to farmers of certain essential inputs and equipment including tractors, fishing trawlers, livestock feeds and improved seeds. This Administration has also completed a review of the Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme. In the coming fiscal year, we will pursue a number of agricultural programmes in order to achieve the aims and objectives of the Green Revolution. To this end, a massive campaign will be launched throughout the country to boost the production of seeds and grains, to be supported by the provision of large quantities of essential inputs, and organised marketing. It is the intention of the Federal Government also to attend to other complementary projects, such as land clearing, control of soil erosion, rural integrated projects, the modernisation of traditional fishing methods, the development of grazing reserves, the settlement of nomadic herdsmen, large scale poultry production in commercial quantities, arresting desert encroachment, etc. Attention will also be paid to trained manpower through the establishment of an Agricultural and Management Training Institute at Ilorin during the financial year.

In addition, the allocation for the Nigerian Agricultural and Co-operative Bank has been augmented by 25 per cent to enable it increase its assistance to farmers. Furthermore, the agricultural sector will continue to enjoy the incentives and concessions granted by the previous Government.

### Housing and Environment

The creation of the Federal Ministry of Housing and Environment is a testimony to the determination of my Administration not only to fulfil our campaign promises in the area of housing, but also to prosecute the programme vigorously. The programme entails the construction of 2,000 units of houses in each State of the Federation this year and for which about half a billion naira has been earmarked. In addition, the Federal Mortgage Bank is being revamped to cater for the needs of various categories of prospective house owners. Housing programmes will also benefit from loans, on reasonable terms, from other sources such as the insurance companies and the World Bank. My Administration will take appropriate measures to remove bottlenecks to facilitate these housing programmes.

### Education

This Administration is alive to its responsibility in the area of education, which will be made free at all levels subject to the financial situation. In pursuance of this objective, my Administration reaffirms its determination to provide qualitative and functional education and, for this purpose, over half a billion naira has been earmarked as grants to the State Governments for primary and secondary education in the 1980 Estimates. The Federal Government's direct programme for secondary schools will cost an additional ₦115 million. Financial provision for teacher training has been increased by over 100 per cent and for technical Education by over 500 per cent. In respect of technical training, it is pertinent to mention that the curriculum content has been revised with the old NND abolished and OND and HND restored.

In line with the Federal Government's dynamic policy on higher education and to enhance University autonomy we have strengthened the power of the University Councils in the appointment of Vice-Chancellors. We have set up a machinery for the evolution of a democratic students association consistent with the principle of University autonomy. The power to admit students is being given back to the individual University authority. To that end, JAMB will be abolished. In line with this dynamic policy on higher education, we are earmarking a total of ₦222 million to the N.U.C. representing an increase of 50 per cent over the provision for the 1979-80 fiscal year.

### Industries

In consonance with the policy of the present Administration, we are making a realistic appraisal of the achievement and the short-comings of the industrial sector. As part of the exercise, a national industrial policy and implementation strategy are being articulated. Already, it has been decided that emphasis should henceforth shift to the establishment of small scale and medium size industries for which substantial financial support will be given by the Nigerian Industrial Development Bank (NIDB) and the Nigerian Bank for Commerce and Industry (NBCI) which, together, will benefit from the Federal Government loan of ₦90 million in the proposed 1980 Capital Estimates. This shift in emphasis is without prejudice to the prosecution of iron and steel and petro-chemical projects which form the commanding height of our industrial policy.

### Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Board

It is the intention of this Government to maintain stable and consistent policy favourable to healthy industrial growth. To that end the existing schedule of the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Board will be maintained. Furthermore, the processes of obtaining rights for the establishment of new industries will be simplified while repatriation of earnings on investment will be likewise facilitated. Every effort will be made to ensure an even distribution of industrial establishments in the country.

### Commerce

A major weakness has been identified in the country's distributive trade which has contributed to the present inflationary trend in the economy. For instance, while some essential commodities abound in certain areas, acute shortages prevail in other parts of the Federation. In order to redress the imbalance, all manufacturers in the country will be directed, as is the current practice in the motor trade, to appoint distributors for their products in strategic urban and rural areas.

### Price Control Board/Price Intelligence Agency

As I stated earlier, the Price Control Board will cease to exist and is being replaced by the Price Intelligence Agency.

### National Supply Company

In line with the programme of reform, the Nigerian National Supply Company will be overhauled and made more efficient, in order to ensure even distribution of essential commodities.

### Import Licences

This Administration is aware of public criticism of the procedures for the granting of import licences. Accordingly, a machinery will be set up to streamline the procedures.

### Science and Technology

It is significant that the first Bill passed by this august Assembly relates to the establishment of the Ministry of Science and Technology to facilitate the modernisation of our economy through the application of Science and Technology. Since the new Ministry took over the 22 Research Institutes formerly managed by the National Science and Technology Development Agency, it has been preparing plans to facilitate the channelling of the results of research conducted by these Institutes to interested commercial, industrial and agricultural organisations. In this regard, I am appealing to the private sector of the economy to take full advantage of this great opportunity to translate research into productivity for the benefit of our people.

### Communications

This Administration recognises the unsatisfactory situation in which we have found our communication system. We are taking every possible measure to correct the situation because without an efficient communication system, the economy as well as life in the country would be paralysed.

**Federal Capital Development Authority**

Another priority area is the development of the new capital territory at Abuja. In the 1980 Estimates before you, a provision of ₦118 million has been made for speedy implementation of the various projects to ensure the realisation of our phased programme of movement to Abuja.

**Ministry of Works**

The responsibilities assigned to the Minister of Works have been reduced by the creation of the Ministry of Housing and Environment. This leaves the Ministry free to give more attention to the area of highways construction and maintenance. In the nine months period covered by this Estimates, a provision of ₦91 million has been made for the maintenance of existing Trunk Roads. This provision is 125 per cent over the current year's provision.

It is proposed that the Maintenance Unit of the Ministry will be re-organised to more effectively mobilise the resources for the maintenance of this vital national asset. At present, work is in progress to construct 4,414 kilometres of highways while another 1,882 kilometres have been programmed for re-construction and rehabilitation in 1980. Road projects with a total length of 2,110 kilometres will be provided with asphalt concrete overlay.

**Security**

The primary objective of my Administration with regard to the Nation's Defence Policy is the establishment of a contented, well trained, disciplined, effective and mobile Armed Forces. In the attainment of this objective, a few areas requiring attention have been identified and are being tackled by this Administration. These include a few uncompleted barracks and their infrastructures, the establishment of a unified command structure for the Armed Forces, the localisation of training programmes, the local production of essential and strategic military weapons, enhancement of the strike capability of the Armed Forces, and the welfare of soldiers. My Administration is aware that no nation can afford to neglect these areas and still hope to get the best from its Armed Forces.

The execution of barrack accommodation programme has satisfactorily progressed to such an extent that hundreds of private houses now being occupied by members of the Armed Forces will be de-requisitioned within the year. To enable us improve on our existing training facilities, I announced during my last visit to Kaduna that the Nigerian Defence Academy will be upgraded to the status of a University.

**The Nigeria Police Force**

With regard to our Police Force, I would like to express the nation's gratitude to our disciplined men and women in the Police Force for bearing the brunt of maintaining law and order under very difficult circumstances. In order, therefore, to sustain their morale and enhance their overall efficiency and operational mobility, an increased allocation of ₦197 million has been made in the Recurrent Estimates. An additional sum of ₦80 million has been provided in the Capital Estimates for the vigorous construction of their barracks.

**Anti-Inflationary Measures**

Mr President of the Senate, Mr Speaker of the House of Representatives. Honourable Members of the National Assembly, let me for the avoidance of doubt recapitulate my programme for containing the inflation in our economy. Appropriate policy measures—fiscal and monetary—will be taken to ensure that the battle against inflation is not lost. As you will have seen, in the ensuing nine months, the Federal Government alone will spend over ₦11 billion representing more than ₦1 billion injection, into the economy, per month. In order therefore to give meaning to the measures we propose to ameliorate the conditions of our working population, my Administration will ensure that sufficient supply of food and shelter, which take up a large part of the monthly expenditure of workers, will be provided. Adequate funding has been provided to the River Basin Development Authorities to enable them make irrigated water available all the year round, which with the co-operation of local authorities, will facilitate an increase in production of certain food items from one season to two seasons. Measures will also be taken to supplement local supply with imported items, bearing in mind the exigencies of our foreign exchange position and the interest of our local industries. The provision of additional shelter will also be facilitated by ensuring adequate and regular supply of building materials at reasonable prices.

You will recall that at the beginning of my Administration, I set up a committee to look into the causes of high cost of government projects. The report of this committee will go a long way towards checking inflation fuelled by Government spending.

**Foreign Policy**

Africa remains the corner-stone of Nigeria's Foreign Policy. My Administration is committed to the cause of the total liberation of Africa and the abolition of racism in all its manifestations. We shall neither relax nor relent until all Africans and all blackmen are free. It should be understood that political freedom is not complete without economic and cultural freedom.

My Administration's Domestic Policy for peace, unity and stability in Nigeria translates, at the first instance, into being good neighbours and brothers to all member-States of ECOWAS. We shall fulfil all our commitments to ECOWAS and explore greater horizons together. Nigeria stands for African Unity. It is in pursuance of this policy that Nigeria has accepted to host the O.A.U. Economic Summit meeting taking place in Lagos next month.

Once more, Mr President of the Senate, Mr Speaker, of the House of Representatives and Honourable Members of the National Assembly, let us all congratulate the heroic people of Zimbabwe for their gallant victory at the first ever popular democratic elections held in that territory. We are proud and happy to be associated with the just struggle of our brothers and sisters of that country under the able leadership of our dear brother and colleague, Mr Robert Mugabe. We acted positively and swiftly, always in consultation with the Frontline States, the O.A.U. Liberation



Committee, members of the Commonwealth and consistently with the full agreement of Mr Robert Mugabe.

Let me state in categorical terms that freedom and unity in Africa will contribute to Third World solidarity as well as to international peace and co-operation. To this extent, Nigeria will play more active roles in mediatory efforts within the international community, always fulfilling its due obligations and responsibilities, within the international system. We want a new world, where no man and no nation is oppressed, where men as well as nations are judged by the content and the quality of their human resources rather than military or economic prowess.

Mr President of the Senate, Mr Speaker of the House of Representatives, Honourable Members of the National Assembly, I shall not end this address without referring to the facilities and provisions proposed for the National Assembly. I am aware of the unfavourable circumstances in which Honourable Members have been obliged to work since taking office. These difficulties form part of the teething problems of our new system. I wish to express my appreciation of the understanding and sense of duty with which you have faced these initial difficulties.

We are taking steps to ameliorate the situation by the provision of more and better facilities, and ample provision for further improvement has been made in the 1980 draft Estimates.

This Administration hopes that as the constraints facing Honourable Members become something of the past, the problems which had beset our initial efforts will fade away. Thereafter, we can look forward to a period of greater co-operation between all arms of government for the upliftment of the welfare of all our people and for the attainment of peace, unity and stability for our nation.

I thank you for listening to me so patiently.

**Senator Sola Saraki (Ilorin/Asa)** : Mr President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, I thank you for coming to address us on your 1980 Budget. On behalf of the National Assembly I would like to thank you very much.

Mr President, Sir, when you were reading your Speech to us, Members of the National Assembly listened very attentively, and their reaction was not based on Party lines ; their reaction was based on the national interest of this country.

I would like to assure you, Mr President, that when you leave us, we are going to debate your Message very well not on Party lines but in the interest of millions of Nigerians who have no where to live and no food to eat. We know very well, Mr President, that your Administration is all out to see that every Nigerian is happy and that he is not a foreigner in his country.

Thank you very much.

(Standing Ovation as His Excellency, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria retires from the Chamber).

**The President** : The National Assembly will now adjourn *sine die*.

The National Assembly adjourned *sine die* : 4.15 p.m.

The House reassembled : 4.25 p.m.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### The Support of hon. Members

**The Speaker** : Order ! Order ! That is how it should be. It is always good to speak to somebody, the language he can understand.

Hon. Members, I am very happy about the support we gave ourselves this afternoon. This is a clear evidence of the solidarity and determination of Members to work, maintain and enhance the prestige of the House of Representatives. (*Prolonged ovation*). Please, let the Pressmen leave the Floor of the Chambers.

Once more, I thank the hon. Members, and I am sure posterity will speak well of us and the people of this country will be very happy that they have got true and conscientious Representatives of the people. I will call for a Motion for Adjournment. The debate on the Appropriation Bill and the Estimate itself will start from tomorrow. It will be officially listed in tomorrow's Order Paper. Then the procedure will commence.

Meanwhile, there will be a Motion for adjournment. I hope everybody has got copies of the Estimates. The Clerk of the House will make copies of the President's speech available to Members today.

## ADJOURNMENT

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that this House adjourns till 10.00 o'clock tomorrow morning.

**Dr Princewill (Degema I)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I respectfully move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That the House stand adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 4.30 p.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Wednesday, 19th March, 1980

The House met at 10.45 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The President's Speech

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, I must first of all thank ourselves that the President's Speech yesterday reflected all the Motions passed in this House. (*Applause*) So, I would like members of the Press to note that we have not been passing useless Motions. (*Applause*)

Joint Remuneration Committee

Another point is that the Joint Remuneration Committee is going to be wound up today. So, all our Members who are Members of the Joint Committee should endeavour to attend the winding up and ensure that there is no further development. (*Interruptions*)

Letter from the Soviet Union

Hon. Members, I have received a letter from the Soviet Union. I would read the letter to you. It reads thus :

*Your Excellencies,*

*In order to further promote the Soviet-Nigerian relations and to continue direct contacts between our countries' supreme organs of state power, the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic proposes the National Assembly to exchange official delegations in 1980-81, and has the honour to invite a Parliamentary Delegation of 7-8 members from Nigeria to come on an official visit to the Soviet Union in mid-May of 1980 for a period of up to 7 days.*

*We are certain that the visit of a Delegation of Parliamentarians from the Federal Republic of Nigeria, their meetings and negotiations with the USSR counterparts and acquaintance with life and work of the Soviet people will contribute to strengthening of friendly relations and co-operation between our countries and peoples, to the interest of the world peace.*

*We would highly appreciate if you, Your Excellencies, could inform us in advance about the composition of the Delegation, the date of its arrival in Moscow, as well as of your wishes concerning the programme of the Delegation's stay in the Soviet Union.*

*Yours faithfully,*

Signed :

A. SHITIKOV

Chairman of the Soviet  
of The Union of the Sup-

Signed :

V. ROUBEN

Chairman of the Soviet of  
Nationalities of the Sup-

*reme Soviet of the USSR    reme Soviet of the USSR  
Moscow, Kremlin,  
February 12, 1980*

That is the invitation we have received. I notice that many Members are dissatisfied with the way delegations have been selected. I think that the selection will now be done by the whole House.

**Some Members :** No ! No ! (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order ! You have seen the Order Paper for today which involves the Estimates and for purposes of today's Order Paper, I would like to read again the names of the Chairmen of the various Standing Committees, and I will beg the Chairmen of the Committees to please meet in my office immediately after this sitting.

Chairmen of Committees

Committee on Agri- culture .. ..	Mr A. E. Ejiga
Committee on Appropria- tion .. ..	Alhaji M. Bachaka
Committee on Aviation	Alhaji M. Rabi'u Is'haq
Committee on Banking and Currency ..	Mr S. U. Nwanganga
Committee on Commerce	Mr Aliyu Mahmud
Committee on Communi- cations .. ..	Mr M. O. Ugwu
Committee on Defence	Mr John L. Laven
Committee on Education	Dr E. C. Emekekwe
Committee on External Affairs .. ..	Mr Sunny Abubakar
Committee on Federal Capital Development	Mr Amos Idakula
Committee on Health ..	Mr Sanusi Imam
Committee on Housing,	
Community Develop- ment and Environment	Mr A. B. Yahaya
Committee on Industries	Chief Yomi Akintola
Committee on Internal Affairs .. ..	Mr Hassan Mohammed
Committee on Judiciary	Mr Yinusa Paiko
Committee on Labour	Mr Edet Bassey Etienam
Committee on Mines and Power .. ..	Chief P. A. Gbinije
Committee on National Planning .. ..	Mr F. N. C. Nwandison
Committee on Petroleum and Energy .. ..	Dr J. T. Sekibo
Committee on Public Service Matters ..	Mr David Attah
Committee on Public Works .. ..	Mr Udo Bassey
Committee on Science and Technology ..	Mr S. Alu

[MR SPEAKER]  
 Committee on Transport Mr A. Ukpanah  
 Committee on Veteran Services and Social Welfare .. .. Mr Mohanmed Danjuma  
 Committee on Water Resources .. .. Dr Eze O. A. Nwala

All these Chairmen of the Committees will meet in my office immediately after this sitting so that we can discuss other details of your various meetings.

**Mr Mathew Olubode Oni** (Obafemi/Owode) : From all the Chairmen mentioned, I could see that the Public Accounts Committee has been omitted. Probably I should remind you.

**Mr Speaker** : It is because it is not contained in any of the Heads provided in the Bill. Have you got your own copy of the Appropriation Bill before us this morning ?

**Mr Oni** : Yes.

**Mr Speaker** : We are only dealing with the various Heads provided under the Bill.

**Mr Oni** : Anyway, I am yet to go through.

**Mr Speaker** : We are concerned with the Bill and no more.

**Mr Oni** : All right, Sir.

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, the meetings of all the Committees, as it appears on the Order Paper except that of the Special Committee on NNPC, are hereby cancelled to enable the other Committees to start work immediately. The Special Committee on NNPC would still meet as scheduled at 11 o'clock this morning.

**Mr O. Afolabi** (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I have the greatest pleasure and honour to present to this honourable House, the Appropriation Bill 1980.

**PRESENTATION OF BILL**

**Appropriation Bill 1980**

A Bill for an Act to authorise the issue out of Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Federation of Nine Billion and Forty Million Naira (₦9,040,000,000) for the service of the Federation for the period of nine months commencing on 1st April and ending on 31st December, 1980, presented by Mr Olusola Afolabi ; read the First time, Schedule thereto referred to the following Standing Committees :

Head 20 : National Special House Committee Assembly  
 Head 21 : The Pre- Committee on Appropriation- sidency  
 Head 23 : Police .. Committee on Internal Affairs  
 Head 24 : Police Committee on Internal Service Commission Affairs  
 Head 25 : Agricul- Committee on Agricul- ture Forestry, Fisher- ies and Animal Science

Head 26 : Audit .. Committee on Finance and the Special Com- mittee on Public Accounts  
 Head 27 : Civil Avia- Committee on Aviation tion  
 Head 29 : Com- Committee on Com- munications munications  
 Head 30 : Defence Committee on Defence  
 Head 31 : National Committee on National Planning  
 Head 32 : Education Committee on Education  
 Head 33 : Federal Committee on Federal Capital Territory Capital Development  
 Head 34 : External Committee on External Affairs  
 Head 35 : Finance Joint Committee on Finance  
 Head 36 : Health Committee on Health  
 Head 37 : Indus- Committee on Industries tries  
 Head 38 : Social Committee on Veteran Development, Youth Affairs and Social and Sports Welfare  
 Head 39 : Internal Committee on Internal Affairs  
 Head 40 : Federal Committee on Judiciary Judicial Service Com- mission  
 Head 41 : Justice Committee on Judiciary  
 Head 42 : Employ- Committee on Labour ment, Labour and Productivity  
 Head 43 : Mines Committee on Mines and and Power Power, and Petroleum and Energy  
 Head 44 : Science Committee on Science and Technology  
 Head 45 : Housing Committee on Housing, and Environment Community Develop- ment and Environment  
 Head 46 : Public To the Committee on Complaints Commis- Public Petitions sion  
 Head 47 : Federal To the Committee on Civil Service Commis- Public Service Matters sion  
 Head 48 : Commerce To the Committee on Commerce  
 Head 49 : Transport To the Committee on Transport  
 Head 50 : Water To the Committee on Resources Water Resources  
 Head 51 : Works To the Committee on and Surveys Public Works  
 Head 52 : Federal To the Committee on Electoral Commission Public Service Matters and the Committee on Appropriation

[MR. AFOLABI]

Head 53 : Consoli- To the Committee on  
dated Revenue Fund Finance and the Com-  
Charges mittee on Banking and  
Currency

Head 54 : Non- To the Committee on  
Statutory Appropriation Appropriation  
of Revenue

Head 55 : Con- To the Committee on  
tingencies Appropriation

Head 56 : Contribu- To the Committee on  
tion to Development Appropriation  
Fund

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

Mr Aliyu Mahmud (Yola) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to second the Motion.

Mr Speaker : We have a Joint Committee on Finance and recently, we agreed that our own Members of the Committee on Finance will form our Committee and for that purpose I have requested hon. Ralf Obioha to act as the Chairman.

An hon. Member : It has not been decided.

Mr Speaker : There was an initial mistake, because according to our rules, Mr Speaker has the right to allocate jobs to Committees. But if you want to present it by way of Motion, it is all right but I do not want to lose sight of my responsibility.

Hon. Members, I think that in view of the fact that the Standing Committees have a lot to do in respect of this Budget, I will suggest, if it is the wish of the Members, that we adjourn immediately so that the Standing Committees will tackle the Budget straightaway. We should bear in mind that we expect a report as soon as possible to enable us debate the Budget, because seven days will be allocated for the debate on the Budget. I hope it is the wish of everybody that we adjourn.

Several hon. Members : Yes.

Mr Speaker : Our problem is going to be the space for the Committee Meetings. Please we should try to make use of whatever we have and we would also use the Chamber. A committee could come and take one wing of the Chamber while another could take the other wing. There are four wings here, and the Committees will just sit for a period of time to enable others do something too. This is what we are going to work out when the Chairmen of the Committees meet in my office. We are going to work out the details.

Dr Chikwe Obihara (Owerri South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I find that, the headings mentioned only cover Recurrent Expenditure ; how about Capital Expenditure ? It does not seem to be included.

Mr Speaker : Dr Obihara, it appears Members are not paying attention to what you are saying.

Dr Obihara : I was saying that the headings in this Schedule only cover the Recurrent Expenditure, how about the Capital Estimates ?

Mr Speaker : They are all there if you go through them.

Dr Obihara : No Sir, I know that they are in the book but they are not in this Schedule.

Mr Speaker : It includes the Capital Estimates. Please if you have anything to suggest go to the relevant Committee and tell them. Please, hon. Members, there is only one Motion which the Clerks are very anxious that we take today and that is Motion No. 2. Yes, Mr Afolabi.

#### Interim Special Legislative Duty Allowance

Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, the second Motion standing in my name is the Interim Special Legislative Duty Allowance for the staff of the National Assembly. With your permission Mr Speaker, Sir, I will now move—

That in view of the tremendous work output of the staff of the National Assembly since the Assembly commenced sitting on 2nd October, 1979, without limit as to hours of work which extend well beyond the normal 3.30 p.m. closing hours in the Civil Service and beyond the normal adjournment of the Houses of the National Assembly at 6.00 p.m. and often right into midnight ; and in view of the decision of the Conference of Presiding Officers of the Federal and State Legislatures held on Thursday, 31st January, 1980—that the staff and other employees of the Legislatures should be appropriately remunerated for the onerous duties they perform and the long hours of work they put in—the Senate and the House of Representatives resolve that pending the passing into law of the Bill on Section 47 of the Constitution—

(i) the staff of the National Assembly be paid interim special legislative allowance from 2nd October, 1979, until such time as the National Assembly Service Commission Bill and accompanying regulations are passed ; and

(ii) the Senate and the House of Representatives appoint a small Committee to determine and approve the interim special legislative allowance to be paid based on the recommendation of the Clerk to the National Assembly.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

Mr Speaker : Is anybody seconding the Motion ?

Mr C. O. Agbor (Obubra) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Colleagues I rise to second the Motion.

Mr Speaker : Just put the question.

Mr Afolabi : Mr Speaker, Sir, before putting the question, I just want to draw the attention of the Members to the fact that it is normal in any Federal or State Assembly to grant this allowance, and since it is not controversial, I respectfully move that the question be now put.

Question, That the question be now put, put and to.

Main question accordingly put and agreed to.

Resolved : That in view of the tremendous work output of the staff of the National Assembly since the Assembly commenced sitting on 2nd October 1979, without limit as to hours of work whiche

[MR. AFOLABI]

well beyond the normal adjournment of the Houses of the National Assembly at 6.00 p.m. and often right into mid-night ; and in view of the decision of the Conference of Presiding Officers of the Federal and State Legislatures held on Thursday, 31st January, 1980—that the staff and other employees of the Legislatures should be appropriately remunerated for the onerous duties they perform and the long hours of work they put in—the Senate and the House of Representatives resolve that pending the passing into law of the Bill on Section 47 of the Constitution—

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(ii) the Senate and the House of Representatives appoint a small Committee to determine and approve the interim special legislative allowance to be paid based on the recommendation of the Clerk to the National Assembly.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Motion for adjournment. I will like Members to bear in mind that we will be coming here as usual to take the report of the Committees as they are ready. We will assemble, debate, approve or disapprove any Head and go ahead to take others. I am going to hold meetings with the Chairmen.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the House adjourn till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Mr Poloma.

**Mr Nuhu Poloma (Tangale-Waja North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Mr Sidi Ali.

#### Fire in Kanya Town

**Mr Sidi H. Ali (Danbatta) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I have a very sad story to tell this honourable House. About two weeks ago, there was a very serious fire outbreak in Kanya Town of Danbatta Local Government area. During this time, 145 houses were razed to the ground. That is the Police report to the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I had contacted the Business Committee of the House much earlier on in order to bring up a Motion on this issue. Unfortunately, in view of the situation now, no Motion is being entertained. Therefore, Mr Speaker, I would like the Federal Government to take notice of this very important issue. (*Prolonged interruptions*)

Mr Speaker, Sir, I take this opportunity to call on the Federal Government to give us a massive relief in terms of medicine—(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, the Motion is that the House stand adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That this House do stand adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 11.23 a.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Thursday, 20th March, 1980

The House met at 10.25 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Committee meetings

**Mr Speaker :** The Order Paper for today contains Meetings of various Committees for this afternoon but there is a change in respect of No. 6 ; that is, the Committee on Defence will not sit today. In its place will be Committee on Public Service Matters. Also, the Committee on Public Service Matters will sit again on Friday in place of the Committee on Mines and Power at 9.00 a.m.

Votes and Proceedings

The Votes and Proceedings of yesterday, the 19th of March, have been approved.

African Parliamentary Union

Hon. Members, our Delegation to Congo Kinshasa is now back and I do not know if the leader of the Delegation, Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo, will give us an idea of what transpired in Zaire.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale Waja) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I am happy to report back to you the trip of the Delegation you appointed to go to Zaire and take part in the deliberations of the African Parliamentary Union which took place in the Capital of Zaire, Kinshasa.

Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, though we arrived a bit late, we were able to meet the meeting of the Executive Committee which was ending last Saturday. The essential thing was to place our application for Membership before the Committee and we were opportuned to do this. The Committee considered our application very favourably on Saturday morning and, after that, the application was formally accepted by the General Assembly on Monday. That is to say, Nigeria has been accepted as a full fledged Member of the African Parliamentary Union. (Applause)

Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I believe the delegates, whom I went together with, will agree with me that all the African countries who were there had been expecting very anxiously to see Nigeria take part in that Assembly. So, our arrival there was really greeted with some kind of pomp and pageantry. Right from the airport, though we arrived as late as 1 a.m., the Zairean Government and the President of the Assembly were at the airport to welcome us, and their protocol was superb

Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, Nigeria, we assured them, is going to take her position now in the African Parliamentary Union in a proper way. We are now a Member of this Parliamentary Group of African Parliaments.

We were fully involved in the discussions which took place from Monday, after having been accepted as a Member. Therefore, all the twelve delegates who left Nigeria for this meeting were admitted as delegates, and nobody was designated as an observer. So, the twelve Members from Nigeria were all accepted as delegates and we were treated as such.

Mr Speaker, hon. Members, you know, in any organisation, you have to pay for your services and so on, and I am glad to inform you that the membership fee is only one million francs. We have to pay one million French francs every year.

**An hon. Member :** How much is that in Nigerian naira ?

**Alhaji Kaltungo :** You can refer that to the Accountants, they will get you the correct amount in naira.

**An hon. Member :** It is not more than five thousand naira.

**Alhaji Kaltungo :** Somebody is telling me that it is not more than five thousand naira. So, hon. Members this is just the Membership fee, but they also welcome voluntary donations from member countries.

Before the meeting ended yesterday, hon. Members elections were held, and normally people who were not yet paid-members would not contest for any post, otherwise we would have contested and I believe that we would have won but since we have not yet paid our membership fee, we reserved that until next year and I believe that Nigeria will contest any position next year. Although we did not contest any post I am glad to report to you that we were made members of the Executive Committee and Nigeria will be represented by two people in the Executive Committee of the African Parliamentary Union.

Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I intend to submit to you and every individual member a full report of our trip to Zaire where we participated in this Conference so that every member will definitely have something in his hand to remind himself of what we were supposed to do there and again what the A.P.U. is meant for.

With this very brief report, Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to thank all the Members who have travelled together with me because we co-operated very well with one another, and we presented Nigeria as one people and nothing more. There was no Party thinking or anything, but all of us were there as Nigerians. Also we have to thank Mr Speaker and all the Members of this House for giving us that opportunity to represent Nigeria in the African Parliamentary Union Conference and we hope that such honour would be given to many of us, to be holding meetings in Africa rather than going to Europe to participate in European meetings or watching European attitudes in their Parliaments.

Thank you very much.

**The Speaker :** Thank you, Leader of the House. You are welcome back from Zaire.

### Committee Report

on

#### Trip to Oil Spillage Areas

**Mr T. J. Sekibo (Bonny II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to lay before this honourable House the Report on the Trip of the House of Representatives Committee on Petroleum Energy Conservation to the oil spillage areas of Rivers State of Nigeria for this honourable House to accept for future debate. Thank you.

**The Speaker :** Thank you very much. I hope hon. Members have got their copies of the Report. Members should go through the Report, and after the Budget we shall debate the various Reports.

I understand that Members of the Appropriation Committee will have to go to their Meeting now. I understand the Executive sent a full team of seven people to come and face the Appropriation Committee. So, if you are a member, please go straight to Committee room No. 3 and take part in the deliberations.

### NOTICE OF MOTION

#### Appropriation Bill—Allotted Days

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name—

That the provisions of Standing Order 63 be suspended and seven days be allotted for Standing Committees' deliberations on the Heads of Estimates pursuant to House Resolution 121 of 18th March 1980, and that morning sessions should be from 10. a.m. to 1 p.m. and afternoon sessions from 1.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. daily.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

**Dr I Ufodu (Enugu) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Afolabi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I will just say that the purpose of this Motion is obvious. It is to give time to the various Committees to go into the Budget and I am sure that it does not need debates. If it is the wish of the House, I will respectfully move that the question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

**Resolved :** That the provisions of Standing Order 63 be suspended and seven days be allotted for Standing Committees' deliberations on the Heads of Estimates pursuant to House Resolution 121 of 18th March, 1980, and that morning sessions be from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and afternoon sessions from 1.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. daily.

**The Speaker :** Honourable Members, I would like to meet the Members of the Business Committee who have been looking after all these matters to meet in my office immediately after the sitting and also, in view of the fact that the Committees are all set for action now, I think the House will have to adjourn.

**Prof. Opeyemi Ola (Ekiti West) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Ladies and Gentlemen, I think Sir, we need guidance from the Speaker and the hon. Leader of the House, hon. Afolabi on the procedure to adopt. If all the Committees are going to use seven days for deliberations on these budgetary affairs, I think after that, we ought to have some days in this House to debate and to accept the Budget. We need to be told how many days this honourable House will use because, according to my own simple arithmetic, after seven days deliberations by the Committees, we will have only about two or three days in this National House, to debate the Budget. I want to say and explain that three days will be very insufficient and grossly inadequate to discuss and accept a Budget which is almost ten billion Naira.

**The Speaker :** Professor, I got what you are saying. In the first place, the Chairmen of Committees met yesterday and we agreed that the Committees should deliberate and each Committee, whenever it is ready with its Report, will tell us and it will be listed for debate. Then the House will assemble and debate a particular Report of any Committee that is ready. We are not obliged to finish before the 31st of March. The Constitution has taken care of that, that even if we do not finish, the President can always fall back on last year's budget up to the period of six months. That does not mean that we will not finish in time, but we really have quite a lot of time. Also, the Committees will use the Chamber for deliberations.

**Alhaji Mohammed Tudun Wada (Waje) :** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I have a slight explanation to make and it is very much in relation to the Appropriation Bill that this House is going to start deliberating upon. The President came before the National Assembly and delivered an Address which contained the fiscal measures that are going to be taken during the course of this Financial Year, and I am sure that when the time comes for us to debate the speech by the President, there are going to be a lot of people who will agree with most of the things he mentioned in his 1980 Fiscal Budget. But, Mr Speaker, this morning when I came in, I met a *corrigenda* to the Bill in my pigeon-hole and it is headed :

*Head 53.—Consolidated Revenue Fund Charges.*  
Mr Speaker, it contains, as I seem to understand—

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Member, are you debating the Budget now ?

**Alhaji Tudun Wada :** No, I am not debating ; I am just trying to point out a small—

**Mr Speaker :** Why not wait. We have seven clear days to debate the Budget. You will say whatever you like then. Let it go to the Committee first ; the Committee will bring a report and then the sky is our limit during the debate.

**Alhaji Tudun Wada :** Mr Speaker, I just thought that it is important for us to point out that if the Bill is before the House, Mr Speaker, it is not necessary for any *corrigenda* of such a nature to come before the National Assembly at this time, because already the Constitution has indicated that it is the responsibility of the National Assembly to prescribe the salary and emoluments of the President, the Vice-President and certain other prescribed Public Officers. So, Mr Speaker, I think it amounts to usurping the responsibility of the National Assembly to present such a *corrigenda*. I think that it is important that we point it out. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I move that the House do adjourn till 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

**Mr Speaker :** Is there anybody to second the Motion.

**Alhaji Yusuf Nadabo Gaya (Gaya) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I second the Motion.

#### Public Accounts Committee

**Mr Mathew Olubode Oni (Obafemi/Owode) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, twice in this House I have reiterated the importance of the Public Accounts Committee especially now that the Budget is under review in this House. Mr Speaker, in any Budget,

Public Accounts Committee is very important. It has a lot of duties to perform ; it has a lot of contributions to make. Because of this, I am reminding Mr Speaker to please, as a matter of urgency, give us a Chairman for that Committee so that the Committee will commence sitting and perform its own duties with regard to the Budget under review. Thank you, Sir.

**Mr Speaker :** Please, Party Leaders and the Whips will meet in my office. Yes, any other comments ?

**Mr T. N. Ochiama (Ikeduru) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Colleagues of mine, I rise to support what the last speaker, my hon. Colleague Mr M.O. Oni has said as regards the Public Accounts Committee Mr Speaker, Sir, since the formation of that Committee has never met for even one hour, and for your information, Mr Speaker, the Members of that particular Committee do not know one another. So, I am suggesting, that it is administratively correct for a meeting to be convened for the Members of the Public Accounts Committee to know one another, and then the Chairman must have been appointed. This should be done, without further delay. So, with these few contributions, Mr Speaker, hon. Colleagues of mine, Ochiama would like to take his seat. Thank you.

**Mr Speaker :** The Committee on Banking and Currency will meet now at the lounge on the First Floor of the Red Brick Building.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That the House do adjourn till 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 10.50 a.m.*



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Tuesday, 25th March, 1980

The House met at 10.25 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members there are only very few announcements. One is on the examination of the 1980 Budget proposals.

**The 1980 Budget Proposals**

I have observed that in keeping with the Resolution of the House the various Standing/Special Committees have started to examine critically the various Heads of the 1980 Budget proposals which have been referred to them. I am grateful to all Members for their prompt action in this matter, especially considering the fact that most of the Committees are obliged to work under conditions that are far from the ideal due to shortage of essential facilities in terms of staff and office accommodation. The readiness of Members to tackle their assignments so energetically and enthusiastically in spite of the prevailing circumstances should provide ample evidence to the public and the mass media that Members of this honourable House are prepared to put in their best at all times in the interest of our nation.

I would like to invite the attention of the Chairmen of the various Committees to the need for them to exercise some caution in inviting Ministers, Permanent Secretaries and other officials from the Executive Branch to appear before their Committees. I know that it is normal practice to invite Government functionaries and officials to come to defend their Estimates, but such invitations should not be issued without enough consideration. To invite a Minister to appear before any Committee of this honourable House must be treated as an important event.

It is, therefore, incumbent on the Chairmen of the various Committees to ensure that before a decision is taken to invite a Minister or his Permanent Secretary, important policy matters or some really substantial issues requiring further explanation or clarification must have been identified by the Committee. Moreover, since there are many Committees meeting at the same time there is need for proper co-ordination and programming to avoid duplication of efforts and embarrassment on either side.

I have accordingly directed that any letters inviting Government functionaries and officials should be cleared by the officer serving the relevant Committee with the Clerk of the House of Representatives who may refer specific cases to me for clearance when necessary. I would also advise that since Ministers are also busy people we should, as far as possible, give them reasonable notice of, say, two or three days at least. Finally, it is important to state in the letter of invitation briefly why they are wanted, the exact venue and the time for the hearings. The general guidelines which I have

just outlined are meant to facilitate the work of the Committees and enhance the image of this honourable House. The co-operation of all concerned will be appreciated.

A Member or an official of the Committee must always wait at the lobby to receive either the Minister or any other invitees.

**Members Visits to the United States Congress**

As I have stated in this honourable House before we intend to arrange parliamentary visits or study tours to Parliaments in other parts of the world for our Members from time to time. In keeping with this policy, it has been decided that five Members of this House should visit the United States Congress for a period of 7 days during the forthcoming Easter Recess. Those who have been selected for this trip are as follows :—

Hon. Rep. S. M. C. Ihekweazu	NPP
Hon. Rep. M. A. Olukoya ..	UPN
Hon. Rep. Sule Lamido ..	PRP
Hon. Rep. Ingo Mac-Eteli ..	NPN
Hon. Rep. Amos Sunday ..	GNPP

Hon. Members the purpose of this particular visit is to enable the Members of the Business Committee and the Rules Committee to travel to the United States and study the business and rules of the United States with a view to providing us with our own Standing Orders for 1980.

**Members of the Bauchi State Assembly**

Hon. Members, we have in the gallery Members of the Bauchi State Assembly. The hon. Members from Bauchi State Assembly, you are welcome to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

Yes Alhaji Kaltungo.

**Congratulatory Message to the Green Eagles**

**Mr Yunusa Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I would like to call for the suspension of Order 19 so as to allow me bring a Motion of congratulation to the Green Eagles. (*Applause*)

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, anybody in support of the Motion ?

**Mr Gbolahan Ijaola** (Lagos North-East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to second.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members this is not a controversial Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Alhaji Kaltungo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members the Motion goes like this—

That this House notes with pride and appreciation the resounding victory of the Nigerian Green Eagles in the 12th African Cup of Nation's Competition, and hereby registers happy congratulations to all members of the team and its officials.

I so move.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, before we go on I understand that the honourable Minister for Defence is here to meet the Members of the Defence Committee. Please, Members of the Committee, you can go and hold your meeting. Yes, anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Effiong Ononokpono (Oron I) :** I beg to second the Motion.

**Dr Junaidu Muhammed (West Ward) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I stand to support the Motion aimed at sending a letter of congratulations to our able proud, patriotic, gallant players in the Green Eagles for doing this nation proud by winning the African Cup of Nation's Cup.

Mr Speaker, Sir, you will agree with me that this nation is a proud nation. It is a powerful nation, it is a nation that used to be called the sleeping giant, it is a nation that has seen many events happy and unhappy in its history. It is a nation that is young but, at the same time, that has traversed many roads and many bridges. For the first time, Mr Speaker, Sir, since the advent of politics, I saw on the pages of Nigerian Newspapers, on the faces of Nigerians, and in the comments they passed, that we have one purpose. The purpose was to see the Green Eagles win the Cup of Nation's Cup which they did.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is not only politicians that make a nation. A nation is made not only by statesmen but by writers, artists, sportsmen, men and women who devote their lives for the attainment of the glory of their nation. Mr Speaker, Sir, it is in this light that I see this Motion as a very important one, and I must congratulate the Leader of the House for his foresight in summing up the feelings, the emotions of this House and, indeed, of this country in congratulating these boys and their supporters who made this momentous occasion possible.

Mr Speaker, Sir, on behalf of myself, my Party and my little group, I wish to support this Motion and I urge that it be passed without further delay.

Thank you, Sir.

**Mr Lam Adesina (Ibadan South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to associate myself with the sentiments expressed by my hon. Colleagues in sending a message of felicitations to the gallant, formidable and invulnerable Green Eagles of Nigeria. (*Applause*)

The Green Eagles of Nigeria is Nigeria's National Team, and since the advent of sports in this country, I have never seen such a wonderful performance as they did last Saturday. I think, on this occasion, we should be very proud of the Green Eagles because they did this nation proud.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, Sir, I would also like it to be put on record that everybody has a way of interpreting events in this country. From the political view-point, I would like to say that it is a victory for democracy in this country. The victory of the Green Eagles is not only in the arena of sports, it is also a victory for democracy in this country. The reason why I say this is that we have just returned to democratic government in this country barely six months ago, and a few days ago the Green Eagles won us an international match. I think this is be-

cause of the fact that we want to tell the world that we cherish freedom more than any other thing.

On this occasion, Mr Speaker, I would like to put it on record that just as the Green Eagles won us victory in the game of sports, we should also strive ahead in this country to always put forth the torch of democracy because it is at this time when we uphold democratic standards that the Green Eagles won us this capital victory.

On this note, I would like to say more grease to the elbows of the Green Eagles. Up Green Eagles and Up Nigeria! (*Applause*)

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II) :** I stand to support my fellow hon. Members in sending a congratulatory message to the Green Eagles for winning the African Cup of Nation's Cup. I am very happy also to commend fellow hon. Members who initially supported the Green Eagles in order to win this match. I would like to remind hon. Members that we have passed several Motions to commit the House of Representatives to support the Green Eagles, and with the initiative from Dr Obitayo and myself, we were able to contribute the meagre amounts of ₦230 and ₦270 respectively to give the Green Eagles ₦500 on behalf of the House of Representatives. (*Applause*) With this sort of impetus, these boys have won the cup for us.

It is very necessary, therefore, that we send them a congratulatory message, and give them extra encouragement to always fly high the Nigerian Flag in all international endeavours. I mean that this extra money should be, from now on, in the estimates of the National Sports Commission. (*Interruptions*)

So, on behalf of my fellow Colleagues who helped the Green Eagles to succeed, I thank the whole House of Representatives for sending congratulatory message to the Green Eagles. Thank you very much.

**Mr Appolos N. Njoku (Isiala Ngwa) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to associate myself with those who have spoken so well about the victory of the gallant Eagles.

In doing this, Mr Speaker, I would like to say that the victory of the Eagles has brought one thing home to us, that is, that there are areas in Nigeria in which, no matter our differences, we can always present a united front.

These young Eagles were drawn from different parts of Nigeria, but they had a common purpose in view and that common purpose was to bring glory to Nigeria and that, they excellently did last Saturday. In congratulating these brilliant boys Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not think it is just enough to pour words of praise on them and abandon them only to remember them when it suits us, when the next turn comes in two years time.

I am suggesting, Mr Speaker, that in order to encourage these young Eagles and encourage those who may be aspiring to tread their foot-steps, it would be necessary to recommend that these young men should be honoured in the Nigeria's National Honours List. They should also be encouraged by

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Wednesday, 26th March, 1980

The House met at 10.30 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENT

**Mr Speaker :** The only announcement, hon. Members is that the Public Accounts Committee has now got a Chairman in the person of the Right hon. Dagogo Princewill. (*Applause*) He is the Chairman of the Public Accounts' Committee. Also, there is a change in Committee Meetings. The Committee on Health will meet in the Lobby of the Red Brick Building at the stipulated time.

Hon. Members, we shall now go to the Order Paper for today.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Nigerian Re-Insurance Corporation Bill**

**Mr K. R. Obioha (Ideato) :** I rise to move—

That the House do receive the Report of the Committee on Finance in respect of the Membership of the Nigerian Re-Insurance Corporation Bill, 1980.

**Mr Speaker :** Is there anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr D. A. Zubairu (Jama'a North) :** I beg to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Mr O. Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Hon. Members, I suggest that we take the Second Reading of this Bill tomorrow morning.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, please go through the Report and then the debate on it will take place tomorrow morning. And after the debate, if everything goes on well, we shall take the Second Reading at the same time and then pass the Bill. We do not want these Bills to stay with us when we know that we have the ability to pass them.

**National Insurance Corporation of  
Nigeria Bill**

**Mr K. R. Obioha :** I move—

That the House do receive the Report of the Committee on Finance on the Membership of the National Insurance Corporation of Nigeria Bill, 1980.

I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker :** Is there anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Aliyu Muhammed Rabah (Gandi/Rabah) :** I beg to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Mr Speaker :** So, the report is now the property of this House and the debate will subsequently follow. I am sorry the microphones are not working, so anybody who wants to speak has to come down to the Floor of the House and use the standing microphone.

**Securities and Exchange Commission  
Bill**

**Mr K. R. Obioha :** I rise to move—

That the House do receive the Report of the Committee on Finance in respect of the Membership of the Securities and Exchange Commission Bill.

I beg to move.

**Mr P. O. Eleke (Obiowo) :** I beg to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

NOTICE OF MOTION

**Easter Break 1980**

**Mr Speaker :** The Motion is on Easter Break 1980, standing in the name of the Leader of the House, Alhaji Kaltungo.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) .** I rise to move the Motion standing in my name on the Easter Break 1980—

That this House do resolve, That the 1980 Easter Recess of the House of Representatives shall be for a period of 8 working days, commencing from Monday, 31st March, 1980 and ending 11th April, 1980.

I beg to move.

**Alhaji A. Abutu (Ankpa South) :** I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Alhaji Kaltungo, is there any further comment or explanation ?

**Alhaji Kaltungo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, since there is no further comment on this Motion, it appears that it would not be debated upon because we really have to go on Easter Recess so as to go and refresh our brains before we come back to start the real business of this House, since we have a lot on our hands in respect of the Budget. In the absence of any further discussion on the issue, I move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That the 1980 Easter Recess of the House of Representatives shall be for a period of 8 working days commencing from Monday, 31st March, 1980 and ending 11th April, 1980.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Alhaji Kaltungo** : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to move that the House do now adjourn till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

**Mr Tom Egbuwoku (Isoko)** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, before we take the debate on Motion for Adjournment, I would like to announce that the special Committee on NNPC will meet in the office of the Deputy Speaker immediately after this sitting. Also, the Party Leaders will meet in my office immediately after this sitting. Yes, any debate on Motion for adjournment ?

**Some hon. Members** : No, we have so many Committee Meetings.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved* : That the House do now adjourn till tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock.

*The House adjourned at 10.43 a.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Thursday, 27th March, 1980

The House met at 10.20 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, I have approved the Votes and Proceedings of yesterday.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Committee Meetings

Hon. Members, there have been a few changes in the Committee meetings scheduled for today. Firstly, the meeting of the Education Committee originally scheduled for today in Committee Room 4, Red Brick Building has been postponed till after the recess. Instead, the Special House Committee will now meet today at the same venue. Members of the Special House Committee should please take note. Secondly, the Members of the Finance Committee and the Banking and Currency Committee will hold a Joint Meeting at 11 a.m. this morning in Committee Room 3, Red Brick Building; and the Minister for Finance will be appearing before the joint meeting. Finally, there will be a meeting of Civil Aviation Committee at 11 a.m. this morning in the Staff Conference Room, Red Brick Building. The Minister of Civil Aviation and his officials will be appearing before the Committee.

Also, hon. Members, you remember I said the other time that if you invite the Minister or any of the officials for an interview, you should please always ensure that either one or two members of the Committee wait for the Minister outside and conduct him to the appropriate Committee Room. It is not proper for these officials to be hanging around, saying that *we do not know what to do*. Each time they will come to my office saying, *Speaker, where are your Committee men? What do we do?*

The Minister of Agriculture is in my office now, he does not know where to go. I understand he has been invited this morning for investigation. I said it here the other time that all letters of invitations, which now have to be in a standard form, must be routed through the Clerk of the House of Representatives so that we would know how many people are coming, when they are coming, and arrangements would be made to receive them, at least to keep them somewhere, give them soft drinks, tea or coffee, and then they can wait until the Committee starts sitting. Please, no Committee should forward a letter of invitation directly, without passing it through the Clerk of the House of Representatives who will keep comprehensive records of all these invitations; and all the invitations should be in a standard form.

National Assembly Quarters

Hon. Members, I was shocked by the incident that took place at Badagry Flats yesterday, it was really very unpleasant. I am asking the Chairman of the House Committee to please bring to me the comprehensive list of allocations made to all the Members. Everybody must get a particular flat allocated to him. There is no question of somebody taking the flat belonging to another person or doing all those things that I heard of yesterday. So, we should get the list and ensure that everybody gets the one allocated to him. I would like to get the list of the allocations today to make arrangement to ensure that everybody gets exactly what he was given at Victoria Island.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

If the report of any Committee is ready, it should be brought here and given to the Clerk of the House so that arrangement will be made for it to be listed to enable the Members of the Committee and the Chairman to come and defend the Report. Members should be given time to study the report before we start a debate on it. So, bring your report now if it is ready to the Clerk of the House.

Nigerian Council for Management  
Development Bill

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move —

That the House do receive the Report of the Committee on Labour in respect of the Reconstitution of the Nigerian Council for Management Development Bill.

I beg to Move.

**Mr Speaker :** Is anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Adamu Yerima (Dukku West) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Mr Speaker :** So the report is now the property of the House and it will come up again for Second Reading. The next one is Presentation of the Report on the National Dock Labour (Amendment) Bill, 1980, by hon. Edet Bassey Etienam.

There is a point of order.

**Mr Muhammadu Lawa Na-Rogo (Karaye) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am pointing hon. Edet Bassey Etienam to Order 3 (2). With your permission I would like to read it.

*A Member may speak only from the seat allocated to him, provided that Mr Speaker may change the allocation from time to time.*

**National Dock Labour  
(Amendment) Bill 1980**

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move—

That the House do receive the Report of the Committee on Labour on the National Dock Labour (Amendment) Bill 1980.

**Mr Mike Ugwu (Udi) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Mr Speaker :** So, it will come back again for Second Reading.

**National Provident Fund (Management  
Board, etc.) Amendment Bill 1980**

**Mr Speaker :** The next one is the Report of the Committee on Labour on National Provident Fund (Management Board, etc.) Amendment Bill 1980, to be presented by hon. Edet Bassey Etienam.

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move—

That the House do receive the Report of the Committee on Labour in respect of the National Provident Fund (Management Board, etc.) Amendment Bill, 1980.

I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, Alhaji Kaita.

**Alhaji Muhammed Ali Kaita (Kaita) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**Nigeria Reinsurance  
Corporation (Amendment) Bill**

S.12-30E

CONSIDERED IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE.

**The Chairman :** The Chairman of the Committee on Finance, hon. Rep. K. R. Obioha, will now read his Committee's report on the Bill, along with the Amendments they are proposing.

**Mr K. R. Obioha (Ideato) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, the House Committee on Finance is pleased to submit the report and recommendation on the above-mentioned Bill referred to it for action. The Committee worked with great dexterity and despatch, and made the following observation :—

(1) SENATE : The Bill had already passed the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Committee noted the Amendments made by the Senate. These Amendments were reasonable and acceptable to the House Committee.

(2) PURPOSE : The Bill is for the reconstitution of the membership of the Board of the Nigeria Re-insurance Corporation. The explanatory memorandum attached indicated the Federal Government's desire to reduce official representation and at the same time to increase *non-ex-officio* representation on the board. The decision of the Executive is laudable and received the Committee's highest commendation.

(3) COMPOSITION : The original bill provided that the reconstituted boards shall consist of ten members each as follows :—

(a) *eight persons (being persons who are not Federal or State public officers) appointed by the Minister with the approval of the President, one of whom shall be appointed as Chairman of the Board at the time of his appointment.*

(b) *the Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry charged with responsibility for matters relating to insurance or his representative ; and*

(c) *the Managing Director of the Corporation.*

After due deliberation the Committee having agreed with the Senate Amendments as regards composition of the Board reduced the membership to nine, that is, the Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry charged with responsibility for matters relating to insurance or his representative shall not sit in the Board.

(4) AMENDMENTS : It should be amended in lines 1 and 2 of the Bill *Federation of Nigeria* to read *Federal Republic of Nigeria*.

(5) RECOMMENDATIONS : Mr Chairman, Sir, your House Committee on Finance strongly and without reservation recommends that the Bill be passed as amended for the following reasons :—

(1) The Bill is straight-forward and well-intended.

(2) The Republic has talented men and women who shall make contributions in our nation building if given the chance.

(3) Ministry officials who are already burdened with their duties should concentrate on those duties for better results.

I beg to move.

*Lines 1 and 2—(COMMENCEMENT)*

**The Chairman :** Yes, thank you very much. The Committee has only one Amendment, so we will deal with that Amendment straightaway. Hon. Members, you have seen the Committee's Report. Our Committee accepted the Amendments made by the Senate and also introduced their own Amendments. So, we are now going to deliberate on the Amendment which says that, in page C 1 lines 1 and 2, leave out the words *Federation of Nigeria* and insert the words *Federal Republic of Nigeria*.

**Mr O. Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I beg to second and I also respectively move that the Question be put.

[MR AFOLABI]

Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.

Amendment put and agreed to.

Lines 1 and 2—COMMENCEMENT—as amended, ordered to stand part of the Bill.

The Chairman : The next Amendment stands in the name of Mr E. D. N. Uwandu.

Clause 1—AMENDMENT OF THE NIGERIA REINSURANCE CORPORATION DECREE 1977, No. 49

Mr E. D. N. Uwandu (Mbaitoli) : Mr Chairman, Sir, the Amendment is in respect of page C1, lines 8 to 11. Delete lines 8 to 11, and substitute the following :

(a) eight persons (being persons who are not Federal or State Public Officers) appointed by the President, one of which members shall be appointed as Chairman of the Board by the President.

I beg to move the Amendment.

The Chairman : Anybody seconding his Amendment ?

Mr J. Y. M. Mallo (Akwangu) : I wish to second the Amendment.

Mr Chairman : Yes Uwandu, please tell us why this Amendment is necessary.

Mr Uwandu : Actually, Mr Chairman, Sir, before I go on, I sent the two Amendments, one for Reinsurance Corporation and the other for the Insurance Corporation, but unfortunately the one that appeared is for the Insurance Corporation.

Why I am making this Amendment is that in most of the Bills coming to this House for the reconstitution of Membership of the Boards, it has always been said that the Minister shall appoint the Board Members with the approval of the President. But, I am of the opinion that under the Constitution or the system of Government we are practising, all appointments shall be presumed to be made by the President. So, it would be proper for us to have on the Bill that the President shall appoint either the Chairman or the other Members.

This is why I suggested that : *Eight persons (being persons who are not Federal or State Public Officers) appointed by the President, one of which member shall be appointed as Chairman of the Board by the President.* So, if we look under Section 5 and Section 136 of the Constitution, we could see that the President can delegate his powers to the Minister ; and the President has got the Executive Powers under Section 5 of the Constitution. It is, therefore, clear that he could make this appointment. Once the power has been given to him under the Constitution, I do not see the reason why we in this House can take away that power. He can delegate his powers to the person directly in-charge. So, it is my opinion that all appointments should be made by the President as it is contained in the Constitution.

Mr Chairman : Yes, it is all right. Have you finished ?

Mr Uwandu : Yes.

Mr Chairman : Any comments, gentlemen ?

Mr Obioha : Mr Chairman, the hon. Member who spoke last should please, with your permission, read the relevant paragraph that concerns him. *Eight persons being persons who are not Federal (this is the Bill itself now) appointed by the Minister with the approval of the President.*

I think the operative words there are that the appointment is *with the approval of the President.* So, I do not think it is a matter that needs quarrel because the final appointing person is the President and not the Minister.

Mr Chairman : Alhaji Abutu.

Alhaji Abubakar Abutu (Ankpa South) : Mr Chairman, Sir, hon. Members, I think that if we are to be realistic, division of labour is so much effective in the presidential system of government. Therefore, there is nothing wrong with the original Motion that says that the Minister *shall appoint* and the President *shall approve*. I think if we are not going to waste our time, it is only the question of grammar and this is not necessary. Thank you.

Mr Chairman : Yes, Mr Ugwu.

Mr Frank Ugwu (Nsukka) : Mr Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Amendment on this basis. When we pass a Bill in this House, it becomes Law. It would look odd for us as the custodians of the Constitution to go back and take away a provision of the Constitution and vest it on some other person. The Constitution provides that the President appoints. Whether he delegates his powers or not, is not our problem. So, the question of division of duties does not come in here. It is a question of Law. If the President wishes to ask the Minister to appoint, well, it would not be deemed that we give him that authority ; he would be acting within his Executive Powers. So, let us do our own duty here and leave the division of work to the President. So, I support that we say that the President shall appoint.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Dr Goden J. Idang (Etienan II) : Mr Chairman, hon. Members, I do not think that we should belabour this particular fact. The Minister is in charge of a Ministry. He knows better the functions of the Ministry and he knows the right calibre of people to be appointed to the Boards.

The President is a very busy man, and I think it is the duty of a Minister to, more or less, look round for suitable individuals and recommend these people. I understand *persons appointed by the Minister with the approval of the President* to mean that really it is the President who will ratify this appointment. The Minister's duty is really to submit this list to the President after looking round. It would be quite unfair to expect the President, with all his Executive functions, to be looking round

for all the people to form or be appointed to all the Boards in the various Ministries. I do not know what the Minister will be doing. I think that we should have that confidence in our own Ministers, that they will, more or less, be able to recommend reliable, honest and dedicated individuals to the President who will then ratify. I do not think that, in view of the fact that we are running against time, we should belabour this point. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

**Mr M. O. Oni (Obafemi/Owode) :** Mr Chairman, I think this is a matter where we should not waste much time. It is clear to us that it is only the President who has got the constitutional power to appoint the Chairman. Mr Chairman, it is only the President who has got that power because he is the only person within the Executive who has got the mandate of the people to take important decisions as are contained herein when they come within Executive responsibility. As such, Mr Chairman, I think we should not manipulate the issue. It is not the duty of the Minister to appoint the Chairman. However, if the President, at any given time, wants to delegate his duty to any of his Ministers, I think he can do so. Therefore, we should not incorporate it into this Bill at all. Incorporating it into this Bill, Mr Chairman, will constitute a sort of manipulation of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. As such, I would implore hon. Members here to please respect the Constitution and give this power to Mr President. Thank you very much.

**The Chairman :** This is a very simple thing. I do not see much difficulty there. I will, therefore, ask the Chairman of the Committee on Finance to move that the Question be now put.

**Mr Obioha :** Mr Chairman, when the last two speakers spoke they referred to Section 5, and I would read it for the House to understand the implications.

**The Chairman :** No. Move that the Question be put.

**Mr Obioha :** I move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

**The Chairman :** Hon. Members, the Amendment is that—In page C1, lines 8-11, leave out all the words in those lines, and insert the words :

*Eight persons (being persons who are not Federal or State Public Officers) appointed by the President, one of which members shall be appointed as Chairman of the Board by the President.*

*Clause 1—(AMENDMENT OF THE NIGERIA REINSURANCE CORPORATION DECREE 1977, 1977 No. 49)—as amended, ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

*Clause 2—(SHORT TITLE)— ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

**The Chairman :** Will the Clerk of the House please read the Bill as amended.

**The Clerk :** It reads thus :

*BE IT ENACTED by the National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and by authority of the same as follows :—*

*(1) For subsection (2) and subsection (3) of section 3 of the Nigeria Reinsurance Corporation Decree 1977, there shall be substituted the following new subsection, that is—*

*(2) The Board shall comprise the following members, that is to say—*

*(a) eight persons (being persons who are not Federal or State public officers) appointed by the President, one of which members shall be appointed as Chairman of the Board by the President ;*

*(b) the Managing Director of the Corporation.*

*2. This Act may be cited as the Nigeria Reinsurance Corporation (Amendment) Act 1980.*

**The Chairman :** Thank you very much. Hon. Afolabi should please move that the Committee should report progress.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Chairman, I move that the Committee should report progress.

(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, the report is that we have accepted the report of the Committee on Finance on the Nigerian Reinsurance Corporation Bill 1980 and also the Amendments made by the Committee on Finance and the hon. Mr E. N. D. Uwandu.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I move that the Nigerian ReInsurance Corporation Bill, 1980 be read the Third time and passed.

**Mr E. C. Ebo (Mbano East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I am sorry I did not get my own original copy of the proposed Bill before coming here. There is a certain omission which I think, at this stage, could come in because it is a very important omission, as I see it. That is in reference to the original Decree.

**Mr Speaker :** Do you want to make an Amendment ?

**Mr Ebo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to remind you of something which you can make use of.

**Mr Speaker :** No ! No ! We have a procedure. This is the Third Reading.

**Mr Ebo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, at the Third Reading you can still make observations on any law. Otherwise there is no Third Reading.

**Mr Speaker :** No ! No ! Please, you had every opportunity during the Second Reading and during the Committee Stages to make all the observations you would have liked to make. You cannot waste our time. Please take your seat.

*Bill reported with Amendments, read the Third time and passed.*

**Mr Speaker :** So, the Bill for the Reconstitution of Membership of the Nigeria Reinsurance Cor-



[MR SPEAKER]

poration has now been passed by the House of Representatives.

#### Mr Abiola's Courtesy Call

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, it is my pleasure to inform you that a distinguished Nigerian in the person of Chief M. K. Abiola is in this honourable House to pay a courtesy call to the House of Representatives. He is there in the Gallery. (*Applause*)

**Some hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Speaker :** Thank you very much.

#### NATIONAL INSURANCE CORPORATION OF NIGERIA (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1980 S.8-80E

#### Considered in Committee of the Whole House

**The Chairman :** Yes, the Chairman of the Committee on Finance.

**Mr K. Ralph Obioha (Ideato) :** Mr Chairman and hon. Members, the House Committee on Finance is pleased to submit the report and recommendations on the above-mentioned Bill referred to it for action. The Committee worked with great dexterity and despatch, and made the following observations :

**SENATE :** The Bill had already passed through the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Committee noted the Amendments made by the Senate. These Amendments were reasonable and acceptable to the House Committee.

(2) **PURPOSE :** The Bill is for the reconstitution of membership of the Board of the National Insurance Corporation of Nigeria. The explanatory memorandum attached indicated the Federal Government's desire to reduce official representation and at the same time to increase *non-ex-officio* representation on the board. The decision of the Executive is laudable and received the Committee's highest commendation.

(3) **COMPOSITION :** The original Bill provided that the reconstituted board shall consist of ten members as follows :—

(a) eight persons (being persons who are not Federal or State public officers) appointed by the Minister with the approval of the President, one of whom shall be appointed as Chairman of the Board at the time of his appointment.

(b) the Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry charged with responsibility for matters relating to insurance or his representative ; and

(c) the Managing Director of the Corporation.

After due deliberation, the Committee, having agreed with the Senate Amendments as regards composition of the Board, reduced the membership to nine, that is, the Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry charged with responsibility for matters relating to insurance or his representative shall not sit in the Board.

(4) **AMENDMENTS :** It should be amended in lines 1 and 2 of the Bill *Federation of Nigeria* to read *Federal Republic of Nigeria*.

(5) **RECOMMENDATION :** Mr Chairman, Sir, your House Committee on Finance strongly and without reservation recommends that the Bill be passed as amended for the following reasons :—

(1) The Bill is straightforward and well-intended.

(2) The Republic has talented men and women who shall make their contributions in our nation-building if given the chance.

(3) Ministry officials who are already burdened with their duties should concentrate on those duties for better results.

I beg to move.

*Lines 1 and 2—(COMMENCEMENT).*

**The Chairman :** Yes, anybody seconding the Amendment ?

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II) :** I beg to second the Amendment.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I respectfully move that the Question on the Amendment proposed be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Lines 1 and 2—(COMMENCEMENT)—as amended, ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

**The Chairman :** There is another Amendment which is not in the Order Paper for today. I do not know why it was omitted. So, the Clerk will have to tell us if he has actually received this Amendment or not because in all these things we have to comply with the rules. These Amendments must be deposited with the Clerks within time. I do not see why it should not be here if it was received by the Clerks within time. All right, we leave it.

Yes, read the Bill as amended.

**An hon. Member :** I want to make an observation, Mr Chairman, Sir.

**The Chairman :** Please, read the Bill as amended now. The Amendment of the Chairman of the Committee on Finance is the only Amendment. The other Amendment is not on the Order Paper.

**The Clerk :** *BE IT ENACTED by the National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and by authority of same as follows :—*

1. *The National Insurance Corporation of Nigeria Decree 1969 is hereby amended as follows :—*

(a) *for subsection (2) of section 2 thereof, there shall be substituted the following new subsection, that is—*

*"(2) The Chairman shall be appointed by the Minister charged with responsibility for matters relating to insurance (in this Act*

[THE CLERK]

hereafter referred to as "the Minister"), and the provisions of section 3 (2) of this Act shall apply in respect of any such appointment."

(b) for subsections (1) and (2) of section 3 thereof, there shall be substituted the following new subsections :—

2.—(1) The membership of the Board shall comprise—

(a) eight persons who shall not be Federal or State public officers, one of whom shall be appointed as chairman ; and

(b) the Managing Director of the Corporation.

(2) Appointments of members of the Board under paragraph (a) of subsection (1) above and of the Chairman, shall be made by the Minister only after first satisfying the President in respect thereof that the persons concerned are persons of integrity, and of good standing in the community from which they are to be drawn. In addition, the President must be satisfied that such persons are in the field of industry, commerce, finance or administration and also have specialised knowledge of the working of an insurance business, so as to be capable of discharging the functions of their office in a manner satisfactory to the Minister".

3. This Act may be cited as the National Insurance Corporation of Nigeria (Amendment) Act 1980.

**Mr Bayo Akinbisehin** (Ifesowapo) : Mr Chairman, Sir, before the Amendment is taken, I would—

**The Chairman** : No, we have finished with the Amendment.

**Mr Akinbisehin** : Before the Question is put on the Amendment, I would suggest that—

**The Chairman** : We have finished putting the Question.

**Mr Akinbisehin** : Have you finished with that.

**The Chairman** : Yes, we have finished with the Amendments.

**Mr Akinbisehin** : I think that there is a contradiction in this Bill which is going to become law in a few moments as opposed to the one that was passed earlier, where it was stated that the President should appoint Members of the Board, and in another breath we are saying, in a sister Board, that the Minister should appoint the Members.

Besides, Sir, I also feel that in view of the fact that this Bill will soon be passed into law, it is but proper to make the following comments in order that those appointed to the Board will take note so that the running of the business will be better. For example, it appears that the Government of Nigeria is having a monopoly of most of the businesses in Nigeria. Insurance business is a business that one should not monopolise because of the risks involved in that in future, if there is any calamity, it will affect us adversely. So, I would suggest that those who will be appointed on the Board will do a lot of work so that they reinsure, as much as possible, the

risks that they are carrying especially when foreign companies are not very keen on accepting risks that are carried in Nigeria. This is our country. I know that any risk that is carried here could be met. But I believe that when these people are appointed, they should have a policy of reinsuring probably with foreign companies so that if there is any risk it would be minimal and evenly shared.

Mr Chairman, Sir, I beg to take my seat.

**Chief P. A. Gbinije** (Ethiophe South) : Mr Chairman, Sir, I only want to make a pertinent observation before dealing with this Bill. The first Bill which was just passed—

**The Chairman** : Leave that one ; we are now dealing with the second Bill.

**Mr Gbinije** : I am saying that if we should be consistent with the way we deal with the Bills, the appointing authority should be the President and not the Minister with the approval of the President, so as to allow for consistency in these Bills.

In view of the fact that perhaps a notice for this Amendment has not been placed on the Order Paper, if the Chairman does not have a way of putting it now, we should allow time for the proper Amendment to be put before this present Bill is passed into law.

**Mr Nuhu Poloma** (Tangale-Waja North) : Mr Chairman, I rise to speak on this Bill with the following comments. It beats my imagination that we passed a Bill earlier on with the President appointing the Board Members, and now we have a similar Bill giving a Minister powers to appoint Board members. We are now creating a precedent where one Minister has more powers than another Minister. Earlier on, about a week or two ago, an Amendment giving the President powers to appoint these people was passed.

So, we want to know why this Amendment was not incorporated in the order Paper. Was it not received ? If it was received, why did it not appear on the Order Paper ? Was there a technical mistake somewhere ? So, we want this Amendment incorporated in the Order Paper because it was passed within the required number of days, yet it is not in the Order Paper. So, we would not give one Minister powers and deny another Minister similar powers.

With these few comments, I beg to sit down.

**Mr D. A. Zubairu** (Janaa North) : Mr Chairman, Sir, my point of order is Order 47 (3) which says—

*Any Amendment proposed to the Bill either in committee of the Whole House or in a standing or select committee on which notice has not been given shall be handed to the chairman in writing.*

So, I feel, in this case, since such a notice has already been given, I think we can make such an Amendment.

**The Chairman** : No, No, you did not get what we are saying.

**Mr Zubairu** : Then it means that the law will be inconsistent with the earlier one just passed.

**The Chairman :** No, No, you are not correct. I think it is the mind of most members that we should do something about this Amendment, and consequently, we would like a Motion to be moved that the Standing Order 19 be suspended to enable the Amendment to be brought.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Chairman, may I move that Standing Order 19 be suspended so as to be able to move the amendment orally.

**The Chairman :** Yes, anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Chief Godwin Wodi (Port Harcourt II) :** Mr Chairman, I second the Motion.

**Mr Afolabi :** Mr Chairman, I respectfully move that the Question be now put.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That the Standing Order 19 be suspended to enable the House to move the proposed Amendment in respect of the bill for the reconstitution of the Membership of the National Insurance Corporation.

**The Chairman :** Yes, move the amendment orally.

**Mr E. N. D. Uwandu (Mbaitoli) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, the Amendment is similar to the former Amendment. But my submission here is that Subsection 2 of Section 2 should read as follows—

*The Chairman shall be appointed by the President.*

In line 3, page C2 delete *Minister* and substitute *President* and delete the word *the* after the word *satisfying*.

In line 4, of the same page C2, delete *President* and substitute *himself*.

In line 11, of the same page C2, delete *Minister* and substitute *President*.

So, what I mean is this, Subsection 2 of Section 2 shall now read—

*The Chairman shall be appointed by the President.*

At page C2 where you have *the Minister*, as I said, we shall substitute it with *the President*, that is, in line 3, page C2. Delete the word *the* after the word *satisfying*.

In line 4 delete *President* and substitute *himself*. In line 11, delete *Minister* and substitute the *President*.

Mr Chairman, Sir, I beg to move the Amendment.

**The Chairman :** Anybody seconding the Amendment ?

**Mr O. J. Ekpenyong (Uyo I) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I beg to second the Amendment.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** I move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Amendment put and agreed to*

*Clause 1—(AMENDMENT OF THE NATIONAL INSURANCE CORPORATION OF NIGERIA DECREE 1969, 1969 No. 22)—as amended ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

*Clause 2—(SHORT TITLE)—ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

**Mr Afolabi :** Mr Chairman, hon. Members, I move that the Committee report progress.

*(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)*

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, the report is that the Committee of the Whole House accepted the report and Amendment made by the Chairman of the Committee on Finance and the Amendment made by hon. Member, Mr E. N. D. Uwandu. So, we go on to the Third reading.

**Mr Afolabi :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I move that the National Insurance Corporation of Nigeria (Amendment) Bill be read the Third time and passed into law.

*Bill reported with Amendment, read the Third time and passed.*

**Mr Speaker :** The Bill making provision for the reconstitution of Membership of the National Insurance Corporation of Nigeria has now been passed into Law by the House of Representatives.

## SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE CONTROL (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1980

S. 9-80E

### Considered in Committee of the Whole House

**Mr K. R. Obioha (Ideato) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, the House Committee on Finance is pleased to submit the report and recommendations on the above mentioned bill referred to it for action. The Bill was examined thoroughly by the Committee and the Committee believes that the following observations be noted.

(1) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the bill is to permit the Federal Government to reconstitute the membership of the Securities and Exchange Commission in order to reduce the level of official representation and simultaneously increase the non-official Membership of the Commission. The Committee unanimously agreed to this decision.

(2) COMPOSITION.—The Membership of the Commission proposed in the Bill is as follows :

(a) a part-time Chairman, not being a Federal or State public officer to be appointed by the President.

(b) eight persons with requisite experience and skill to enable them make effective contributions to the work of the Commission, to be appointed by the President.

(c) one representative of each of the following Federal bodies, that is—

(i) the Federal Ministry charged with responsibility for matters relating to the Commission,

[MR OBIOHA]

(ii) the Central Bank of Nigeria, and

(iii) the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Board.

The Committee deliberated on the composition of the Commission or Board Membership and decided that a representative of the Federal Ministry charged with responsibility for matters relating to the Commission need not be a member.

(3) (a) AMENDMENTS.—It should be amended in Lines 1 and 2 of the Bill *Federation of Nigeria* to read *Federal Republic of Nigeria*.

(b) Subsection 2 (c) (i) delete content entirely. Subsection 2 (c) (ii) change (ii) to (i), Subsection 2 (c) (iii) change (iii) to (ii).

## RECOMMENDATION

Mr Chairman, Sir, your House Committee on Finance unanimously recommends that the Bill be passed as amended for the following reasons :

(1) The Bill is non-controversial and well-intended.

(2) In infusing into the Commission Nigerians with requisite ability, experience and specialised knowledge, better results will be achieved.

I beg to move.

**Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel** (Degema II) : I beg to second the Amendment.

Lines 1 and 2—(COMMENCEMENT)

**Mr Chairman** : Any comments, Gentlemen?

**Mr Afolabi** : Mr Chairman, hon. Members, in the absence of any questions or comments, I respectfully move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

Lines 1 and 2—(COMMENCEMENT)—as amended, ordered to stand part of the Bill.

**Mr Chairman** : The Clerk should read the Bill with the Amendments.

**The Clerk** : *A Bill for an Act to make Provision for Reconstitution of Membership of the Securities and Exchange Commission.*

BE IT ENACTED by the National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and by authority of same as follows :—

1. For section 2 of the Securities and Exchange Commission Decree 1979, there shall be substituted the following new section, that is to say—

2. The Commission shall consist of the following members, that is—

(a) a part-time Chairman, who shall not be a Federal or State public officer, to be appointed by the President ;

(b) eight persons appointed by the President, being persons who by reason of any requisite ability, experience and specialised knowledge,

have skills that will be useful and will enable them to make effective contributions to the work of the Commission ; and

(c) One person each of the following bodies that is—

(i) the Central Bank of Nigeria ; and

(ii) the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Board.

2. This Act may be cited as the Securities and Exchange Commission Amendment Act 1980.

**Mr Afolabi** : Mr Chairman, hon. Members, I move that the House should report progress.

**Alhaji Mr G. Shamaki** (Katagum West) : I beg to second.

(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)

**Mr Afolabi** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I report that the Securities and Exchange Commission Bill 1980 has passed through the Committee of the Whole House with Amendments and I now move that the Bill be read the Third time and passed into law.

*Bill reported with Amendments, read the Third time and passed.*

**Mr Speaker** : So, hon. Members, we have passed three Bills into law today.

## Death of Alhaji Aliyu Makaman Bida

**Mr Speaker** : Hon. Members, it is with deep regret that I have to announce the death of Alhaji Aliyu Makaman Bida. He was a Minister in the former Civilian Government. May his soul rest in peace.

## ADJOURNMENT

**Mr Olusola Afolabi** : Mr Speaker, Sir, I move that this House should adjourn till 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

**Mr K. R. Obioha** (Ideato) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker** : Has any Member anything to say on Motion for Adjournment? Yes, hon. Chukwu.

## Oil in Imo State

**Mr P. C. Chukwu** (Ohaji Egbema Oguta) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, in contributing to the Motion for adjournment, I wish to express my feelings on the oil being drilled in Nigeria to which Imo State has not been given any credit.

Imo State is an oil producing area. I shall cite some cases. Oil is drilled in Owaza, Isimiri, Ozza (East), Ozza (West), Ukwa Local Government Area, Egbema, Awara, Izombe in Ohaji Local Government Area. Up till this time, the Federal Government has not made any statement telling the nation that oil is being drilled in some areas of Imo State.

The NNPC siphoned the oil in Ohaji Local Government Area in Imo State and credited same to the Rivers State. I would suggest that meters be

[MR CHUKWU]

installed in all oil wells throughout the country to determine the quantity of oil being drilled in each area of the States.

I wish also to call on the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, through the Speaker, to make a categorical statement informing the nation that Imo State is an oil producing area. In the geological map of Nigeria, showing areas where oil is being drilled, Imo State is not so indicated. I take this opportunity, also through the Speaker, to request that the Geological Department of the Ministry of Mines and Power should insert, without further delay, Imo State as one of the areas where oil is being drilled. Mr Speaker, Sir, a Motion to this effect will be coming to this House later.

With this observation, I beg to sit down.

Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I now move that the Question be now put.

Question, that the Question be now put, put and agreed to.

Main Question put and agreed to.

Resolved : That this House stand adjourned till 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned accordingly at 11.40 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Friday, 28th March, 1980  
The House met at 9.35 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

**Mr Speaker:** Hon. Members, I have gone through the Votes and Proceedings of yesterday and they are in order, so I have approached them.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Business Committee Recess Meetings

There are a very few announcements. Because of the nature of their work, the Members of the Business Committee should always meet at least once during the Easter Recess of the House to map out the schedule of work before the House re-assemblies. Accordingly, a meeting of the Business Committee has been fixed for Wednesday, the 9th of April, 1980 in Committee Room No. 4, Red Brick Building. Members of the Business Committee should make it a point of duty to attend the meeting. They will, of course, be paid the normal transport allowance for the journey from their constituencies to Lagos.

I have also instructed the Clerk of the House to send telegrams to all the Members of the Committee during the recess as a reminder to this announcement.

Official Delegation to US Congress

Hon. Members will recall that on the 25th of March, 1980, I informed this House that five Members of the Business Committee and the Rules Committee would visit the US Congress during the Easter Recess. Subsequently, however, the Clerk of the House was informed by the officials of the American Embassy in Lagos that the US Congress would be on recess from 4th to 14th April, 1980, which almost coincides with our recess period.

In the circumstance, the visit of our five-man delegation will be rescheduled to take place at a more appropriate time in April when the US Congress would be in session.

Happy Easter

I would like to wish all Members a very happy Easter and a happy reunion with members of their families. We have all worked very hard especially during the current budget exercise. I hope that you can have some well deserved rest during the recess and come back with a renewed vigour and enthusiasm to continue with the critical and constructive examination of the Budget proposals, Bills and other measures that would come before the honourable House.

Thank you very much.

COMMUNICATION

Also, there is a letter here from West Germany. The letter has a covering letter from the Ministry of External Affairs. The letter from the Ministry of External Affairs reads as follows :

*The Clerk of the National Assembly,  
National Assembly,  
Tafawa Balewa Square,  
Lagos*

*Federal Republic of Germany's Invitation to some  
Nigerian Members of the House of Representatives*

*I am directed to forward herewith for information and necessary action copy of a Note Verbale No. 49/80 dated 28th January, 1980, from the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, intending to invite a group of six members of the House of Representatives to visit the Federal Republic of Germany for a two-week information tour.*

*E. F. UDOEYOP,  
for Permanent Secretary*

The letter itself from the Federal Republic of Germany reads :

*Embassy of the Federal  
Republic of Germany*

Pol 321.36

Note-No. 49/80

*The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany presents its compliments to the Ministry of External Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and has the honour to communicate the following :*

*In view of the good and friendly relationship between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Federal Republic of Nigeria the Embassy intends to invite a group of six members of the House of Representatives to visit the Federal Republic of Germany for a two-week information tour. During the visit the members of the House of Representatives will have the opportunity to meet German parliamentarians, representatives of the political parties in the Federal Republic of Germany and Government representatives. The information tour would also include visits to Hamburg, Munich, and Berlin as state capitals of major German Laender. The main purpose of the visit would be to give information on the German parliamentary system, the relationship between the Federal Government and the 11 Federal States as well as on the distribution of revenues between the Federation and the States.*

*The Embassy would be most grateful if the Ministry of External Affairs could forward this offer as soon as possible to the members of the House of Representatives and if a suitable group of 6 members could be nominated.*

*To the  
Ministry of External Affairs  
Lagos*

[MR SPEAKER]

*The Embassy would also welcome if a suitable date for the proposed visit could be indicated according to the wishes of the members of the group.*

*The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Ministry of External Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria the assurances of its highest consideration.*

Lagos, 28th January, 1980.

So, the Party Leaders should meet in my office immediately after this sitting.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### THE NIGERIAN COUNCIL FOR MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

(AMENDMENT) BILL, 1980 : CONSIDERED IN  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

**The Chairman :** Hon. Members, you will remember that the Report of this Bill was laid on the Table of this House and Members got their own copies, and we decided that it would come back to the House today for further discussion. Yes, the Chairman of the Labour Committee should give the report of the Committee on the Bill.

**Mr E. B. Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I am the Chairman of the Committee on Labour.

Your Committee is delighted to submit its Report and Recommendations on the above-mentioned Bill on the Order Paper referred to it for action.

2. The Bill has been critically examined by your Committee alongside the Decree setting up the Council—Decree No. 51 of 1976 : (COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL).

3. The Committee notes that the Bill is an amendment to the above-named Decree. The said decree made provision for 25 members to be appointed into the Council by the Commissioner. The composition of the Council was accordingly set out as follows :

- (a) A Chairman ;
- (b) Four persons representing four Universities ;
- (c) Four persons representing Colleges of Technology ;
- (d) One representative each of the following Federal Ministries ; that is to say :—
  - (i) Education ;
  - (ii) Establishments ;
  - (iii) Industries ;
  - (iv) Labour ;
  - (v) Economic Development ;
- (e) The Director, Centre for Management Development ;
- (f) One representative of the Nigerian Employers Consultative Association ;
- (g) One representative of the Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture ;
- (h) Two persons representing professional management training Institutions in Nigeria ;

(i) One Representative of the Industrial Training Fund ;

(j) Four persons with extensive knowledge and close association with management training, Industry and Commerce, each chosen on his individual merit ; and

(k) One representative of Labour Organisations.

The intention of this Bill is therefore to increase the Membership of the Board and change the method of the appointment of the Chairman as well as Members of the Board. The Chairman of the Board will now be appointed by the President while other Members of the Board will also be appointed by the President but on the advice of the Minister.

This is in order to emphasise the important role which the Council is expected to play in the development of manpower requirement of our growing and dynamic economy.

Recommendations : Mr Chairman, your Committee wishes to state that after a careful consideration, it has come to the conclusion that the Bill is appropriate, well timed, straightforward and non-controversial. Besides, your Committee is convinced that the requirements of the Bill are within the provisions of the Constitution.

Your Committee, therefore, recommends strongly that the Bill be passed without amendment.

Mr Chairman, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to move.

**The Chairman :** So, there is no Amendment to this Bill and you recommend that it should go through ?

**Mr Etienam :** Yes.

**Dr Juniadu Muhammed (Kano West Ward) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, judging from the submission of the Chairman of the Labour Committee, my distinguished Colleague from Oron II (*Mr Edet Bassey Etienam*), it is clear that the Committee has done its home work. The concept for the establishment of the Nigerian Council for Management Development is a very important one, and I do not think this is an issue that can be contested. I appreciate the fact, Mr Chairman, Sir, that in a modern age we have to apply new management concepts if we are to manage our economy.

The reasons adduced in both the Bill, the explanatory notes and, of course, the brilliant submission by the Chairman of the Labour Committee are self-explanatory. On this note, Mr Chairman, Sir, I think we need not take much time of the House. I beg that we pass this Bill into law. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

**Chief Godwin B. Wodi (Port Harcourt II) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I want to congratulate the Committee on Labour for giving a place to the Nigerian Association of Chamber of Mines, Commerce, Industries and Agriculture. There is one thing that we have been doing in this country and that is over-looking the impact which this institution can have on the economic development of this country. In fact, in most West African countries

the Chamber of Commerce movement forms part of the main government functionary, but this has not been the case in this country. This Committee has now realised this and it has given but one place to NACIMA. How I wish they had given them two places or more.

I wish to take this opportunity to recommend that in most of these appointments, the NACIMA should always be thought of as a very integral part of the organisation. Thank you very much, Mr Chairman.

**The Chairman :** Any other comment on the Bill ? It is a straight-forward Bill.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Chairman, in the absence of any further discussions, I move that the Report of the Committee on Labour on the Reconstitution of the Nigerian Council for Management Development Bill, 1980 be accepted by the Committee of the whole House.

**Mr Chairman :** Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Damisa Jomoh (Adaybi Okehi) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to second the Motion to accept the Report of the Labour Committee.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That the Report of the Committee on Labour be adopted and accepted by this House.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi :** Mr Chairman, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the Chairman should report progress.

**The Chairman :** Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Dr Nwala Eze (Ikwerre/Etche II) :** Mr Chairman, hon. Members, I beg to second the Motion.

(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)

**Mr Speaker :** The only report is that the Committee of the whole House has accepted the report of the Committee on Labour which was tabled before this House yesterday. It was debated this morning and accepted without Amendment.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the Nigerian Council for Management Development Amendment Bill, 1980 be read the third time and passed into law.

*Bill reported without Amendment, read the Third time and passed.*

**Mr Speaker :** The Bill to make provision for Reconstitution of the Nigerian Council for Management Development has now been passed into law by the House of Representatives.

Yes, the next one.

NATIONAL DOCK LABOUR (AMENDMENT) BILL 1980 : CONSIDERED IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

**The Chairman :** Yes, hon. Members, as you will remember, the Report on this Bill from the Committee on Labour was tabled before this House

yesterday, and we ordered that copies should be distributed to Members for them to study the report and that a debate on that report and the Committee Stage of the Bill will take place today. We shall now have the report on the Bill from the Chairman of the Committee on Labour (*Mr Edet Bassey Etienam*).

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, your Committee wishes to present its report and recommendations on the Bill referred to it for action. The Bill has been critically examined by your Committee. Your Committee has related the Bill to the Decree (No. 13 of 1979) which it seeks to amend in respect only of mode of appointment of Board Members.

The said decree provides for the composition of the Board as follows :—

The Board shall consist of a Chairman to be appointed by the Commissioner with the approval of the Federal Executive Council, and the following other members, that is :

(a) a representative each of the Federal Ministries of Labour and Transport ;

(b) a representative of the Nigerian Ports Authority ;

(c) two representatives of registered dock labour employers of whom one shall be the General Manager of the National Cargo Handling Company ;

(d) two representatives of dock workers ; and

(e) a representative of shipping Company.

Mr Chairman, your Committee is of the opinion that the amendment thus proposed to the Decree as contained in the Bill is non-controversial. The Bill seeks only to alter the mode of appointment of Board members as follows :—

The Board shall consist of a chairman to be appointed by the President and the following other members :

(a) five persons to be appointed by the President,

(b) one person to represent registered dock labour employers,

(c) the general Manager of the National Cargo Handling Company,

(d) two persons to represent dock workers,

(e) one person to represent shipping companies.

Your Committee recommends that one person be appointed into the Board to represent the interests of workers in the shipping, clearing and forwarding companies since the companies are directly represented on the Board.

This recommendation is based on your Committee's desire to see that the interests of the workers are adequately represented on the Board.

Your Committee recommends strongly that the Bill be passed for the following reasons :—

(1) To make the mode of appointment into the Board reflect the change from Military to Civilian administration.



[MR ETIENAM]

(2) The appointments are within the constitutional competence of the President and will make for greater efficiency and effectiveness in the conduct and management of the affairs of the Board.

(3) The re-constitution of the Board, as proposed under the Bill, is in the National interest and does not therefore permit of any other delay.

*Clause 1—(AMENDMENT OF THE NATIONAL DOCK LABOUR DECREE 1979, 1979 No. 13).*

**Mr Etienam :** Mr Chairman, I beg to move—

That between lines 12 and 13, we should *insert* as follows :

*(f) one person to represent workers in the shipping, clearing and forwarding Companies.*

Mr Chairman, hon. Members, I beg to move.

**The Chairman :** Yes, is anybody seconding the Amendment ?

**Mr B. D. Wahu (Mubi) :** Mr Chairman, hon. Members, I rise to second the Amendment.

**The Chairman :** Yes, any debate on the Amendment ? Is anybody saying anything on the Amendment ? Okay, Mr Afolabi you may move now that the Question be put.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Chairman, in the absence of any comments on the Amendment, I move that the Question on that Amendment be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Clause 1—AMENDMENT OF THE NATIONAL DOCK LABOUR DECREE 1979, 1979 No. 13—as amended, ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

**Mr Olusola Afolabi :** Mr Chairman, I move that the Committee of the Whole House do report progress.

*(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)*

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, the report is that the Committee of the Whole House has accepted the report and the Amendment of the Committee on Labour.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi :** Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I move that the National Dock Labour Board (Amendment) Bill 1980 be read the Third time and passed into law.

*Bill reported with Amendment, read the Third time and passed.*

**Mr Speaker :** The National Dock Labour Board (Amendment) Bill 1980 has now been passed into law by the House of Representatives.

NATIONAL PROVIDENT FUND MANAGEMENT BOARD (AMENDMENT) BILL 1980 : CONSIDERED IN COMMITTEE

**The Chairman :** Hon. Members, you will also remember that the Report on this Bill was tabled

before this House and Members got their own copies to study. We scheduled the debate on the report of this Bill for today and then we will also have the Committee Stage of the Bill.

Yes, the Report on the Bill will be given now by the Chairman of the Committee on Labour, Mr Edet Bassey Etienam.

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Chairman, hon. Colleagues, your Committee is pleased to present its report and recommendations in respect of the above-mentioned Bill referred to it for action.

The Bill has been examined in conjunction with Decree 39 of 1974, since the Bill is an Amendment to the Decree, the Bill therefore seeks to alter the character of membership of the Board.

2. The Decree listed the composition of the Board as follows :—

(a) the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Labour, who shall be Chairman.

(b) the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Finance or his deputy,

(c) the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Establishments, or his deputy,

(d) the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Economic Development or his deputy,

(e) the Director of the National Provident Fund, (f) the Legal Adviser of the National Provident Fund,

(g) one person appointed by the Commissioner to represent the Central Bank of Nigeria,

(h) two persons appointed by the Commissioner to represent employers, and

(i) four persons appointed by the Commissioner to represent workers.

But the Bill now seeks to replace Permanent Secretaries and other civil servants who dominated the National Provident Fund Management Board with persons who are not only knowledgeable in social security matters, but are also able to put into practice the principle of accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

Mr Chairman, your Committee is satisfied that the Bill is straightforward and non-contentious. It is, however, of the opinion that some degree of uniformity should be maintained in the mode of appointment of Board Members. In this regard, therefore, your Committee recommends that members specified in sub-paragraph (1) (b) and (c) of paragraph 1 of the Bill should not be appointed by the Minister but by the President on the recommendation of the Minister based on the nominations by the interests the members represent. In other words, this recommendation is based on your Committee's desire to see that appointments into the Board are uniform. Your Committee accordingly recommends strongly that the Bill be passed as slightly amended (as shown hereunder).

*Clause 1—(AMENDMENT OF THE NATIONAL PROVIDENT FUND (MANAGEMENT BOARD, ETC. DECREE 1974, 1974 No. 39. 1978 No. 33).*

**Mr Etienam :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I, therefore beg, to move that in page C1, Clause 1, sub-clause 2, leave out the words in lines 14 to 16 and insert instead thereof the following words :

*Members specified in sub-paragraph (1) (b) and (c) of paragraph 1 above shall also be appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Minister based on the nomination of the interests they represent.*

Mr Chairman, hon. Colleagues, I beg to move.

**The Chairman :** Yes, the debate is open on the report.

**Mr D. A. Zubairu (Jemaia North) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I rise to contribute to this particular debate that is on the Floor of the House. My attack here is not on the Bill but the inconsistency of the National Provident Fund since its birth in the Nigerian history. The last time we passed a Motion here calling for a real investigation into the activities of the National Provident Fund, and the Committee on Labour has not been able to provide us with anything. Now, a Bill is on the Floor and this Bill will now be passed whereas we do not actually know what is happening. These same people will now go back and sit as Members of the Board and nothing will be done for many Nigerians who have left the service or who are still in the service in order to claim their entitlements from the National Provident Fund. I hope the Chairman of the Committee on Labour in this House will ensure that within the four years of our stay here, a lot of achievements would be made by the National Provident Fund.

Thank you very much.

**Mr Effiong Ononokpono (Oron I) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I have first of all to thank the Committee on Labour for having the foresight and more so that the Committee has been made up of professional trade unionists who know the plight of workers and therefore seek to remove the Civil Service bureaucracy which had dominated the activities of the National Provident Fund.

Mr Chairman, Sir, in civilised countries or societies as we deem to be, the National Provident Fund should be a social security whereby a worker, at the end of his service to the nation, reaps what he had sown. But without going back to dig up what we had passed in this House on the activities of the National Provident Fund, I would ask that this Committee on Labour should go further to seek from the Management of the Fund what their problems are, and also to seek to provide a permanent solution to the problems of the workers at the end of their services to the nation. More so, the Committee on Labour should seek to establish the National Provident Fund on a footing whereby it could eventually act as an insurance provision at the end of workers' services.

Mr Chairman, Sir, with these, I whole-heartedly wish to support the Amendment.

**The Chairman :** Any other comments, Gentlemen ?

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Chairman, I respectively move that the Question on the Amendment be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

**Clause 1—(AMENDMENT OF THE NATIONAL PROVIDENT FUND MANAGEMENT BOARD ETC. DECREE 1974, 1974 NO. 39. 1978 NO. 33)—as amended, ordered to stand part of the Bill.**

**The Chairman :** The next Amendment stands in the name of hon. Mr A. O. Dairo. He is absent. The Amendment lapses.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi :** Mr Chairman, may I move that the report of the Committee of Labour on National Provident Fund Management Board Amendment Bill, 1980 be accepted by the Committee of the Whole House.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Mr Olusola Afolabi :** Mr Chairman, I move that the Committee of the Whole House should report progress.

*(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)*

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, the report is that the Committee of the Whole House has accepted the Report as presented by the Chairman of the Committee on Labour and that the Amendment also proposed by that Committee has also been accepted by the Committee of the Whole House. The second amendment proposed by the hon. Member for Odo Otin (*Mr Amos O. Dairo*) has not been argued and, therefore, it has lapsed.

**Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to move that the National Provident Fund Management Board, etc. (Amendment) Bill 1980, be read the Third time and passed into law.

*Bill reported with Amendment, read the Third time and passed.*

**Mr Speaker :** This is an Act enacted by the National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria making provision for the reconstitution of the National Provident Fund Management Board that has now been passed into Law by the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

So, within a week, we have cleared six Bills. Our friends up there should take note. (*Laughter*)

#### Committee Meetings

The various Committees will sit as shown on the Order Paper. As I have said, please, as soon as the Report of any Committee is ready, let it be passed on to the Clerk of the House so that the Business Committee will schedule the Debate on the Report as soon as we come back from the recess.

#### Message from the President

Hon. Members, I have the pleasure to announce the presence in this honourable Hall of the hon. Federal Minister of Finance, Professor Esang.

[MR SPEAKER]

Professor Esang has come to deliver a special message from the President which I will soon read to the hon. Members and also to pay his respect and courtesy call to this honourable House. Thank you, Professor Esang. (*Applause*)

Hon. Members, I have just got a letter addressed to me from the President and it reads as follows :

*The hon. Edwin U. Ezeoke,  
Speaker of the House of Representatives,  
National Assembly,  
Tafawa Balewa Square,  
Lagos*

#### Presentation of Bill

*I have the pleasure to forward the attached Supplementary Appropriation Bill for consideration by the National Assembly and subsequent enactment.*

*That is a Bill for an Act to authorise the issue out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Federation of ₦1,434,000,000 for the purpose of making further provision for the Service of the Federation in respect of the Financial Year ending 31st March, 1980 and to appropriate that sum for the purposes specified in the Act.*

Hon. Members, the problem is that this Bill was passed by the Senate yesterday, and I understand from the hon. Minister and the Presidential Parliamentary Liaison that it is necessary that this Bill be considered before the end of the Financial Year.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No ! (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Speaker :** Hold on, hon. Members ! I have discussed this matter with the Leader of the House and the Deputy Speaker but it is not possible to consult other Party Leaders.

I have got the Bill here. (*Interruptions*) Hon. Members, it will be necessary for us to proceed on this. First of all we must have copies of the Bill and secondly we must have to move a Motion to suspend the necessary Standing Orders to enable us take the Bill today.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**Mr Speaker :** Order ! Order ! (*Prolonged Interruptions*) I have always said that the interest of the nation must take precedence over party and private interests.

Hon. Members, I have said earlier on that we have been able to do a lot of work as it is evidenced by the number of Bills and proposals we have made in this House and also the quality of debate conducted in this House. I believe that it is the interest of this nation that—(*Interruptions*)

Order ! Order ! Please hon. Members, I am just going to make a suggestion, just be patient. It is a very important Bill and I am going to make a suggestion. Please Gentlemen, go to your seats. (*Prolonged Interruptions*) Order ! Order ! please take your seats. Hon. Member from Kwara State, please take your seat.

Hon. Members, my suggestion is that—(*Interruptions*) Please, let us help ourselves and help the nation. What I am suggesting, hon. Members, is this. Members will remember that we passed a Motion in respect of our recess two days ago. All that we will do is to bring another Motion to rescind that Resolution so that we go on recess on Tuesday. (*Applause*)

Order ! Order ! Please take your seats. (*Interruptions*) The Sergeant-at-Arms should come here. (*Prolonged Interruptions*)

Hon. Members, take your seats. (*Interruptions*) Order! Order! Please sit down. Go to your seats.

I really do not blame the hon. Members for their reactions towards this type of thing. We have said repeatedly that this first civilian National Assembly must never be a rubber stamp Legislature, (*Applause*) and must never be a stooge of the Executive. This National Assembly must maintain and preserve its independence and preserve absolutely its rights and conditions under the Constitution. (*Applause*) I would only ask that in the interest of this nation and because of the legal aspect of this Bill, it is a matter of national necessity that this Bill must be passed to strengthen the hands of the President and allow him to carry on his executive functions. (*Applause*) In the circumstances, I would ask the Leader of the House, Alhaji Kaltungo, to bring a Motion to rescind the previous Motion on our recess.

First of all, a Motion to suspend the Standing Order 19 should be moved. There will be two Motions ; one will be to suspend Order 19 and the second Motion is to rescind the decision we have taken in respect of our recess to enable Members get copies of this Bill and study them. Then, we would fix a date for the debate.

#### Suspension of Order 19

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the Order 19 be suspended in order to allow us bring a Motion on Appropriation Bill for 1979-80.

**Mr Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion?

**Mr Akinboro (Oke-Ona/Owu/Gbagura) :** I rise to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, the question is that Order 19 of our Standing Order be suspended to enable us consider the Motion to rescind the previous decision of this House in respect of Easter Recess.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That Order 19 be suspended to enable the House consider the Motion to rescind the previous decision of this House in respect of Easter Recess.

**Mr Speaker :** Yes, the next one.

#### Easter Break

**Alhaji Kaltungo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, in view of the message which we have just received from the President of the Republic on the

Supplementary Appropriation Bill 1979-80, I move that this House do rescind its earlier decision to vacate on Monday, March 31st, by reconvening on Monday at 10.00 a.m. for the purpose of considering the Supplementary Appropriation Bill.

I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker :** Anybody seconding the Motion? Yes, hon. Akinboro.

**Mr O. Akinboro** (Oke-Ona/Owu/Gbagura) : I beg to second.

**Mr Speaker :** It has been seconded by Mr Akinboro. I will put the question.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That this House do rescind its decision to go on break on Monday 31st March, 1980 by reconvening on Monday at 10.00 a.m. for the purpose of considering the Supplementary Appropriation Bill 1979-80.

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, the Clerk of the House will make copies of the Bill available to all Members today. If it is possible, they will be forwarded to the Badagry flats.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Alhaji Altungo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to move that the House do stand adjourned until Monday at 10.00 a.m.

**Alhaji Baiaka** (Argungu) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Member I beg to second the Motion.

**Mr Speaker :** Any debate on Motion for Adjournment?

#### Supplementary Budget

**Dr E. J. Sowho** (Ethiopia North) : On the Motion for Adjournment, Mr Speaker, I would like to raise two issues one of which we appeared to have disposed of rather briskly a few moments ago.

It seems to me that we have resolved that the Supplementary Budget should be discussed in the Whole House without referring it to the Appropriation Committee. *(Interruptions)*

**Mr Speaker :** Please to the Question, That the Question be now put. *(Interruptions)*

#### Nigerian Agricultural Co-operative Bank

**Dr Sowho :** The second issue, Mr Speaker, is on the Nigerian Agricultural Co-operative Bank Limited, Kaduna. There is an inquiry into it and the

terms of reference of the inquiry were so clearly stated and the impression given was administratively such that the activities of the management with respect to granting of loans, the relationship between the management and the Board were to be investigated.

From the facts reaching us and from what we all read in the papers, the General Manager of this Organisation has been singled out to stand in for the management. From the procedure so far adopted, the Chairman of the Board has even gone as far as giving directives preventing or barring the General Manager from getting into the premises to obtain facts related to the inquiry presently going on.

The impression created, Mr Speaker, is such that one is bound to think that in certain quarters, the General Manager appears to have been found guilty even before the Committee enquiring into the activities of the management as a whole has a chance to start work.

We feel particularly concerned that if the management is to be probed, it should be seen that the management as such is entirely involved and not just the General Manager. It is not being suggested in any way that the General Manager should be exonerated or should not be looked into if his activities are suspected to have been short of expectation, but I think, Sir, that the General Manager alone should not and cannot be held to be entirely responsible for the activities where the management is meant to be probed. *(Interruptions)*

Mr Speaker, I am saying that it should be noted that justice does not appear to be done by the way the inquiry is so far being conducted. The General Manager alone was not totally committed to look into the affairs of granting loans, and therefore, singling him out appears to me to be that he has been found guilty, as I said earlier on, even before the Committee sat; I thought I should mention this in the interest of fair-play and justice.

**Mr Yunusa Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I move that the Question be now put.

*Question, That the Question be now put, put and agreed to.*

*Main Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That the House do now adjourn till ten o'clock on Monday morning.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 10.58 a.m.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Monday, 31st March, 1980

The House met at 10.15 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

**Mr Speaker :** Hon. Members, I have approved the Votes and Proceedings of last Friday, 28th March, 1980.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Investigation of NNPC Missing Money

Hon. Members, I think I would seize this opportunity to congratulate ourselves for the progress we have made so far in respect of the investigation of the missing ₦2.8 billion in the NNPC. (*Applause*) Following the events of the last week and the newspaper publications, the stand of this House in respect of the misappropriation of ₦2.8 billion by whoever it might be in this country, has now been fully justified. (*Applause*) I will maintain that the investigation must continue. We must satisfy the aspirations of the people who elected us into this august Assembly. I must maintain that we must not be a successful victim of any blackmail, any subversion, and any attempt by inside and outside sources to impede the continuation of this investigation. This money, in whatever account it may be anywhere in the world, must be recovered and brought back to this country. (*Applause*)

As soon as we conclude our investigation, the appropriate committee will introduce a legislation to enable the repatriation of this money, and to ensure that the people involved are adequately punished. Accordingly, the special Committee on NNPC will meet in my office immediately after today's sitting. Yes, hon. Amadi.

**Lt-Col. P. C. Amadi (Owerri North) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, you have heard what Mr Speaker said. As a matter of fact, we must hit the nail on the head.

It was last Friday, the 28th of March, 1980, that a statement was credited to the distinguished hon. Leader of the Senate, Dr Sola Saraki, that this ₦2.8 billion missing in the NNPC had been discovered. Dr Saraki further stated that this money had now been found and lodged in a private account in Midland Bank of London.

Now, as far as we know, just as the Speaker has said, this House resolved and appointed a special Committee on Petroleum and Energy to look into the alleged missing sum of ₦2.8 billion. As far as we also know, this Committee has not submitted its report to this honourable House.

Having heard the statement credited to Dr Saraki on the radio, I felt rather disturbed, and so I had to carry out some investigations. During the course of my investigation, I found that the Midland Account of the NNPC in London is used simply as an imprest

account whose limit was placed not beyond ₦2 million. During the Military era, around 1973 or 1974, the Supreme Military Council passed a resolution allowing the NNPC to established that imprest account. As a matter of fact, from further investigation, I discovered that all monies accruing from crude oil, paid to the NNPC, is paid through this method. I shall quote—

*Pay Federal Reserve Bank of New York for the account of the Central Bank of Nigeria and for the benefit of NNPC.*

So, from this statement which was credited to the Leader of the Senate, a few questions quickly came to mind. Firstly, if this money was paid into a private account, who authorised that the Midland Bank of London be used as a receiving Bank of the proceeds from the crude oil? Since the Federal Reserve Bank of New York is the receiving Bank, it, therefore, means that the Federal Reserve Bank of New York is the receiving Bank of the crude oil proceeds. The account into which this crude oil money is usually paid is the Central Bank Account, and the beneficiary is the NNPC. Therefore, since the Midland Bank is being used merely as simply as an imprest account, who then authorise that the Midland Bank of London be used as the receiving Bank of the proceeds from crude oil instead of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York?

The second question is if the Midland Bank was not used for receiving or collecting crude oil proceeds, who then authorised the transfer of the colossal and that legendary sum of ₦2.8 billion in question from the Federal Reserve Bank of New York?

The third question is into whose account was this ₦2.8 billion transferred?

The fourth question, who are the signatories of this private account in the Midland Bank into which ₦2.8 billion was transferred?

The fifth question, at what date were the payments made into the said private account in the Midland Bank of London?

The sixth question, what amount was paid at each instalment?

The seventh question, I have been told by the distinguished Leader of the Senate that the ₦2.8 billion had been recovered but we have not, I repeat, not been told where the accrued interest in favour of the ₦2.8 billion was lodged. My information revealed that, on each amount, the Midland Bank would pay about *per cent* interest. So, if you work it out it amounts to 420 million naira yearly. Then in all this period who has been receiving this interest? Well, gentlemen, this is food for thought for all Nigerians and in particular for this Legislature that has been elected really to represent the interest of the common man.

As a matter of fact, there is another development now in the NNPC. It is now alleged that NNPC has lost another ₦20 million because a company has been lifting Nigerian crude oil without any invoice since June 1979. In other words, this company has been enjoying the benefits of the Nigerian crude oil to the tune of ₦20 million without paying a k into the coffers of the NNPC.

I am informed by a reliable source that the Chairman of the NNPC and a few other officers discovered that lapse only last week. What a situation hon. Members! The House of Representatives must do something about this also. Well, there must be some solution to all problems, as Mr Speaker has said. The special Committee on Petroleum and Energy must be allowed to do its work. Anybody who feels he can help the Special Committee on Petroleum and Energy in arriving at an equitable solution to the problem is free to do so. Is that not correct?

**Some hon. Members :** Yes.

**Col. Amadi :** I am very happy that Mr Speaker allowed me to express my mind on this burning issue, and I think it is in the interest of fairplay, justice, equity and the stability of the country that the Special Committee on NNPC should be allowed to do its work without disturbance.

Thank you, Mr Speaker. (*Applause*)

**Mr Speaker:** Order! Order! Gentlemen, please we will come back to this matter during the Motion for Adjournment. We also intend to propose a Motion that this House resolves that the Senate be informed that they should please not interfere in the investigations of this Committee. That Motion will be passed today and the Clerk of the House will forward that Resolution to the President of the Senate today.

### Labour Situation in the Country

**Mr E. B. Etienam (Oron II) :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of the House of Representatives, I would like to make a brief statement on the Labour situation in the country with regard to the threatened general strike by the leadership of the Nigerian Labour Congress.

Mr Speaker, Sir, on 13th February, 1980, this honourable House adopted a resolution No. 80 directing the Committee on Labour of the House of Representatives to *seek ways and means of determining a reasonable minimum wage with a view to improving the living conditions of Nigerian workers.*

Soon after the adoption of this resolution my Committee met and considered the procedure in carrying out the assignment.

It is gratifying to report that so far, we have received memoranda from various organisations including the Nigerian Labour Congress on the issue. We have suspended our proposed public sittings to take evidence from the workers, the employers of labour and other interested bodies on the issue until further notice owing to our involvement in the consideration of the current National Budget.

It is a matter for regret, however, that despite the genuine concern of this honourable House towards the plight of the workers and the concrete efforts of the Executive to ameliorate their working and living conditions, the leadership of the Nigeria Labour Congress seems determined to hold this Nation to ransom on issues which are still before this honourable House.

As an important instrument of the Legislative arm of the present system of Presidential Administration, the Labour Committee of the House of Representatives wishes to state for public consumption and for information of this honourable House that the approach on which the NLC leadership intends to call out the workers of this country on a general strike any time from today is a fundamental departure from the established practice of industrial relations system in Nigeria. It is an unpatriotic abuse of the rights and privileges of organised labour under the law. Already the NLC demands are fully covered by the 1980 Budget Proposals of the President which have since been laid before the National Assembly for consideration. Besides most of these issues on which the NLC now wants to flex its muzzles have been with the workers throughout the 13 years of Military Rule and yet the Congress leadership did nothing about them.

It is important to point out that the Civilian Administration in the country is only 6 months old in office and we cannot therefore be blamed or held responsible for the ills and failings of the various Military regimes in this country.

It is only fair and reasonable that the politicians who have just been given the mandate by the people to rule this country should be given a chance to implement their various policies and programmes in an atmosphere of peace and stability for the benefit of the entire people of Nigeria as a whole.

In conclusion, I want to warn that it is neither in the interest of the NLC nor of the workers for the Trade Union Movement in Nigeria to continue to see itself as a protest organisation. For the NLC to justify its existence and to ensure that Trade Unionism in Nigeria does not again SPLINTER, it is imperative that it must return to the path of sanity and national service by conducting itself not only as a responsible Trade Union Centre created by the Military Regime at public expense, but also as a patriotic partner in the development process. We cannot afford the luxury of an industrial strife at this stage of our development bearing in mind that the forces of imperialism and reaction are against the progressive development of democratic forces in this country.

In spite of our political differences, Mr Speaker, which is quite normal in a healthy democratic society, we are all unanimous in our fundamental positions on the issues of nationalism and democracy in this country and are therefore totally committed to the ideals of our national interest.

The proposed industrial action by the NLC leadership is propelled by subversive political consideration and should be roundly condemned by this honourable House not only as a dangerous threat to industrial peace and political stability in this country but also as a great challenge to the integrity of the National Assembly.

The first National Budget of a democratically elected Government in Nigeria is still under the consideration of the National Assembly, and the State Governments are yet to present their Draft Budgets to their various State Legislatures for approval.

[Mr. ETIENAM]

In fact the National Budget has been described by other sectors of the Economy as the workers Budget.

I would therefore like to warn that the NLC leadership which seems to be living in glass houses should not throw stones, as the consequences of such an action can better be imagined than expressed.

I commend the editorial comments in the *New Nigerian* issue of 28th March and *Daily Times* issue of 29th March, respectively to the ordinary workers who are members of the 42 Industrial Unions from whom the NLC is supposed to derive its strength. This is important because these poor workers will be the first set of people who will suffer in the event of any irresponsible industrial action by their elitist and bureaucratic leadership.

This country belongs to all of us and we have a duty to ensure its survival and progress by all means.

Surely, whatever may be the grievances of the workers, these cannot be solved by violence. Their purported issues in dispute should therefore be referred to the Industrial Arbitration Tribunal without delay as we cannot tolerate anarchy in our industrial relations system which is a model in Africa. The laws of the land must be respected by all concerned. And as the supreme law makers of this country, we have a duty to ensure that our laws are not only respected but that they are observed by all and sundry. But if the NLC leadership persists in its present political adventure, then this honourable House should have no other alternative than to review the decree under which the NLC was created by the Military with a view to determining the rationale behind the existence of only one NLC in the country.

Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Colleagues, thank you, very much.

**Mr Speaker:** Yes, thank you. Order! Order! Please, be as brief as possible, Mr Fagbamigbe.

**Mr O. Fagbamigbe (Akure):** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, the threat by some units of the Nigerian Labour Congress to go on strike is a very grave matter indeed, and it is one that must be pondered not only on the Floor of this honourable House but throughout this country on a very serious and sober reflection.

We take note that the Nigerian Labour Congress asked for, among other things, a minimum wage of ₦300 per month. We also take note that the Executive has presented budget proposals suggesting a minimum of ₦100 per month. These budget proposals are still being studied by hon. Members at the various committees in camera. It is therefore presumptuous of the leaders of the Nigerian Labour Congress to come out at this time with a threat of going on strike and depriving the nation of electricity and water supplies. It is really unfortunate if the leaders of the Nigerian Labour Congress are not aware that members of this honourable House, by and large, come from the working class as any of the members of the Nigerian Labour Congress.

It is, therefore, not fair and indeed not charitable that they should regard Members of the National Assembly as a group of people who are insensible to the problems of this country. I have no doubt at all in my mind, Mr Speaker, hon. Members, that the leaders of the Nigerian Labour Congress want to intimidate this honourable House in the performance of its duty. Much as we sympathise with the problems of workers in this country we would prefer to perform our duties in an atmosphere free from threat and intimidation from any quarter whatsoever.

This honourable House can assure the workers of this nation that we have the interest of the workers at heart, and indeed we have no alternative. We cannot contemplate stability without giving satisfaction to workers, and we cannot contemplate peace without making our workers happy. It is therefore legitimate for them to expect Members of this honourable House to examine their demands and in a democratic society all demands, reasonable or otherwise, demand to be looked into and they should wait for a reply from this honourable House.

Mr Speaker, in his speech on Friday, assured the nation that this honourable House will not be a rubber stamp for the Executive. Why therefore should the leaders of the Nigerian Labour Congress suppose that we are going to ratify without proper examination whatever the Executive has proposed to this House?

Mr Speaker, Sir, this honourable House should appeal to the Leaders of the Nigerian Labour Congress not to precipitate any crisis at this particular period of our political evolution. Should there be any crisis that will bring us back into the disaster which this country experienced years ago, the leaders of the Labour Congress must know that the suffering that will be attendant on such disaster will not escape them as it will not escape other citizens of this country. I therefore appeal to the leaders of the Nigerian Labour Congress to be patriotic, to show examples of good leadership. We all have to put up with some inconveniences.

When, at the inception of this honourable House, we cried against the conditions under which we had to function, members of the Labour Congress and some members of the public were the most articulate of our critics. Why now should they be hasty? Why should they be too hasty and not allow us to work in an atmosphere of peace, freedom and happiness? Obviously Members of this House have the interest of the working class of this country at heart and the Members are prepared to look into their demands with a view to finding equitable solution to the problems of wages in this country but Mr Speaker, Sir, the workers must not attempt to intimidate this House whatsoever.

With this, Mr Speaker, I thank you for allowing me to speak on this issue.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (1979-80) BILL, 1980

**Mr Speaker:** Order! Order! Hon. Members we go straight to the business of the day, that is Supplementary Appropriation Bill, 1979-80.

[MR SPEAKER]

A Bill to Authorise the issue out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Federation of One Billion and four hundred and thirty-four Million Naira (₦1,434,000,000) for the purpose of making further Provision for the Service of the Federation in respect of the Financial Year Ending on 31st March, 1980 ; and to appropriate that sum for the purposes specified in this Act.

Hon. Members after the last Friday's discussion, I referred this Bill to the Appropriation Committee and I understand that the Appropriation Committee has made its report.

#### Members of Sokoto House of Assembly

Hon. Members, we have with us today the distinguished Members of the Sokoto State House of Assembly led by their Deputy Speaker. The hon. Members are in the Gallery. They have come to pay a courtesy call to the House of Representatives.

Hon. Members from Sokoto House of Assembly, you are welcomed to the House of Representatives. (Applause)

#### Supplementary Appropriation (1979-80) Bill, 1980 : Considered in Committee of the Whole House

**Alhaji Muhammadu Bachaka (Argungu) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, hon. Members, I seek your indulgence to submit the report of the House Committee on the Supplementary Appropriation Bill 1979-80.

I beg to submit.

Mr Chairman, the Supplementary Appropriation (19-80) Bill No. S. 16-80 from the Senate titled *A BILL FOR AN ACT TO AUTHORISE THE ISSUE OUT OF THE CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND OF THE FEDERATION OF ONE BILLION AND FOUR HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FOUR MILLION NAIRA (₦1,434,000,000) FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING FURTHER PROVISION FOR THE SERVICE OF THE FEDERATION IN RESPECT OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING ON 31st MARCH 1980 ; AND TO APPROPRIATE THAT SUM FOR THE PURPOSE SPECIFIED IN THIS ACT* was referred to your Committee on Appropriation by Mr Speaker in the exercise of his powers under Standing Order 44 (1)—Committal of Bills—on 28th March, 1980.

In view of the importance and urgency attached to the Bill, your Committee met and deliberated on it at 5 p.m. on Friday the 28th of March, 1980 and found as follows :

(1) That, of the total sum of ₦1,434,000,000 in the Supplementary Appropriation, in fact, only ₦357,720,000 has been committed.

**Alhaji Sarkin Adamu (Dawakin Kudu) :** Point of order.

**The Chairman :** You are a Member of the Committee.

**Alhaji Sarkin Adamu :** Yes, I am a Member, Mr Chairman, but I was not present during the meeting I was a Member of the first Committee.

**The Chairman :** You are a Member of the Committee.

Alhaji Muhammadu Bachaka, go on.

**Alhaji Bachaka :**

(2) That ₦1,076,280,000 is available as a contingency fund which can only be drawn on by the President under Section 77 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, out of which ₦77,280,000 is recurrent estimates and ₦999,000,000 is under capital estimates.

(3) That, of the ₦357,720,000 of committed expenditure, capital expenditure accounted for ₦345,220,000 whilst recurrent expenditure accounted for ₦12,500,000 ; and that, of the ₦345,220,000 under capital expenditure, ₦211,000,000 is committed to Posts and Telecommunications ; ₦131,620,000 was additional subventions to the States, ₦600,000 went to the National Livestock Production Company, the Bauchi Meat Project ; and ₦2,000,000 was granted to Imo State Government for reconstruction of roads in Aba.

(4) That, of the ₦211,000,000 spent in the Posts and Telecommunications, your Committee has satisfied itself, after a detailed examination of the projects (on paper) during discussions with a full panel of very senior officials from the Ministry of Communications and the Director of Budget in the Federal Ministry of Finance, that most of the funds are meant for paying contractors to whom they had already been committed on contracts arising from directives from the former military administration.

(5) That the sum of ₦10,000,000 shown in the Schedule to the Bill under Head 28—National Assembly—and described in one of the explanatory documents circulated to Members as being additional provision for Members salaries and allowances, is both incorrect and grossly misleading. The correct sum for that purpose is shown in the current Estimates as ₦3,700,000. The additional ₦10,000,000 reflected in the Supplementary Appropriation is desired in respect of expenditure incurred on behalf of the National Assembly by the Federal Ministry of Works for the constructions of the Committee Rooms Building and the Legislative Printing Press within the premises of the National Assembly. Consequently, the National Assembly was not in any way involved in the disbursements of the aforementioned ₦10 million.

(6) That in view of the above findings which reveal that the funds requested for in the Supplementary Appropriation Bill are already committed, your Committee hereby recommends that the Bill be passed by the House as presented.

(7) Finally, that from the discussions already referred to, it is obvious that in considering the 1980 Budget, a full examination, including a physical examination of the projects and costs in question, would require to be undertaken by your Committee on Appropriation to ensure judicious use of public funds in the future.

Mr Chairman, Sir, I beg to submit.



**The Chairman :** Is there anybody seconding the Motion to receive the report ?

**Mr Aliyu Mohammed Rabah (Gandi/Rabah) :** Mr Chairman, I beg to second.

**The Chairman :** Yes, any comment ?

**Mr Adeyinka Mako (Ijebu North) :** Point of order. I am raising this point of Order under Order 44.

**The Chairman :** Yes, please read it.

**Mr Mako :** The Report which we have just listened to—

**The Chairman :** Please, read Order 44.

**Mr Mako :** I am going to read it, Mr Chairman, but I want to refer you to the section of the Report which refers to this Order. (*Interruptions*)

**The Chairman :** Order ! Order ! Please, go on with your point of order.

**Mr Mako :** This Order reads :

*When a Bill has been read a Second time it shall stand committed to a committee of the whole House, unless the House on Motion made commit it to a standing committee or a select committee. Such Motion shall not require notice, but must be made immediately after the Bill is read a second time and must be proposed by the Member in charge. Bills committed to standing committees shall be allocated to a particular standing committee by Mr Speaker whose direction in this matter is final.*

The question then is, has this Bill been read the second time ?

**The Chairman :** Thank you. Let me reply to your question. You are correct as far as ordinary Bills are concerned. When you look at Order 63, it deals with Financial Bills, Appropriation Bills. This particular provision does not apply to Appropriation Bills. Any comments ?

**Mr Tom Egbuwoku (Isoko) :** Mr Chairman, hon. Members, I would like to comment on the report being presented to us by the Appropriation Committee as follows. Firstly, I am happy that the Committee was courageous enough to realise that there should be judicious use of public funds in the future and that in the estimates of 1980 we will ensure this. They stated in paragraph 7 of their report—

*Finally, that from the discussions already referred to, it is obvious that in considering the 1980 Budget, a full examination, including a physical examination of the projects and costs in question would require to be undertaken by your Committee on Appropriation to ensure judicious use of public funds in the future.*

I think I would like to congratulate them on this. This shows that something has gone wrong with this supplementary Appropriation Bill.

Mr Chairman, Sir, Gentlemen, we do realise the difficulties which the Executive had on assumption of office, and if ever we are going to pass this Supplementary Bill it must be done, as they have stated in this Committee, just out of sympathy for the President. All of us who are here owe it a duty to ensure that the President works efficiently. (*Applause*)

But it is quite clear from this type of Supplementary Bill that some people do not seem to be advising the President correctly.

As you will see, the President has no powers to spend money without we in this House approving such expenditure. His intentions are to be brought to us. We are what the lawyers call *primus inter pares*. As you will see Gentlemen, while as much as we want to help the President, we shall not condone any waste of public Funds.

When we were talking about the NNPC, and here I would like to pay my homage to the Speaker of this House for the courage with which he brought in that NNPC affair otherwise it would have been killed. Now we are being given monies that had been spent and this House is being asked to approve. Mr Chairman, with due respect, you did warn that this House should not be stampeded to become a rubber stamp, and I think this kind of thing will not give respect to this House even if we approve it.

**An hon. Member :** Point of order.

**The Chairman :** There is a point of order.

**Mr A. Afonja (Oyo Central) :** My points of order are Orders 63 (3) and 64 (a). Order 62 (3) says :

*After the Motion for the second reading of the Bill has been made and seconded, the debate thereon shall be adjourned for not less than two days and when resumed shall be confined to the financial and economic state of Nigeria and the Government's financial policy. Detailed items in the Estimates may not be debated on second reading of the bill and at the hour appointed for the interruption of business on the last of such allotted days, Mr Speaker shall put the questions necessary to bring the proceedings on the second reading to a conclusion :*

*Provided that if the question on second reading be agreed to on a day earlier than the last day so allotted, any day or days thus saved may be added to those allotted under paragraph (6) of this order.*

Order 64 (a) states, but I better read the whole order 64 which says :

*If at any time a Supplementary Appropriation Bill is introduced into the House, the provisions of Standing Order 63 (Appropriation Bill) shall apply to the stages of and the proceedings upon a Supplementary Appropriation Bill, except that after the Motion for second reading has been moved and seconded—*

*(a) the debate shall be adjourned until the next sitting day ;*

Mr Chairman, I would like to suggest that we suspend this order because of the importance of this particular Bill.

**Mr Chairman :** If you can remember on the day this started, that was last Friday, that Order 63 was suspended. It has not been restored ever since.

**Mr Afonja :** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Egbuwoku :** May I continue Mr Chairman ?

**The Chairman :** Yes go on.

**Mr Egbuwoku :** Mr Chairman, Sir, hon. Members, as I was saying without necessarily pointing fingers, it is quite clear that this Supplementary Budget being brought to us is in contravention of Section 77 (1) of this Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and if I may read—

**The Chairman :** Hold on, let us see the part you are reading.

**Mr Egbuwoku :** Section 77 reads thus :

*Contingencies Fund*

(1) *The National Assembly may by law make provisions for the establishment of Contingencies Fund for the Federation and for authorising the President, if satisfied that there has arisen an urgent and unforeseen need for expenditure for which no other provision exists, to make advances from the Fund to meet the need.*

(2) *Where any advance is made in accordance with the provisions of this section, a Supplementary Estimate shall be presented and a Supplementary Appropriation Bill shall be introduced as soon as possible for the purpose of replacing the amount so advanced.*

Mr Chairman, Sir, what I am saying here is that it is the duty and the power of the President to present Supplementary Estimates to us, but he has no power to spend before he presents them to us. On this basis, this Supplementary Estimate is very unconstitutional.

**Several hon. Members :** No ! No !

**The Chairman :** Order ! Order !

**Mr Egbuwoku :** So, Mr Chairman, we are setting up standards in this honourable House. In as much as we want to support the smooth functioning of the system, we must not be a party to the flouting of the Constitution.

**Dr O. O. Ore (Arochukwu) :** Point of order :

**The Chairman :** There is a point of order.

**Dr Ore :** My point of order is order 26 (2) ;

*A Member must confine his observations to the subject under discussion and may not introduce matter irrelevant thereto.*

Mr Chairman, Sir, I am saying that the portion of the Constitution that the last Speaker quoted is irrelevant to the subject under discussion. We are not considering the contingencies Fund, we are considering Supplementary Estimate. *(Interruptions)*

**The Chairman :** Order ! Order ! Yes, the hon. Member for Isoko (*Mr Tom Egbuwoku*) continue please.

**Mr Egbuwoku :** Thank you, very much, Mr Chairman. I can assure hon. Members that my only concern here is to ensure that we who are in this honourable House must give the leadership that we have given in other areas, and we should not help anybody to flout the Constitution.

Before we even move a step, you can see that the Members of the National Assembly, from the

Estimates, are being told that ten million naira was given as salary advances to Members. As the Committee rightly pointed out, this is not true. This money was spent on some other things. Now, we are being asked to approve something which we cannot account for.

Mr Chairman, Sir, I have been to your office, I have been to the Deputy Speaker's office, but in the Supplementary Estimates which were spent before we came to power, it was put that over two million naira was spent to furnish your office, it is here on paper, and that of the Deputy Speaker. I do not think that your office is worth more than, maybe, three thousand naira. You can see from this paper that over two million naira has been spent to furnish your offices.

What I am trying to say is this. The House of Representatives is the eyes of the people for the protection of these funds. If they had presented this Bill to us before spending it, we would have been in a position to question a lot of these items that are stated here. Two million naira was said to be used for furnishing. I think this is unfair.

So, I believe, Mr Chairman, Sir, with due respect to you, I beg to move that even if we want the Supplementary Estimate to be passed because of mercy, the Committee should insist that details of these expenditures should be forwarded to the appropriate Committee. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

**Alhaji Muhammed G. Shamaki (Katagum West) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support this Bill which has been presented to us. Mr Chairman, Sir, there is nothing controversial in this Bill. *(Hear ! Hear !) (Interruptions)*

**The Chairman :** Order ! Order ! Yes, please go on.

**Alhaji Shamaki :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I believe that the President has proposed to spend this money, but it is—*(Interruptions)*

Mr Chairman, Sir, I am sorry, please. I am sure this money has been spent by another regime and the money has been spent long ago, and there is nothing we can do to take this money back again to the Consolidated Revenue Fund. Mr Chairman, Sir, what I want to say is this, this Bill was supposed to come to the House long ago but unfortunately it did not.

**Several hon. Members :** Why ? Why ?

**Alhaji Shamaki :** What I am now saying, Mr Chairman, is this, I believe there must be something wrong in one way or the other. So, I am now asking the Chairman to go deep into this case to find out where the fault is lying. At least this was brought to the Senate long ago so, I believe there should be something done to find out the reason why it was not brought to the House in time. *(Interruptions)*

**The Chairman :** Order ! Order !

**Alhaji Shamaki :** So, Mr Chairman, Sir, what I am now saying, is that I am supporting the Bill and I want it to be passed.

**Mr Chairman :** Order ! Order ! Hon. Members, please sit down and let me put the records straight. What is on the Order Paper says—

*Bill to Authorise the Issue out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Federation of One Billion and Four hundred and thirty-four million naira (₦1,434,000,000) for the purpose of making further Provision for the Service of the Federation in Respect of the Financial Year Ending on 31st March, 1980.*

It never said that this money has been spent. This is just to put the records straight.

**Mr M. O. Ugwu (Udi) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, I would like to remind this honourable House that the Bill before us is a very important one, and as this House has been behaving in the past, I hope that it will rise to the occasion and see that this Bill is attached the right meaning instead of the wrong one.

I would like to say that the Chief Executive is a man of honour. (*Applause*) Anybody who saw him hugging the African Cup of Nations would have seen that he is only a man who can do to this country those things which will make this country great. When he came to power in October 1979, he said that he would not present a Supplementary Appropriation Bill to this House, and instead he ordered all the Ministers to check up-to-date the debts they inherited from the past Administration. When the Ministers did so, they found that the Military Regime had spent more than they budgeted for.

The President is, therefore, asking this House to approve ₦1.4 billion spent on projects and other commitments by the last Administration. I would like to remind Mr Tom Egbuwoku that we are not doing this simply to show pity on the President, but we have to pay for the commitment that the Military in fact, has entered into. I must also remind Mr Tom Egbuwoku that in 1976-77 the States received revenue allocations on the sixty per cent and forty per cent system. Before the Military Regime left the scene, they adopted, Abovade's recommendation which advocated seventy-four per cent for the Federal Government and twenty-six per cent for States ; and out of the twenty-six per cent to States, fifty per cent goes to them on the basis of population. For this reason, therefore, smaller States like Ondo and Ogun need subventions from the Federal Government. The Federal Government or the Chief Executive is asking this House to make money available to States because up till now, some of the cheques issued by States have bounced in the banks because there is no money for them at all.

I do agree, however, that the Ministry of Communications require their ₦211 million because of projects which had been committed by the last Administration. I can assure you that the Ministry of Communications has awarded no contract of half a kobo to anybody. They are paying for the projects which the Military, in fact, initiated and contracted for.

The other thing I would like to remind Mr Tom Egbuwoku about is that it is not a question of trying to look at it from any other angle but that the present regime wants to clear the mess of the past. All we are trying to do here is to try to show understanding and try to allow the President to carry on from tomorrow. I, therefore, urge this House to, in fact, rise to the occasion because we are all hon. Members and we have done very well in the past, and I hope we shall continue that way. So, I beg all hon. Members to support the Bill. Thank you very much.

**Dr J. E. Sowho (Ethiopia North) :** Mr Chairman, Sir, hon Members, I would like to comment very briefly on the issue of the Bill before us, and to speak on behalf of the Committee comprising members from all parties appointed to that committee that sat and investigated it in detail. I would like to report that the Paper presented by our Chairman this morning is in fact the result of the very detailed work meant to satisfy the expectations of this honourable House.

The Committee on Appropriation, as you have been told, made a detailed study of the Supplementary Budget. We did not just sit for two or three minutes and rose. We sat up till 10 p.m. that night and we called in senior members from the Ministries concerned where most of the monies were supposed to have gone and we satisfied ourselves before we wrote our recommendations.

The paper before you was circulated on Friday and again this morning. It states in what order the monies were supposed to be appropriated. There is no argument as to the money meant for relief operations. There is also no argument as to what went in for the use of Youth Corps running expenses. The issue of the expenses involving the National Assembly has been clarified adequately in the report circulated to members this Morning. The disbursements to States, as stated here, are also very clear.

**Mr Chairman :** Order ! Order !

**Dr Sowho :** The amount that went to Aba, the disaster area, is also simple to understand. The Bauchi Meat Project is the same thing. We were therefore left to make a very close study of the ₦211 million that was supposed to have been used by the Ministry of Communications.

We have with us here details of these things, but it is not routine for papers that come to committees for study to be circulated ; otherwise, the whole House would become a committee of everything.

We have here with us a detailed study of on-going projects which were explained to us in detail, and we were satisfied about the intentions. We also have here with us projects that are presently embarked upon, their intentions and their capacities, State by State. No single State in the Federation is left out. As a matter of fact, looking at the paper, one is even tempted to grumble that there is too much concentration in certain areas. There are, therefore, misgivings now as to the areas where the monies are being spent. These papers are available for scrutiny by anyone who shows particular interest. I have with me also a

summary of the Capital Expenditure from the Department of P & T, and we have the details, showing what areas and for what projects these sums of money were actually intended to cover.

Finally, it is wise for me to point out that we are here to protect the interest of the public. Members of the public, especially contractors in areas largely affected have committed themselves to loans from the banks and they require their money to pay. If we decide not to approve this Bill or to slow it down, we shall not be serving the public for whose interest we are supposed to be here.

This money is meant to pay contractors who have done jobs totalling ₦211 million. I am sure, Mr Chairman, that if the contractors were to appear with their party leaders, we would find that they belong actually to a different party to which I belong.

I would like to emphasise finally, Mr Chairman, that the money mentioned here is already committed. To emphasise further, most of what has been written on the paper involves money which is on the Contingency Fund—₦999 million. We are in short then talking of only ₦357 million, ₦211 million of which is meant to take care of money meant to pay contractors who have done certain jobs. There is, therefore, no difficulty as far as we see it and as a Committee which involves Members of every Party, we have found out that in approving a Supplementary Budget of this nature, we are in effect only carrying over something that had been done even before this regime came into power. It was clearly stated there that the last regime committed us into several projects and people did certain jobs ; we are bound to pay.

It is on this basis that the Committee has recommended that the Bill should be approved. I therefore heartily plead with hon. Members to see the wisdom in it and to support the Bill.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

**Dr Chikwe H. Obihara** (Owerri South) : Mr Chairman, it is true that looking. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Ogwe Kalu Ogwe** (Bendel) : Point of Order. My point of order is Order 26 (9) which states that :

*A Member desiring to speak shall rise in his place and if called upon shall address his observations to Mr Speaker or the chairman. (Interruptions)*

**Dr Obihara** : I am sure that my learned Friend was not watching me all the time. (*Interruptions*)

**Mr Chairman** : Go on.

**Dr Obihara** : Looking at the issue before this House today, the Supplementary Appropriation Bill is quite an important one. It is specially important because today is the 31st day of March, 1980. Today is the last day of the financial year, and we are trying to look at this Bill from the angle of the year which is ending today. Therefore, Members must in fact avoid all frivolities and all unnecessary matters so that this matter can be settled today. I am sure that even though it was inconvenient for most of us to be recalled from our week-end recess because of the urgency attaching to this Bill, we are all aware that it is necessary to come back and deal with it today.

It is true that many Members have made the point that at the beginning of the Session the President did say that he was not going to submit any Supplementary Estimates, and he had no intention of preparing any. It is also true that the President at the time did, in fact, I understand, ask Ministries to check their accounts and see what the position was. I do not think it was clear at the time even to the President that debts as big as the ones we are now considering were owed by the past Military Administration. The point has been made that in fact this amount which we are asking has not been spent at least by this Administration. It is not that the President appropriated this amount of money and he is asking us now to approve it. What really happened as I understand it, is that the Administration has found out that the Military Regime from which they took over had in fact made commitments up to this amount, and this is now being noticed. If that is the case, if it is now found out that this amount of 1.4 billion naira was in fact committed by the Military Regime, then I think we owe it as a duty to save this country from this debt. This is because the commitments of the past Administration are in fact binding on the one that took over.

I think, therefore, that because of the fact that both the Executive and ourselves as Legislators are successors of the Military Regime, and since we have noticed that they have committed this country, rightly or wrongly, to this huge amount of money, I think that the least we can do is to try and find funds to clear this debt.

As you are all aware, many of the people to whom this money is owed are Nigerian Contractors. These contractors are in very poor shape, financially. Many of them have been almost ruined because of this great debt. We know that as the new Budget is being prepared, the contractors have been saying that they should be paid the past amount owed them, and perhaps by releasing this fund, we can alleviate the conditions and sufferings of these contractors.

The disparities have been pointed out already about the National Assembly. We have now found out that this amount of ₦10 million, for example, was not really spent by Members of the House, but was spent on facilities provided by the Federal Ministry of Works around the National Assembly. I think, with this sort of observation, this can still go on, but with note to show that this was not spent by Members, but by the Ministry of Works.

As regards the money for the States, I think that that is a clear-cut case. It is no good punishing the States for any past mistakes made by anybody, because the States need this money very badly. I think we should try to make this fund available to the States who need this money very, very badly.

The amount allocated for the construction of Aba Roads is a bit meagre. That is my only contention. The ₦2 million is too small for the construction of Aba Roads. I would have liked to say that it should be ₦20 million. (*Interruptions*) ₦2 million is too small for the purpose it is voted. As you all know, with the situation as it is now, judging by the cost of materials, this ₦2 million can only cover

[DR OBIHARA]

the cost of constructing only one or two kilometres of the streets in the town, which is really nothing at all.

As for the Posts and Telegraphs, we have found out that these were commitments already made, not by the present Administration but by the past military regime. The least we can do is to approve this budget.

Therefore, I implore all hon. Members from all sides of this House that, as this is not a party matter, we should give this Supplementary Budget its due approval. Thank you.

**Mr D. D. Dafuan** (Shendam West): Mr Chairman, hon. Members, the Bill before this House is requesting us to approve an expenditure for the President. I do not think there is anybody in this House who would doubt the integrity of the Chief Executive. (Applause) I also believe that Members of this honourable House are only quarrelling about the time this Supplementary Budget was submitted. We, as a group, and as a team, a responsible team too, must fight to maintain the integrity of this House. Therefore, those of us who claim to be the defenders of the Executive should understand that those Members arguing on the Floor of this House are not entirely against this particular Supplementary Budget. We should accept the responsibility that we belong to this House as a team and we should also fight for our rights to be recognised and we should not be used as a rubber stamp, as the Speaker put it over the television on Friday.

All my appeal to all hon. Members is that we should, please, accept this Bill and we should make it clear to the Executive that, in future, the House should be allowed to scrutinise any Supplementary Budgets before the money is spent. However, for the sake of stability of the nation and the goodwill of this House to the Executive, I appeal to all hon. Members to approve this Bill in *toto*. Thank you.

**Alhaji Mohammed A. Yelwa** (Yauri): Mr Chairman, hon. Members, in principle, the House has the right to oppose the Bill because of three reasons.

Firstly, the President himself made it abundantly clear that he was not submitting any supplementary Budget to the House. Secondly, the timing is certainly wrong. Forty-eight hours before the close of the Financial year, it is inappropriate to bring in a Supplementary Budget. Thirdly, the pressure brought on the Appropriation Committee is too much. The Committee had to meet at five o'clock on Friday evening and it had no option other than to make recommendations from their side. That is just one angle.

Now, looking at the contents in themselves, the explanatory notes given are satisfactory; at least, it puts certain things down. Without the explanatory notes, we would not know what amount had been allocated to the National Assembly and how that amount is going to be disbursed. Also, the National Assembly had been kept aware of things, so, the fault could not have been altogether that of the Executive. From what we have in our

notes, we can see that the President of the Senate sent the request for the Supplementary Appropriation Bill for the National Assembly on the 17th March, 1980; that certainly was too late.

Thirdly, I think it is such an important Bill that both the House of Representatives and the Senate should have been informed simultaneously, so that, at least, we could study it at the same time, rather than just sending the Bill to hon. Members of this House at the eleventh hour after the Senate had deliberated upon it. We are as powerful as the Senate, in fact, more powerful than the Senate on financial matters. As such, we should have been kept fully in the picture days ago, and not just at the last minute.

In conclusion, I think by rejecting the Bill, we are doing a great damage to ourselves. This is because in certain cases, these commitments had been made by the Military Regime. Therefore, if, in the last minute, the Executive is not given the money, we shall be putting some people into a very inconvenient situation. I think it is not in the interest of the National Assembly to put everybody involved in such a situation through no fault of his own.

Again, if we reject this Bill, and of course, we have got every right to do so, people would say it is politics that we are playing. But certainly, in politics, you have to do certain things for certain reasons. Still, if strictly the Executive would observe that such a Bill as this is brought to us in good time so that enough time is given to Members of the Appropriation Committee to consider it, and also that any commitment is made known to us before money is spent, and not after the commitment had been made, I think there would not be any objection to approving such Appropriation Bill. Thank you.

**The Chairman**: Thank you. Yes, Alhaji Hamza Nganjiwa.

**Mr Hamza M. Nganjiwa** (Biu North): Mr Chairman, hon. Members, it is not a long time ago that we were rejoicing about the recovery of the ₦2.8 billion. This shows the great concern the Members of this House have towards public funds in this country.

Mr Chairman, it is only unfortunate that this House is being asked to bear the brunt of this hefty Supplementary Budget for 1979-80. If you look at it, when we were worried about the ₦2.8 billion missing in the NNPC account, we were frightened by both the amount and the method of disappearance. The same thing applies to this hefty Supplementary Bill which has just come to this House barely 24 hours to the end of the Financial Year 1979-80. It is because of this that I have some reservations for this Bill.

Firstly, as hon. Members of this House, we have discovered, from the Report submitted by the Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, some flaws in the details of the Bill. There is no doubt that if further details are exposed to us, we would definitely see the reflections of the nature of the flaws occurring here and there. It is without doubt that a Bill for such a huge amount of money, being appropriated at this very time, has actually been ill-timed to come to this very honourable House.

To oppose it totally, Mr Speaker, would amount to causing sufferings. I have a very high respect for the President and his Government. In fact, looking at it, the President is actually bearing the brunt of problems created before he assumed office. But Mr Chairman, this does not mean that the method by which this Bill was brought to this House deserves our total support. I would like to say that much as we should give the President support for his Bill in this very august Assembly, it is regrettable that the method by which this Bill has been brought to us in this House deserves no sympathy whatsoever.

With this, I oppose the Bill.

**Mr Sidi H. Ali (Dambatta)**: Mr Chairman, I rise to support this Bill, but I want Mr Chairman to also draw the attention of the Executive to certain mistakes which certain top government officials make and which the President at the end is made to bear the brunt.

Mr Chairman, Sir, it is not in the interest of anybody here for us not to approve this Budget. If April 1st comes and the Government is not in a position to pay its workers or even pay for some services, all of us will be facing the same danger and nobody is going to be exempted. Most of us are aware of how recently we were hooted by some members of the community because they said we were going to receive fantastic sums of money, and they said that we were only interested in ourselves. A few days ago, the same people were full of praise for us because of certain jobs we did and of which they have seen the benefit.

Mr Chairman, as I said, I fully support this Bill and I want us to pass it but at the same time we should draw the attention of the President to the behaviour of some of his officers. For instance, when this Supplementary Budget was sent here, it was addressed to the National Assembly. It was somebody here who thought that the National Assembly meant the Senate and instead of bringing it to us, it was taken to the Senate. So, if we go further we may find out that it was our own officials here in the National Assembly who have no respect for us.

Mr Chairman, as a Member of this Committee, I know the great work we have done. At one time, (Mr Chairman will bear me out) he, (Mr Chairman) had more than five Ministers waiting in his office for their turn to appear before us. Yet, there was one Minister who refused to answer our call. According to him, he was going to the Airport to join the President to receive the President of Ghana. We thought this was wrong. The President would have preferred him to come and see us to get the money approved rather than going to join the line and have his picture taken. Mr Chairman, we should not blame some of these mistakes on the President. We should blame the individuals who have been given these important jobs but who do not know their responsibilities. Mr Chairman, Sir, we have here in the Gallery, six Commissioners from various States of the Federation. These people are here to plead with the Members of the National Assembly to restore the 50 per cent cut in allowance to the various polytechnics withheld by the former Military Regime.

A year ago, the Federal Government was paying 50 per cent to every College of Technology or Polytechnic while the State concerned paid 50 per cent, but the Obasanjo Regime cut this amount. Now, the Commissioners are here to plead with us that the Federal Government should take full responsibility for these polytechnics. For example, the Federal Government is owning the Kaduna Polytechnic 10.2 million naira. This institution wants this money.

Mr Chairman, Sir, as one of the hon. Members mentioned, I know a contractor who invested about three million naira in various jobs and at the completion of the jobs, he handed them over to the Federal Government. The Federal Government inspected them and gave him a certificate saying that the work was good, but there was no money to pay him. These contractors pay heavy interests to various banks. Therefore, it would not be in the interest of this House for us not to approve this Bill. This should be approved so that these debts could be paid quickly.

Mr Chairman, with all humility, I plead that we should remove politics completely out of this issue. We have been in Government for only six months and if anything goes wrong, the people are not going to hold the President responsible. They are going to hold the National Assembly responsible. That was why the whole House supported the Chairman of the Committee on Labour when he got up and gave us a full picture of what was going on regarding an attempt by a certain section in the country to cause trouble in this country. So, Mr Chairman, I plead with every Member to give full support in particular to the Ministry of Communications because they have promised to build a post office in every Local Government area in the country.

So, for these reasons I support this Bill.

**Alhaji Sarki Adamu (Dawakin-Kudu)**: Mr Chairman, Sir, when I last stood up here I was only going to explain my position clearly on the Minutes of Meeting of the Appropriation Committee held on the 28th of March 1980 distributed this morning. On that day, I attended a Sub-Committee meeting with our Sub-Committee Chairman, Mr A. B. Yahaya; Mr Sidi H. Ali was also in attendance. We met with some of the Directors of NTV, Information and others; in fact we finished that meeting at 11 o'clock. Mr Chairman, before I left the meeting, I signed the register and that was where I made the mistake. I am only trying to explain my position on that very day because even if I am going to support or oppose this Bill my name should not appear on something which I am not committed to.

So, Mr Chairman, I am appealing to you personally and to the whole House to see that my name is cancelled from the Minutes of that meeting because I was not there when such a discussion took place.

Secondly, Mr Chairman, with regard to the question of either to support or oppose this Bill, I would like to make it clear that this type of financial issue should not be considered politically. We should actually be sincere to ourselves. We should not base our argument for either to support or oppose this Bill on the question of political ideology.

[ALHAJI ADAMU]

Every person here should have respect for the President and his Government. I have respect for the President of this country and I have respect for his Government, but I believe in the separation of powers, Mr Chairman. I believe that the Legislature is different, the Executive is different and likewise the Judiciary. I believe that whatever the Executive brings to this House, we are not committed to accept it or to rubber-stamp it simply because we belong to that particular party.

Mr Chairman, this Supplementary Budget is not properly submitted at the appropriate time and the explanation on the Supplementary Budget is not sufficient to convince us. I therefore appeal to everybody in this House to reject this Supplementary Budget, because by approving it, it means that we are just showing that we know nothing, and that we are not going to do anything in this country. We are not going to be rubber-stamp here.

Mr Chairman, that is all I have.

**Mr S. A. Shiyambola** (Ede South) : Mr Chairman, I stand to support this Bill with the following notes.

Mr Chairman, before I continue to make my points, I want us to make some corrections. I do not know where the error came from which made it late for us to get this Bill. We would want such an error to stop from today on. We do not want this House to be subordinate to the Senate. This National Assembly has two arms—the Federal House of Representatives and the Senate. Many errors have been made when people refer to the Senate just as if they are talking in terms of the House of Lords in England. The Senate is only one arm of the National Assembly. The other arm of the National Assembly is the House of Representatives. Therefore, none of these is inferior to the other. We in this House ought to have got this Bill the same day the Senate got it. Therefore, I am calling on those who were responsible for delaying the Bill to please check this in future.

In line with this, I will also call on the Press and some others who always talk about a Bill being sent to Dr Wayas, instead of saying that a Bill has been sent to the National Assembly. Some people always say that a Bill has been sent to the Senate. The National Assembly is not made up of only the Senate. So, Mr Chairman, I would want everybody who deals with us to deal with the National Assembly as the House of Representatives as well as the Senate.

Now, in supporting this Bill, I want to go through some of the issues raised. First of all, I apologise to those who think that the Ministry of Communications should not get the amount allocated to them, because I belong to the Committee on Communications and I have seen how badly this Ministry needs money. It is really ridiculous when they tell you so many things that they really need, and it is also very ridiculous to see how we misunderstand this Ministry. Recently, the Minister in charge of Communications apologised to the Committee and promised that he was going to wash this Ministry

clean. Therefore, we should please be patient with them. The amount they are asking for in this Supplementary Appropriation Bill would be spent well. He promised us that, and if he does not do so, we will bring to this House their errors. This is a promise.

Also, in supporting this Bill, I want to call our attention to the States that really need some of the money. Out of the 19 States, 15 have not been able to utilise all the money that they were supposed to spend in 1979-80. The only four States that are out are Bauchi, Bendel, Rivers and Cross River. It follows then that the rest of the States of the Federation will get some money out of this Supplementary Appropriation Bill. If we reject this Bill, you know who is going to suffer! Our Local Governments will suffer because most of these Local Governments will benefit from some of the money that has been listed in the paper we have been given here. Therefore, I am calling on all of us to please support this Bill.

I would want, when this Bill is approved, that we should please remember to pay the debts of all these States. Some of the States owe a lot of debts and we are calling on the President that this money should be used immediately to pay up the debts owed by the States. Thank you very much.

**Mr F. O. Iyayi** (Opebho) : Mr Chairman, Sir, hon. Colleagues, I want to say that the Bill before us is a very important Bill indeed. It is a Bill that we have to consider, having at the back of our minds the interest of the masses who voted us in. We also have to consider the fact that as from the 1st of October, we the hon. Members assembled here, are accountable to the people of this country. I want you to take note of the date—1st of October, 1979. Whereas you will see from the Minister of Finance's brief and from the report of the House Committee on Appropriation, the additional sums required have either been committed or spent before that date. For the avoidance of doubt, I would like to read the relevant sections. The Ministry of Finance says :

*The last Military Administration before leaving office directed that Supplementary Allocation of 903.05 million Naira for 1979-80 which became available to the States as a result of improvement in revenue should be distributed to the States on the basis of the new Revenue Allocation based on Abovade formula which the said Administration have accepted.*

This directive was complied with by the Federal Ministry of Finance in releasing the instalments due to the various States before the present Civilian Administration came into force in October.

Our Committee on the Appropriation Bill said in its Report received this morning that the additional ₦10,000,000 reflected in the Supplementary Appropriation in respect of the expenditure incurred on behalf of the National Assembly by the Federal Ministry of Works for the construction of the Committee Room Building and the Legislative Printing Press within the premises of the National Assembly has been a *fait accompli*. It also went further to say that the fund requested for had already been committed. From all these, Mr Chairman, you will agree with me that the

[MR IYAYI]

President of this country is not in my view responsible for the act of omission or commission caused by the Military Administration. In view of this, I give the Bill my wholehearted support. (*Applause*)

**Mr Chairman :** Round up.

**Mr Iyayi :** Having said this, I would like to draw attention to some issues of principle involved in the whole exercise. It would appear to me that the spending and committal of the Supplementary Appropriation Bill, as I said earlier, had been the handiwork of the members of the Military Administration who were noted for their short-sightedness, financial irresponsibility, recklessness and criminal waste of public funds.

**Mr Chairman :** Round up.

**Mr Iyayi :** It would also appear to me that some danger is lurking around the corner in this matter. Part of the danger is the impression created that this honourable House is a mere rubber-stamp because of the fact that the Senate has approved it and the Senate has assumed deliberately that it is superior to the House of Representatives which it is not.

Finally, Mr Chairman, in the debate in the Senate, the Leader of that House referred to the people of Rivers State as his brothers and sisters very rightly.

**Mr Chairman :** Round up.

**Mr Iyayi :** He was referring to the items in the provision for the national emergency relief to the people of the Rivers State.

**Mr Chairman :** It is time.

**Mr Iyayi :** No ! No ! Bendelites are also our brothers and sisters. They are citizens of this country and they are entitled to consideration for the provision made for relief in respect of oil spillage. Bendel State must have her own share.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo :** Mr Chairman, Sir, hon. Members, I move that the Chairman now report progress.

**Mr Chairman :** Anybody seconding the Motion ?

**Mr Bayo Akinbisehin (Ifesowapo) :** Chairman, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to second the Motion.

*Clauses 1 and 2, ordered to stand part of the Bill, Schedule agreed to.*

(Mr speaker resumed the Chair)

*Bill reported without amendment, read the Third time and passed.*

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo :** Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I now move that the House do stand adjourned until the 15th of April, 1980.

**Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II) :** I beg to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That the House do stand adjourned until the 15th of April, 1980.

*The House adjourned accordingly at 12.15 p.m.*



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Wednesday, 9th April, 1980

The National Assembly met at 10.15 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Chairman of the National Assembly  
in the Chair)

**The Chairman :** I recognise the distinguished  
Leader of the Senate, Senator Olusola Saraki.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Late Senator Joseph Sarwuan Tarka

**Senator Olusola Saraki (Ilorin/Asa) :** The  
Chairman of the National Assembly, hon. Members  
of the National Assembly, I beg to move this Motion  
in my name—

That in view of the fact that Senator J. S.  
Tarka had been in the frontline of Nigerian  
politics before and after independence, and in  
recognition of the significant contributions which  
he made during that period to the development  
of parliamentary institution in the House of  
Representatives and in the Senate, the National  
Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria  
resolves to place on record its deep appreciation  
of the great wisdom, patriotism and tenacity  
of purpose of the late Senator J. S. Tarka, and  
hereby expresses the deep sense of the loss sus-  
tained by this august Assembly by his untimely  
death and its sympathy with the relatives of the  
deceased Senator.

I beg to move.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) :**  
Mr Chairman, hon. Members I beg to second the  
Motion.

**The Chairman :** The question is that we have a  
joint sitting of the National Assembly.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That in view of the fact that Senator  
J. S. Tarka had been in the frontline of Nigerian  
politics before and after independence and in  
recognition of the significant contributions which  
he made during that period to the development of  
parliamentary institution in the House of  
Representatives and in the Senate, the National  
Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria resolves  
to place on record its deep appreciation of the great  
wisdom, patriotism and tenacity of purpose of late  
Senator J. S. Tarka, and hereby expresses the deep  
sense of the loss sustained by this august  
Assembly by his untimely death and its sympathy  
with the relatives of the deceased Senator.

**Senator Olusola Saraki :** The Chairman, hon.  
Members of the National Assembly I beg to move—

That the body of the deceased, Senator J. S.  
Tarka, should be brought to the Floor of this  
National Assembly.

I beg to move.

**Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo :** Mr Chairman, hon.  
Members, I beg to second the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved :* That the body of the deceased, Senator  
J. S. Tarka, should be brought to the Floor of this  
National Assembly.

*(The body of late Senator J. S. Tarka was brought  
to the Floor of the National Assembly).*

**The Chairman :** Distinguished hon. Members.  
of the National Assembly, eminent Nigerian Leaders,  
Chief Obafemi Awolowo, eminent Nigerian State  
Governors, Ladies and Gentlemen, this morning  
we gather here for the purpose of giving honour to  
whom honour is due, one of our Colleagues who  
passed away last week, a Colleague who had  
shown himself as a true Nigerian, who had  
demonstrated that Nigerian politics would mean  
nothing unless we are united and talk with one  
voice, Senator Chief Joseph Tarka. I will allow a  
few speakers. I call first on the distinguished Leader  
of the Senate, Senator Saraki.

**Senator Olusola Saraki :** The Chairman of the  
National Assembly, hon. Members of the National  
Assembly, we are here gathered on this solemn  
but great occasion not to mourn the dead, or to  
bemoan a loss (it is a loss indeed) but to pay our  
respect, and indeed our tribute, to a valiant and  
noble warrior who has fallen on the field of battle,  
a distinguished Senator of this Republic whose  
place in our midst will be very difficult to fill, a most  
charming and handsome leader of our society who  
brought joy and happiness to all those who came in  
contact with him.

Joseph Sarwuan Tarka was born in Benue State  
at Igbor on 10th July, 1932. He first attended the  
Gboko Primary School and later went to the Katsina-  
Ala Middle Secondary School and then finally to  
the Bauchi Teachers' Training College. On leaving  
college he taught as a teacher for some time before  
entering politics. In 1954 he was elected a Member  
of the House of Representatives on the platform  
of the United Middle Belt Congress of which he  
was the founder and the President. He was a Member  
of the Delegation to the 1957 and 1958 Nigerian  
Constitutional Conferences which produced our  
Independence Constitution. He was also a delegate  
to the 1959 Pan-African Conference. Because he  
was a man who fought relentlessly for what he  
believed to be the truth and justice he was imprisoned  
and detained on several occasions by the authorities  
of that time.

Mr Chairman, when the Military Government in  
1967 decided to co-opt civilians into their administra-  
tion, Chief J. S. Tarka was one of those able civilians  
appointed to serve as the Commissioner for Trans-  
port, and later on he was moved to the Ministry of  
Communications. On the 7th July, 1979, he was  
elected as a Senator in the National Assembly and

[SENATOR SARAƘI]

later in our Senate he was appointed as the Chairman of the Appropriation and Finance Committee, a Committee which he had no opportunity to chair before he died. During the last few weeks of his life he showed exceptional courage and determination, knowing lately that further courses of treatment would only delay the inevitable end which has come to him.

J. S. Tarka was the legend of his life-time and fought a stubborn losing battle with death. He walked with death as if death was his companion, an acquaintance which he recognised, Mr Chairman Sir, but of course he never feared death. In the end death took him away from us. We are now here this morning to pay our tribute to one of us who left us at a very young age. Mr Chairman, Sir, distinguished Members of the National Assembly, we gather here this morning to pay our tribute to him but we have a consolation in the fact that he left behind a good record for everyone of us to emulate. Mr Chairman, Sir, in the end, as I said, death came to him as a friend and took him away, but his contributions to the creation of States, his struggles in fighting for the independence of this country, Mr Chairman, will be a perpetual memorial to his leadership, his vision and his indomitable courage.

Today we realise that the passing away of J. S. Tarka has left a void, which no words of sympathy can fill, but the knowledge of the respect, admiration and affection with which he is held will in time assuage our sorrow. History will record him as a dedicated patriot who fought hard for his people and his country for independence in its darkest period during our struggle for freedom from the yoke of colonial powers, and also as one of the outstanding leaders, for indeed his life was a life resplendent with courage, resourcefulness and resoluteness. His unbounding cheerfulness was an inspiration to us all. J. S. was a gentle, kind man, who constantly considered what was best for his people. Alas, after a long battle for life from a dreaded but modern disease, he gave up the ghost on Sunday, 29th March, 1980.

He was so crowded with, and full of noble deeds and achievements that his biography, which I have outlined to you, does not tell the full story of the man we all love to call J. S. The beloved and most respected Senator from Benue State was a man of supreme courage, humility, a leader who loved his people and regarded his life as worthless in their service. Of course, as a man he loved life and enjoyed it. But he was a dogged fighter for truth and justice, fair treatment and equality of all the constituent ethnic groups which make Nigeria, and for this he will for ever be remembered.

Today it is fashionable for the people from many corners of the Federation to come to the National Assembly to lay before us, Mr Chairman, petitions for the creation of more States. These petitioners and many of us in this National Assembly who come from the new States—the Cross River State, Kwara State, Rivers State, Gongola State, Imo State, Niger State, Bendel State, Plateau State and Benue State—owe our late J. S. Tarka a greater

debt of gratitude. It is no exaggeration, Mr Chairman, Sir, to say that without J. S. Tarka and the uncompromising campaign he waged in the face of persecution, imprisonment and other forms of deprivations, the break-up of Nigeria in 1967, Mr Chairman, Sir, into 12 States would not have happened. And that event marked a new era and the birth of a new Nigeria.

Senator Tarka was a great orator and a leader with charisma. Listen to him speak on the soap-box and indeed, in this House, see him act with warmth and love in the midst of his people, you will then understand why millions in Nigeria and outside today respond to his magic and warmth to his love.

We in this National Assembly will miss the immense benefits of his noble qualities. He was a unifying force amongst all the five political parties in this National Assembly, and I, will miss most dearly, Mr Chairman, Sir, the wise counsel and the support of a most loyal friend. In times of difficulties I turned to him, *Mr J. S. what should I do?* and he would give me part of his experience of being a Member of the Assembly which he had been for years. Some of us are so new in this game and, of course, we cannot buy experience; we have to learn by time.

Mr Chairman, Sir, the sum total of his life, the great battles he fought successfully in defence of truth, justice and freedom, the indestructible nature of his soul in the face of attacks by his political adversaries, Mr Chairman, Sir, made Senator Joseph Sarwuan Tarka earn an immortal place of honour in our society as a hero.

On this solemn occasion, J. S. does not want us to shed tears. But, of course, we cannot help it. Nor does he want us to weep for him. He had lived a full and glorious life, a life which was full of service and devotion to the cause of his people. He had lived to see the attainment of self-determination for all the minority tribes of Nigeria in the creation of 12 States and later 19 States in Nigeria. He had lived to see democracy restored to his dear fatherland, and he played no small part in ensuring the installation of the first post-military civilian regime in Nigeria. But very unfortunately, my friend J. S., has not been able to go along with us to the end of this regime. We have spent only six months and death has snatched him away from us.

Mr Chairman, Sir, finally, well may he say on that fateful Sunday when he gave up the ghost that his task on earth had been accomplished and it was time for him to go, and he has gone.

We, who now gather round his body today still have our duty to perform. We have to continue the battle where he left it. We have to collect ourselves together and make sure Nigeria does not go to pieces. We have to forget the party ideologies but see what is good for the country and stand by it and remember millions of our Nigerians outside who have nowhere to lay their heads. Mr Chairman, Sir, we have to renew our faith in the cause of truth and justice. We have to rededicate ourselves to the task of ensuring peace, unity and faith in one Nigeria. From the hills of Jos to the Banks of the Sokoto River, from the golden peaks of Milken Hill to the

[SENATOR SARAHI]

basin of Lake Chad, let the message re-echo, that we the living here resolve to rededicate ourselves to the great task of ensuring peace and plenty for our people and that from the example of the life of this great and illustrious son of Nigeria, J. S. Tarka, we derive fresh inspiration, new vigour to devote ourselves to the cause that Nigeria, in the words of our National Anthem, shall be, and remain a nation where peace and justice shall reign.

Bye-bye, Dear J. S., farewell distinguished Senator Tarka. May your path to heaven be strewn with flowers and palm leaves as befit a Hero. May the Angels bear you to Paradise.

*To every man upon this earth Death cometh soon or late. And how can man die better than facing fearful odds for the ashes of his fathers, and the temples of his Gods?*

May you Rest in Peace, J. S.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

**Mr Yunusa Kaltungo** (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Chairman, Sir, hon. Members of the National Assembly, I would like first of all, to start by saying that late Senator Joseph Sarwuan Tarka was my teacher in school when he was in Bauchi Teachers' College in 1948. I had spent two years in the School when he came and had his teaching practice in my own class for many months before he qualified as a teacher in 1949. So, I think I knew him for quite a long time, long before he joined politics. Maybe at that time he never dreamt of becoming a politician. I never knew that I, myself, one day would become a politician and join my teacher.

Now, our Colleague, Mr Joseph Tarka has departed. This will remind all of us that however placed one is in the world, one will one day leave the shores of this world to our Maker. Indeed, Tarka, the gallant hero of the Tiv land and its people has passed away, but indeed like a Trojan that he was he has left his footprints on the sands of time.

The National Assembly was turned into a mournful state last Monday 31st March when the news came to us that the voice of our Colleague, J. S., would no longer be heard in this National Assembly. The cruel hands of death had snatched this illustrious son of Nigeria from the face of the earth. The late Tarka was a doughty fighter who contributed in no small means to the political advancement of Nigeria and played a leading role in the political emancipation of the Tiv land. He was a champion of minority interests. Indeed one could describe him as the father of the present Niger, Benue, Bauchi and Plateau States.

A leading member of my Party, the National Party of Nigeria, the late J. S. was a founding father of the NPN and consequently became a Senator on the ticket of the Party. His leadership role in the Senate was worthy of emulation. He was indeed a unifying force and was highly respected by all shades of political opinion in the National Assembly. His place in the Senate, judging by his immense contributions in that august Assembly, would certainly be difficult to fill. However, we must take consolation in that J. S. lived a full life. Although

his life was short, he would always be remembered for his good work by the teeming millions of the citizens of this great country. He had a sense of purpose and mission. He was steadfast and courageous and above all, had the ability to inspire confidence in others. If we could emulate his leadership qualities and all that he stood for, he would not have died in vain.

I wish to express my condolence and that of the entire Members of the House of Representatives to his family and, in particular, to my dear Simeon for this irreparable loss. Our sympathy also goes to His Excellency, the Governor of Benue State, Mr Aper Aku, and the Tor Tiv, His Highness Akpera Orshi, and to you compatriots Isa Odoma, Isaac Shaahu, Abubakar Usman, Jacob C. Obande, Amadu Ali, Abogede, Uye, Swem, Adoyi, Afaityo, Abutu, Ejiga, Awuna, and the good people of Benue State on the death of a great leader. I urge you to continue the good work of Joseph.

Indeed, Tarka is not dead. His great soul had only changed from mortality to immortality. It is perhaps appropriate to remind you of a passage in Saint Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, Chapter 15 vs 51-58 which goes thus :

*Lo I tell you a mystery, We shall not all sleep ; but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable nature must put on the imperishable, and this mortal nature must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written :*

*Death is swallowed up in victory  
O death, where is thy victory?  
O death, where is thy sting?*

*The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore my beloved brethren and colleagues, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain.*

May the great Soul of J. S. Tarka and that of the faithful departed through the Mercy of God rest in perfect peace.

Farewell Joe.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

**Senator J. A. O. Odebiyi** (Egbado North/South) : Mr Chairman, hon. Members of the National Assembly, I rise on behalf of my party, to pay tribute to Senator J. S. Tarka with whom many of us have been associated as far back as 26 years ago. I think, Sir, we must strive and put the record straight.

Dr J. S. Tarka had his first involvement in practical politics with the banned Action Group with which the UMBC came into alliance during the 1954 election. It was this association that made Senator J. S. Tarka what he had been until his death. Like every human being, he had his measure of good sense, wit and patriotism ; and like every other human

being, he also had his weaknesses. But when weighed in the balance, Senator Tarka made tremendous efforts to tilt the weight in his favour as a nationalist, a patriot, and an indefatigable fighter for the cause of the minorities.

When, a few weeks ago, he wrote a letter to the Senate in which he said *inter alia* that after he had had a thorough cure, he would go to a very quiet place to have a very good rest, he was then making an ironical statement. That rest he now has. He is no longer with us in body, but he is with us in soul.

Whilst being a member of the National Assembly, particularly in the Senate, his was a voice of reason. He was an apostle of reconciliation. Anything divisive was anathema to him. During turbulent politicking in the Senate, J. S., as he was popularly known, was a voice of compromise.

Today we are giving him the burial befitting a status which we did not accord him in his lifetime. We are burying him today as a Head of State, because in our history no one has ever been brought to the National Assembly for the great honour which we are doing to this great Nigerian.

Let us ask ourselves how many of us will, from now on, continue to play the role of a unifying force in the cause for which we are all here gathered. How many of us will continue to work for the unity, for the peace, the progress and prosperity of our country to the extent that this honour which has been to our late brother will be done to us? Let us all leave here firmly in our resolve to try and heal the nation's wounds, to unify our people on matters in which the interest of the populace is paramount, and in the end say to our Maker hitherto hath the Lord helped us.

Fare thee well, J. S. May God bless you. The seeds which you have sown, may God germinate. Bye Bye, and good luck.

**Mr Debo Akande** (Ibadan North) : Mr Chairman, Sir, the last speaker has expressed the condolence of our party, but having been called upon by you, I will say that those of us in the House of Representatives who have not sat with the late Senator in the last six months but have followed his contributions in the *Hansard* and through the corridors when we met to discuss, bear testimony to his love for Nigeria, his unifying force and his undaunted courage in the cause of a true Nigeria.

On behalf of the Members of my party in the House, I say farewell to you, the late Senator. We will miss you but your contributions to the development and progress of Nigeria will continue to shine, and we the younger elements coming behind have something to look forward to, to emulate. I associate myself with the previous speakers that on an occasion like this, sad as it is, it gives us moment to think over again and to resolve in the interest of Nigeria that the best that we can do for Nigeria is what late Senator Tarka has done, and in this brief speech I bear thee farewell.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

**Senator Onyeabo Obi** (Anambra West) : Mr Chairman, Sir, hon. Members of the National Assembly, National leaders, fellow Nigerians, so much has been said about late Senator Joseph J. S. Tarka that perhaps one might spoil the beauty of the occasion by going further to add little details of his life. The only point I wish to use this opportunity to make is my assessment of the contributions which the late J. S., as we have been reminded, has made in recent months in the Senate and in the National Assembly.

Senator Tarka had his seat right next to the Leader of the Senate, Senator Olusola Saraki, on the Front Bench near to the President of the Senate. But it is a tribute to Senator Tarka that he could have been most welcomed and could have felt most at ease if he sat next to the Leader of any of the other political parties in the Senate. We are working a Constitution which puts a premium on the separation of powers : the Executive, the Legislature, and the Judiciary. The fundamental principle of this is healthy respect of one institution for the other. This concept of separation of powers needs human ingenuity and goodwill to make the system work. The tragedy of the past is that they have been lacking persons who have such maturity to oil the system and make it work. It is a great tribute; I consider, late Senator Joseph Tarka to have become of his own volition, of his efforts, maturity and experience a human institution which oiled and greased the system which we are now operating. So, he became in his own way, and very few could equal him, a system of human checks and balances which can only make this system survive for the benefit of Nigeria.

I would like to remember the poet when he said, Sir, *That the Lives of great men all remind us that we can make our own sublime and die and leave behind us*, as my Colleague has said, *footprints on the sands of time*. The late J. S. has left very clear footprints on the sands of Nigerian time.

The question and the challenge to Members of the National Assembly and to all Nigerians, is that late Joseph Tarka is now no more. Will there now arise Nigerians in the National Assembly and particularly in the Senate who would have the courage, the vision, the versatility not suffering from political myopia, to perform what J. S. Tarka did in his life time? Would there be a system of human checks and balances and a system which will oil the Presidential System of Government so that we can proceed with happiness, peace, security and development of the entire people of Nigeria.

I remember J. S. Tarka as detribalised Nigerian. J. S. Tarka felt at home in every corner of Nigeria. I would also like to remember him as one of the communities in Anambra State. I remember J. S. Tarka, as the *Onwa ne tiri ora* of that community, meaning, the moon that shines for all the communities of Nigeria. Good-bye J. S.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

**The Chairman** : I now call on hon. P. C. Amadi, Leader of the NPP in the House of Representatives.

**Lt Col. P. C. Amadi** (Owerri North): Mr Chairman, hon. Members of the National Assembly, distinguished Elder Statesmen, Ladies and Gentlemen we are here today mourning the sad loss of a great man, a great patriot, a noble gentleman and an affable and good natured gentleman that endeared himself to his people in particular and to Nigeria in general.

Since the sudden death of the distinguished Senator J. S. Tarka, a lot of tributes had been paid to him at both National and international levels. His death, therefore, has rocked this nation. Any student of contemporary Nigerian politics will, no doubt, agree that all these tributes paid to the late Senator are well deserved by him. I do not consider it necessary to go back and recount all the niceties that have been said of our beloved late Senator, but I think it is necessary to highlight some of his achievements. By Nigerian standard, it is unusual to get someone to be elected into the House of Representatives at the age of 22. I think, to my mind, up till today, it is only Senator J. S. Tarka that this could be credited to. Still, as if that was not enough at this tender age, the late Senator was able to form a Political Party, the United Middle Belt Congress which identified him with his people and he fought against the oppression of the common man and fought against the shackles of political oppression which we all know about.

For somebody to start fighting at this tender age of 22, identifying himself with his people, struggling for his people in general, which have been recounted by the earlier speakers, I think that person is worthy of our gathering today.

Nigeria today has 19 States and as a matter of fact, that could, as someone has already said, be credited actually to Senator J. S. Tarka's earlier crusade in fighting for the Middle Belt State. That was what fired the National consciousness in the creation of States and the result is what we have today—the 19 States, but I think, as many people have said, that could be credited to the late Senator J. S. Tarka.

Senator J. S. Tarka was a magnificent being, somebody who loved his country and loved his people; somebody who cut across tribal sentiments; somebody who identified himself as a Nigerian. This he specifically did at the end of the Civil War when, among the prominent Nigerians, he led the crusade of the spirit of forgive and forget, the spirit of peaceful re-unification of the country. The good part that the late Senator played will always be remembered by the people of this country in general, and in particular, the people of the then East-Central State.

His death, therefore, has left a permanent vacuum in this National Assembly which will be very very difficult to fill. But I am happy that we have in this Assembly a son of his. This son we all pray will, in no distant future, ascend to the lofty height attained by his late father. His loss is, therefore, irreparable to the National Assembly, moreso, to his family. We pray, therefore, that God will give his family the strength and courage to endure this irreparable loss.

Goodbye Senator J. S. Tarka. May God protect and guide your spirit always.

**The Chairman:** I call upon the GNPP Leader in the Senate, Senator Idrisa Kadi.

**Senator Idrisa Kadi** (Borno North-Central): The Chairman of the National Assembly, Elder Statesmen, Members of the National Assembly, Ladies and Gentlemen, this gathering is a very sad one. We lost our distinguished colleague, Joseph Tarka. The history and the background of Joseph Tarka, most people have already mentioned, but for the few months we were together in the Senate, one has to make some comments.

Joseph Tarka was a true Statesman and a patriot. He was very simple, with a nice, cool voice but was straightforward and frank. He was a gentleman, always looking for amicable solutions whenever there were problems. He was very hard-working, patient and also very tolerant. Because of these qualities, even people who are not with him in the same Party regarded him as a friend and a brother. Indeed, we have lost a very great man in the Senate. So, we the GNPP Senators use this solemn occasion to mourn the irreparable loss of our distinguished brother. We have of course, to express our sorrow and sadness for the loss and pray that his soul rest in peace, may he rest freely and happily with God.

Senator Joseph Tarka, right from the beginning was a Statesman, a politician that one can easily say that by his death he has left a very wide vacuum in the National politics which we believe, will be very difficult to fill. We can say little or nothing about him except that we pray that may his soul rest in peace.

Good bye Joseph Tarka. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

**The Chairman:** May I call upon the GNPP Leader in the House of Representatives, to speak.

**Dr Gordon J. Idang** (Etinan II): Mr President of the Senate, Mr Speaker of the House of Representatives, Elder Statesmen, hon Members of the National Assembly; on an occasion like this it is usual for people to pay tribute to a departing hero, and to say so many things about him.

A lot has already been said about Senator, Joseph Tarka and at this stage I have no intention whatsoever to repeat all the nice things that have been said about him. My intention now is to express the deep feelings of the GNPP Members of the House of Representatives on this irreparable loss to this country at a time when we, as Nigerians, can do everything to keep a person like Senator Joseph Tarka alive to join hands with us to build a virile, stable and united country; but this is impossible.

Today, we mourn his death and remember him as a fearless and dynamic fighter who spent most of his time fighting for a comfortable place for his people and the unity of this country. I am sure that today, although Senator Tarka is no more with us, he has every reason as he lies before us in this august Assembly to rest in his eternal sleep, not only because he has achieved so much during his short but eventful

years but most importantly because he has fought and left a political legacy for his people in particular and for us Nigerians in general. His dynamic and fearless leadership and his great commitments to democracy and national unity will remain for long his greatest tribute.

Although Senator Tarka took to politics at a tender age of twenty-two, he was fully aware of the political aspirations of his people and the intractable problems of political independence. Apart from participating actively in all the Constitutional Conferences leading to the granting of our Independence in 1960 he was an outspoken and highly respected Member of the House of Representatives until the Military take over of government in 1966. His great talent and political ability was also recognised by the Military Administration which appointed him first as Federal Commissioner for Transport, and later as Federal Commissioner for Communication. As any other politician, Senator Tarka's political career was not without problems and difficulties. He was, for instance, sent to prison several times for political reasons, but throughout these periods, his patriotism and sense of purpose remained unshaken.

Senator Tarka is no longer with us. His place will be very difficult to fill but we should take consolation in the fact that whatever his shortcomings as a human being, he will for ever be remembered by the generality of our people for his humaneness and great devotion to the cause of national unity. We, hon. Members of this National Assembly owe it as a moral duty not only to our departing hero but to the generality of our people, most of whom have stayed without meals for the past three days to strive and join hands together to work for the progress of our people and the unity of our fatherland.

On behalf of the GNPP Members of the House of Representatives, I join fellow Nigerians across the Nation to ask for God's special protection to the family of J. S. Tarka who is not with us during this trying period of their lives. I should also like to extend the same condolence to the Government and people of Benue State who loved him and cherished him and I do hope that they will continue to work and give the same support to his son who, as God would have it, is now a Member of this National Assembly. I would like to join the previous speakers to appeal not only to Members of the National Assembly but also to every Nigerian to use this occasion to reflect, and to recount our own contribution to the cause of National unity to resolve once and for all that we will continue to struggle as long as we live to see that an ordinary Nigerian has a place under the sun.

Goodbye Senator Joseph S. Tarka. We miss you but we pray to God that he should allow your soul to rest in peace.

Mr Chairman, Sir, thank you.

**The Chairman :** May I call upon the PRP Leader of the House of Representatives, to speak.

**Mr Sidi H. Ali (Danbatta) :** Mr Chairman of the National Assembly, hon. Members, my name is Sidi H. Ali representing the Leader of the PRP in the House. I was asked to represent the Party for two reasons. Firstly, there was a special relationship between late Senator Tarka and myself, and secondly I was one of the two delegates sent by the Party to accompany his body back to Nigeria. That was why the Leader felt that I should speak on behalf of the PRP.

Mr Chairman, we have assembled today to honour our Colleague about whom much has already been said. Without actually trying to raise any argument, with due respect to the Leader of the UPN in the Senate, the honour we are bestowing on Tarka is the second in the history of National Assembly. The first one was on May 3rd, 1965 when the late Muhammadu Ribadu the then Minister of Defence died. This Joint Sitting was organised to honour him, so J. S. Tarka became the second to be accorded this honour.

Mr Chairman, to speak about late Senator Tarka is something very difficult. During the First Republic the then Speaker, Alhaji Jalo Waziri, told the Nation that it was an unpleasant duty for him to summon the House to announce the death of their Colleague. This unpleasant Sitting today again fell on the Senate President, Dr Joseph Wayas. I happened to be in the office when he announced the death, he was indeed heart broken. I felt that was the feeling all over the country.

Mr Chairman, to me I consider it a great fortune to have known the late Tarka intimately and to have dealt with him at other levels. One of the levels which I am sure many people will remember was in 1974 when he was accused and he had two groups of advisers ; some saying that he should resign as a Federal Commissioner and others saying that he should not resign. One of the advisers at that time was the late senior brother of Godwin Daboh. The relation of Tarka said, *No, as long as Daboh is accusing you, his brother should not be here with you but Senator Tarka said, Godwin Daboh is different, this particular Daboh is different as far as I am concerned. He is my friend, he should stay.* We spent almost forty-eight hours thinking what to do, but finally Joseph Tarka announced his resignation. One newspaper wrote a caption, *Tarka surrendered* and this motivated me in writing a book which served as a counter to the allegations or at least tried to present the case fairly. It actually landed me in Kirikiri prison. It was again at that period that some newspapers accused some of us of defending indefensible. One paper went to the extent of calling somebody a paid mentor.

I am sure the Senate Leader, Dr Saraki, will bear me witness. It was he who had to pay for the publication because J. S. Tarka had no kobo to pay. The publication of that book after we were taken to Court was paid for by the Senate Leader and he is here with us.

[DR ALI]

Ladies and Gentlemen, I feel very strongly that these few points in the life of J. S. Tarka should really be brought out for people to know the type of man Tarka really was and the way he treated all people irrespective of their political leanings will always remain an everlasting monument to him and a constant inspiration to those of us who had the opportunity of being very close to him. I feel, as somebody said, that this is not the time to make a very lengthy speech but it is a time for us who are known to be close to him or even those who do not know him but who have heard about the good things he did to emulate these deeds. Like every other human being he had his weaknesses. It will be unfair to just say that we are all envious without having one or two problems from time to time. Therefore, all I would do is to appeal to the National Assembly, probably to bring pressure to bear on the President to do this great son of Nigeria an honour by having a monument, probably the new Airport at Abuja, named J. S. Tarka Airport. May he rest in peace. Thank you Sir.

**The Chairman :** May I call on the PRP Leader in the Senate.

**Senator Usman Alto Danbatta** (Kano North-Central) : Mr Chairman, Members of the National Assembly, we of the PRP in the Senate wish to join others to pay tribute to Chief J. S. Tarka.

In my contribution, I would like to look at his death as a National loss. Mr Chairman, a hero has fallen in the political arena of this Nation. Chief Senator J. S. Tarka could be befittingly described as one of the greatest pioneers of the struggle for political independence of this great country. He died at the time when his contributions to the new democratic exercise, that is, the Presidential System of Government, was much needed. His death is a great loss to the nation. Senator J. S. Tarka spear-headed the Middle Belt Movement during the Colonial period prior to the granting of Independence to this country in 1960.

During the years of the First Republic, he was the man who held the balance of power between the ruling Northern People's Congress, the NPC and the Action Group, during the Westminster Parliamentary System of Government after the exit of the British. The late Senator inspired many of his follo-

wers with positive sense of belonging and nationalism. He was a nationalist of the first order. He suffered imprisonment in his struggle for a democratic social order in Nigeria and he was never discouraged. His noble record in political life of this country will linger for long in the minds of all those who were privileged to be associated with him. His name, no doubt, will be recorded in gold letters in the annals of political history of this country.

Mr Chairman, I would like to take this opportunity to deliver a message from one of the great leaders of this country today. He is a well-known leader who has the great interest of this National Assembly; one who always shows his interest in the progress of social order and the progress of democratic representation. He is Mallam Aminu Kano, the National Leader of the PRP. He wishes all of us God's help to endure this great loss.

Goob-bye Senator J.S. Tarka.

**The Chairman :** At the end of this joint sitting, the Members of the National Assembly would file past the body of our distinguished colleague. But just before then, we shall rise and pay a two-minute silence.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the presence of some of our eminent leaders who have attended this special sitting today. I start with the Leader of the UPN, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, who is sitting here in the special Box on my right, Chief Akinloye, the Chairman of NPN, sitting to my right, Chief Olu. Akinfosile, Chairman of the NPP, sitting on my right, the Lagos State Governor, Chief Lateef Jakande, sitting on my right and we also have the Governor of Ogun State, Chief Bisi Onabanjo. Lastly, but not the least, we have the Deputy Governor of Benue State, Mr I. S. Odoma, who is also with us here.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**The Chairman :** The special sitting of the National Assembly has now come to a close and we will now file out to pay our last respect to him. We will have two-minute silence before we continue with the programme.

*(Two-minute silence observed in memory of late Senator Chief J. S. Tarka).*

*The National Assembly adjourned sine die at 11.35 a.m.*

**INDEX TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATES**

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**OFFICIAL REPORT**

**FIRST ASSEMBLY, FIRST SESSION**

*14th January-9th April, 1980*

**EXPLANATION OF ABBREVIATION**

**Bills Read First, Second or Third Time—1R, 2R, 3R**

**Com—Committee**



Case—Continued

This book first issued as Third Time—18, 21, 22

Revisions or Corrections

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FIRST ASSEMBLY FIRST SESSION

OFFICIAL REPORT

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

INDEX TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY REPORTS

National Assembly Debates (Representatives)

INDEX

	Column	Column
<b>Mr Speaker</b>		
Announcements .. .. .	1011, 1161, 1915	
Announcements—Committee Meetings ..	1041, 1234	
Military take over in 1966 .. .	1041	
Presence of a Distinguished visitor ..	1041	
Resignation of a Member .. .	1072	
Meeting of Party Leaders .. .	1826	
Mode of Dressing .. .	1318	
Procedure .. .	1826	
Standing Orders .. .	1319	
Special Committee on NNPC .. .	1357-1358	
Standing Committee on Education .. .	1358	
Committee Meetings .. .	1179	
Misconduct of an hon. Member .. .	1207	
Remunerations .. .	1825	
Proposed tour of the United States .. .	1217	
Distinguished Visitor .. .	1233	
Meeting with the President .. .	1233	
Selection of Members for the study tour of the United States .. .	1233-1234	
Special Committee on NNPC .. .	1825	
Committee Meetings .. .	1381	
Explanation by a Member of the Remuneration Committee .. .	1382	
Letter from the President of the National Assembly of the People's Republic of Bulgaria .. .	1410	
Letter from the Special Adviser National Assembly Liaison .. .	1409	
Letter from the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in Nigeria .. .	1410-1411	
Message from the President .. .	2133	
Announcements—Business Committee Recess Meetings .. .	2123	
Communications .. .	2124-2125	
Investigation of NNPC missing money ..	2137	
Official Delegation to US Congress .. .	2123	
Happy Easter .. .	2106	
National Assembly Quarters .. .	2106	
Committee Meetings .. .	2025, 2053, 2105	
Members accommodation .. .	2080	
Chairmen of Committees .. .	1053	
Joint Remuneration Committee .. .	2079	
Letter from the soviet Union .. .	2079	
The President's speech .. .	2079	
The 1980 Budget proposals .. .	2093	
Behaviour of a GNPP Member .. .	1164	
Letter from the Speaker of the Polish Parliament ..	1163	
Personal Explanation .. .	1161, 1162	
Committee on the creation of New States ..	1137	
Adjournment—Meeting of the Speakers of various States .. .	1354	
Parliamentary Immunity .. .	1850	
Visit of members of the Rockefeller Foundation ..	1354	
Alteration of the Financial Year .. .	1320	
Announcements—Members visit to U.S.A. ..	1823-1825	
Car Loans .. .	1896	
Committee Work .. .	1011	
Control of Drugs .. .	1036	
All African Parliamentary Union .. .	1915	
Committee on Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation ..	1114	
Federal Capital Territory .. .	1239	
Adjournment—Fight against corruption .. .	1246	
Insurance Companies .. .	1937-1965	
Membership of the Army Council .. .	1319	
Suspension of Standing Orders .. .	1851	
National Provident Fund (Management Board) etc. Management Act 1980 .. .	1360	
Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation .. .	1042-1047	
.. .	1050-1052	
.. .	1057	
Opobo Boatyard Limited .. .	1097	
Omission of Parliamentary privilege in the Constitution .. .	1181-1182	
Personal experience at the US Congress .. .	1017	
Personal explanation—Nigerian Press .. .	1249	
Request for the creation of a New State .. .	1129-1130	
Supplementary Appropriation 1979-80 Bill 1980 .. .	2142-2143	
The Federal Mortgage Bank .. .	2019	
Visit of traditional Rulers from Anambra State .. .	1413-1414	
Announcement—List of Members for African Parliamentary Conference .. .	1965	
Government Contracts .. .	1060-1061	
Burial Arrangement for Mr Bassey .. .	1066-1067	
Natural Disasters .. .	1991-1992	
Members attitude during Motion for Adjournment .. .	1067	
Adjournment—Declaration of Assets .. .	1069	
Sittings of the House .. .	1073	
Equal powers of the House .. .	1204	
Announcement—Communication from the Speaker of the House of Representatives in America .. .	1077	
Return of Forms .. .	1078	
Opobo Boatyard Limited .. .	1078-1080	
.. .	1083-1084	
.. .	1084	
<b>The Deputy Speaker</b>		
Announcements—Committee Meetings .. .	1431	
Votes and Proceedings .. .	1271, 1272, 1565	
Usurpation of Legislative powers by the Executive .. .	1273	
Committee Meetings .. .	1497	
National Electric Power Authority (Amendment) Bill, 1980 .. .	1477	
Nigerian Coal Corporation (Amendment) Bill, 1980 .. .	1477	
Nigerian Mining Corporation (Amendment) Bill, 1980 .. .	1477	
Committee Meetings .. .	1532, 1565, 1624	
Committee Witnesses .. .	1531	
Circulation of documents .. .	1565-1566	
Joint Committee on Remuneration .. .	1533	
Late General Murtala Muhammed .. .	1531	
Order Paper .. .	1566	
Members' Photographs .. .	1565	
Committee Meetings .. .	1673, 1699, 1725, 1763	
Committee Members .. .	1699-1700	
Committee Membership .. .	1673-1793	
Inter-Parliamentary Union .. .	1764-1765	
Lagos-Ibadan Expressway .. .	1673	
Votes and Proceedings .. .	1673, 1699, 1761	
Letter from the President .. .	1763	
The return of the Nigerian Delegation from the United States .. .	1725-1726	
Drafting of Bills .. .	1433	
Committee Meetings .. .	1630, 1651	
Committee Meetings .. .	1599	
Photographs .. .	1599	
Reports .. .	1599	
Votes and Proceedings .. .	1599, 1623	
Army Bill, 1980 .. .	1746	
Allocation of Seats .. .	1601	
Communication from Senate .. .	1624-1625	
Deportation of Shugaba Abdurahman .. .	1600	
Green Eagles .. .	1627	
Guarantee of Foreign Loans .. .	1449	
High cost of consumer goods .. .	1560	
Letters .. .	1623-1624	
Minimum Wage .. .	1516, 1517	
National Youth Service Corps .. .	1284, 1291	
.. .	1292, 1293	
.. .	1294	
National Dock Labour (Amendment) Bill .. .	1767	
National Road Transport Corporation .. .	1777	
Parliamentary Privileges and Immunities ..	1631, 1632	
Personal Explanation—Shugaba Affairs .. .	1431	
Public Service Commission Bill, 1980 .. .	1629, 1630	
Personal Explanation .. .	1797	

National Assembly Debates (Representatives)

INDEX—continued

	Column		Column
Request for the creation of a New State ..	1275,1277 1279,1280, 1281	<b>Motions</b>	
Report of the Public Petitions Committee ..	1601	Export Cash Crops .. .. .	1691-1697
Situation in Zimbabwe .. .. .	1295	Equitable distribution of Capital Investment ..	1544-1555
Study tour of the United States .. .. .	1214	Faulty Air-Condition Plant .. .. .	1475
The Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree ..	1478	Federal Capital Territory .. .. .	1235-1245
The D.C. 10 Aircraft .. .. .	1584	Federal Government Corporations .. .. .	1584-1596
Quorum .. .. .	1752	Federal Mortgage Banks .. .. .	2021-2022
Vehicles Basic Allowance for workers .. .. .	1491	Formation of the Commonwealth Parliamen- tary Association .. .. .	1951-1953
The Universal Education Scheme .. .. .	1804	Fight Against Corruption .. .. .	1345-1406
		Financial Year Act, 1980 .. .. .	1374-1378
		Government Contracts .. .. .	1058-1062
		Guarantee of Foreign Loans .. .. .	1446-1450
		Green Eagles .. .. .	1627
		High cost of consumer goods .. .. .	1556-1563
		Implementation of Sections 14 (3) and 157 (5) of the Constitution .. .. .	1143-1159
		Importation of Cars .. .. .	1906-1914 1916-1927
		Insurance Companies .. .. .	1965-1986
		International Centre for Child Study .. .. .	2017
		Joint Session of the National Assembly .. .. .	2056-2059
		Legislative Duty Allowance .. .. .	2084-2085
		Manufacture of Low Cost Cars for Workers ..	1337-1353
		Medical Services .. .. .	1464-1474
		Minimum Wage .. .. .	1511-1529 1533-1542
		National Youth Service Corps .. .. .	1281-1294
		Natural Gas .. .. .	1361-1374
		National Road Transport .. .. .	—
		National Reinsurance Corporation Bill .. .. .	2108-2111
		Authority .. .. .	1778-1790
		National Voluntary Youth Organisation .. .. .	1961
		Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation .. .. .	1042-1057
		Nigerian National Supply Company Limited ..	1652-1666
		Nigeria Enterprise Promotion Decree, 1977 ..	1603-1619
		Oil Spillage .. .. .	1826-1846
		Opobo Boatyard Limited .. .. .	1078-1097
		Parliamentary Privileges and Immunities ..	1630-1631
		Pensioners and Retiring Benefits .. .. .	1632-1643
		Personal Experience at the U.S. Congress ..	1012-1018
		Public Petitions Committee Report .. .. .	1708-1710
		Plight of Nigerian Students in Overseas Institution .. .. .	1018-1035
		Post Office .. .. .	1451-1459
		Psychiatric Hospitals .. .. .	1164-1171
		Recall of University Students involved in the 1978 Students Crisis .. .. .	1667-1671 1129-1130
		Request for the Creation of a New State .. .. .	1172-1175 1273-1280
		Restoration of two-tier System in Technical Education .. .. .	1434-1445
		Self-help Development Project .. .. .	1815-1820
		Situation in Zimbabwe .. .. .	1295,1314, 1321-1338
		Study Tour of the United States .. .. .	1175-1177
		Teachers Salaries .. .. .	2033
		The DC 10 Aircraft .. .. .	1568-1583
		The Lagos-Ibadan Expressway .. .. .	1182-1197
		The Nigeria Police Force .. .. .	1711-1724 1478
		The Nigeria Enterprises Promotions Decree ..	1799-1815
		The National Provident Fund .. .. .	1383-1394
		The Nigeria Airways .. .. .	1750-1751 1754-1759
		The Nigerian Embassies .. .. .	1416-1429
		Vehicle Basic Allowance for Workers .. .. .	1479-1450
		Water Supply .. .. .	1497-1510
		West African Examination Council .. .. .	1131-1142
		Zimbabwe-Congrats Mr Mugabe .. .. .	1888-1895
		<b>A</b>	
		<b>Mr Stephen B. Abodunde</b>	
		Activities of Price Control Board .. .. .	1106-1107
		Water Supply .. .. .	1501-1511
		<b>Alhaji Sani Abubakar</b>	
		Zimbabwe Congratulations to Mr Mugabe ..	1887-1888

## National Assembly Debates (Representatives)

## INDEX—continued

	Column	Column
<b>Alhaji Abubakar D. O. Abutu</b>		
Adjournment—Missing Money ... ..	1198-1199	
Announcement—Explanation by a member of the Remuneration Committee ... ..	1382	
(b) Black Maria Suspects Fatality ... ..	1853-1854	
Manufacture of low cost cars for workers	1341-1342	
Minimum Wage ... ..	1523-1525	
Personal Explanation—Nigeria Press ... ..	1248	
Vehicle Basic Allowance for workers ... ..	1488	
<b>Mr Mutari Adamu</b>		
Automatic Telephone Facilities in each Federal Constituency ... ..	2032	
Government Contracts ... ..	1058-1059	
<b>Ahaji Sarki Adamu</b>		
Admission of Students into Federal Institutions	1225	
Black Maria Suspects Fatality ... ..	1856	
Equitable Distribution of Capital Investments ... ..	1553	
Minimum Wage ... ..	1529-1530	
Nigeria Police Force ... ..	1721-1723	
Plight of Nigerian Students in Overseas Institutions ... ..	1033	
Select Committee on Public Relations ... ..	1999-2000	
<b>Mr S. A. Adeagbo</b>		
Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree, 1977	1602-1605	
Situation in Zimbabwe ... ..	1299-1300	
The Nigerian Enterprises Promotions Decree ... ..	1477	
<b>Mr David Niyi Adelu</b>		
Adjournment—Presidential Inquiry into the First Military Coup ... ..	1076	
Financial Year Act, 1980 ... ..	1376-1377	
Joint Session ... ..	2056	
Manufacture of Low Cost Cars for workers ... ..	1352	
The Lagos-Ibadan Expressway ... ..	1196	
Vehicles basic Allowance for Workers ... ..	1491-1492	
<b>Mr Adebowale Adeola</b>		
Personal Explanation ... ..	1161	
The Universal Primary Education Scheme	1814-1815	
<b>Mr Lamidi Adesina</b>		
Congratulatory Messages to the Green Eagles ... ..	2095-2096	
Personal Explanation—Nigerian Press ... ..	1248-1249	
The Nigerian Airways ... ..	1873-1875	
West African Examinations Council ... ..	1135-1138	
<b>Mr Gbadebo Adeyemi Adewumi</b>		
Natural Gas ... ..	1363	
The Lagos-Ibadan Expressway ... ..	1195-1196	
<b>Mr F. C. Adigwe</b>		
Adjournment—African Cup of Nations Cup	1204-1205	
Announcement—Lack of Water at the National Assembly Flats ... ..	1318	
Insurance Companies ... ..	1975	
Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation	1053-1054	
Situation in Zimbabwe ... ..	1314-1321, 1322-1323	
<b>Mr O. Akinboro</b>		
Adjournment—(a) House Delegation ... ..	1645-1646	
(b) Oil Spillage Relief Fund ... ..	2048	
(c) Reports from Committees ... ..	1644-1645	
(d) Working Method in the House ... ..	2047	
Nigerian National Petroleum Corporations	1046-1047	
Nigerian Embassies ... ..	1420-1421	
Quorum ... ..	1752	
<b>Mr Charles A. Adoga</b>		
Activities of Price Control Board ... ..	1111-1112	
Request for the creation of a new state ... ..	1278	
<b>Mr David Afaityo</b>		
Declaration of right to economic activities	1989-1999	
Nigeria Airways ... ..	1876-1877	
<b>Mr Olusola Afolabi</b>		
Adjournment—Parliamentary Immunity ... ..	1850	
Adjournment till Monday ... ..	1704	
Announcement ... ..	1703	
Appointment of the House Budget Committee ... ..	2060	
Appropriation Bill ... ..	2089	
Committee on the Creation of New States	1172-1174	
Composition of Members for Study Tour of the United States ... ..	1176	
Declaration of Rights to Economic Activities ... ..	1849	
Housing Scheme for Nigerians ... ..	2026	
Insurance Companies ... ..	1986	
Interim Special Legislative Duty Allowance	2084-2085	
Joint Session of the National Assembly ... ..	2056	
National Voluntary Youth Organisation ... ..	1944-1946	
Nigeria Police Force ... ..	1724	
Select Committee on Public Relation ... ..	1996-1997	
<b>Mr A. Afonja</b>		
Formation of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association ... ..	1952	
Government Contracts ... ..	1062-1063	
Minimum Wage ... ..	1536	
Natural Gas ... ..	1369-1370	
Select Committee on Public Relation ... ..	1997-1998	
<b>Mr M. A. Agbamuche</b>		
Insurance Companies ... ..	1974	
Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation ... ..	1053	
Remuneration ... ..	1628	
<b>Mr Cornelius Okpa Agbor</b>		
Audit Report ... ..	1773	
Situation in Zimbabwe ... ..	1309-1310	
<b>Mr David Agi</b>		
Adjournment—The Business Committee ... ..	2039-2040	
Construction of planned Federal Roads ... ..	1880-1881	
Equitable distribution of Capital Investments	1547-1548	
Fight against Corruption ... ..	1397-1398	
Formation of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association ... ..	1952	
Opobo Boat-yard Limited ... ..	1092-1093	
Pensioners and retiring benefits ... ..	1637-1638	
Water Supply ... ..	1502-1503	
<b>Mr Debo Akande</b>		
Activities of Price Control Board ... ..	1105	
Announcement—Business Committee ... ..	1461	
Army Bill 1980 ... ..	1734	
Burial Arrangement for Mr Bassey ... ..	1065	
Federal Government Corporations ... ..	1588-1591	
Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation ... ..	1049	
Omission of Parliamentary Privilege in the Con- stitution ... ..	1181	
Personal Explanation—Shugaba Affairs ... ..	1431	
The Nigeria Airways ... ..	1871-1873	
<b>Mr Bayo Akinbisehin</b>		
Adjournment—Parliamentary Immunity ... ..	1850	
Unfair Comment on Members ... ..	2036-2038	
Equitable distribution of Capital Investments	1553-1554	
Federal Capital Territory ... ..	1240-1241	
Federal Government Corporations ... ..	1595-1596	
Joint Session ... ..	2058	
Opobo Boat Yard Limited ... ..	1088-1089	
National Insurance Corporation of Nigeria Bill	2113-2114	
<b>Chief Yomi Akintola</b>		
Federal Government Corporations ... ..	1593-1594	
Guarantee of Foreign Loans ... ..	1449	
Manufacture of low cost cars for workers ... ..	1353	
Minimum Wage ... ..	1521	
National Voluntary Youth Organisation ... ..	1942	
<b>Mr Jire O. Akintunde</b>		
Manufacture of low cost cars for workers ... ..	1351	
<b>Mr Funsho Akinyosoye</b>		
The Lagos-Ibadan Expressway ... ..	1193-1194	
<b>Mr M. J. Akpabio</b>		
Black Maria suspects fatality ... ..	1855	
Insurance Companies ... ..	1979-1980	
Medical Services ... ..	1472-1473	
Minimum Wage ... ..	1538-1539	
Plight of Nigerian students in Overseas Institu- tions ... ..	1031-1033	

## INDEX—continued

	Column		Column
<b>Mr J. O. Eze</b>		<b>Alhaji Iliyasu Hong</b>	
Adjournment—Low Income Group and Destitutes in Nigeria .. .. .	1123-1124	Committee on Discipline of Members .. .. .	1121
Ban on Food Items .. .. .	1124	Medical services .. .. .	1468-1469
Activities of Price Control Board .. .. .	1101-1102	Small-scale Industries .. .. .	1262
Minimum Wage .. .. .	1540-1541		
National Youth Service Corps .. .. .	1286-1287		
		<b>I</b>	
		<b>Mr Dauda A. Ibrahim</b>	
<b>F</b>		Admission of students into Federal Institutions ..	1226
<b>Mr John Fadeyi</b>		Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree .. .. .	1977-1615-1619
National Provident Funds .. .. .	1394-1395		
<b>Mr Olaiya Fagbamigbe</b>		<b>Alhaji Idris Ibrahim</b>	
Adjournment—Assembly of an Aeroplane .. .. .	1199-1200	Committee on Discipline of Members .. .. .	1122-1123
High Cost of Consumer Goods .. .. .	1557-1563	Congratulatory Message to the Green Eagles .. .. .	2098-2099
Labour Situation in the Country .. .. .	2141-2142	Government Contracts .. .. .	1059-1060
The DC-10 Aircraft .. .. .	1573-1574		1061
Water Supply .. .. .	1509-1510	Implementation of Section 14 (3) and 157 (5) of the Constitution .. .. .	1158
		Nigerian Embassies .. .. .	1426-1428
<b>Alhaji S. A. Famuyide</b>		Personal Experience at the U.S. Congress .. .. .	1011-1017
Fight Against Corruption .. .. .	1407-1408	The Situation in Zimbabwe .. .. .	1336
<b>Mr Dele Fayemi</b>		<b>Alhaji Sa-idu Ibrahim</b>	
Adjournment—Badagry Express Road .. .. .	1649-1650	Adjournment—Standing Orders .. .. .	1620
Activities of Price Control Board .. .. .	1106	Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree 1977 .. .. .	1613-16-14
Insurance Companies .. .. .	1984-1985		
Nigerian Enterprises Promotion .. .. .	1616-1617	<b>Mr I. C. Ibrahim</b>	
<b>Mr Bello Dauda Furo</b>		The Universal Primary Education Scheme .. .. .	1809-1810
Situation in Zimbabwe .. .. .	1310-1311	<b>Mr Amos Idakula</b>	
		Adjournment Sittings of the House .. .. .	1073
<b>G</b>		Announcemet Explanation by a Member of the Remuneration Committee .. .. .	1382
<b>Mr Hassan Gambo</b>		The DC-10 Aircraft .. .. .	1577
Construction of planned Federal Roads .. .. .	1870	<b>Dr Gordon Idang</b>	
Medical Services .. .. .	1469	Federal Capital Territory .. .. .	1244-1245
West African Examinations Council .. .. .	1140	International Centre for Child Study .. .. .	2013
<b>Mr A. brose Gapsuk</b>		Nigerian Reinsurance Corporation Bill .. .. .	2110-2109
Adjournment—Non-display of the President's portrait .. .. .	1201-1202	The Federal Mortgage Bank .. .. .	2018,2020-2022
Announcements—Mode of dressing .. .. .	1317-1318	Request for the creation of a New State .. .. .	1276
Army Bill 1980 .. .. .	1735	The Lagos-Ibadan Expressway .. .. .	1191-1192
Conflict of Power .. .. .	1701-1702	Select Committee on Public Relations .. .. .	1999
Joint session .. .. .	2058	<b>Mr P. E. S. Ideh</b>	
National Road Transport Authority .. .. .	1786	Membership of the Union of African Parliaments .. .. .	1955
Orderliness in the House .. .. .	1701	<b>Mr S. M. C. Ihekweazu</b>	
Plight of Nigerian Students in Overseas Institutions .. .. .	1030-1031	Announcement Business Committee .. .. .	1462
<b>Mr Uba Iliya Garki</b>		Construction of Planned Federal Roads .. .. .	1881-1883
Nigeria Police Force .. .. .	1723	Nigerian National Supply Company Limited .. .. .	1665-1666
<b>Mr David G. Gba'aondo</b>		The Nigeria Police Force .. .. .	1711-1715
Construction of Planned Federal Roads .. .. .	1884	<b>Mr O. Ijaola</b>	
Manufacturer of Low Cost Cars for Workers .. .. .	1348	Minimum Wage .. .. .	1533-1534
Minimum Wage .. .. .	1519-1520	The Lagos-Ibadan Expressway .. .. .	119-1197
Water Supply .. .. .	1550	<b>Mr Ime J. Ikpatt</b>	
<b>Chief P. A. Gbinije</b>		Equitable distribution of Capital Investments .. .. .	1548-1549
Black Maria Suspect Fatality .. .. .	1859	Lifting the Restriction on the Importation of Cars .. .. .	1910-1911
Insurance Companies .. .. .	1971-1972	The DC 10 Aircraft .. .. .	1583-1584
Post Offices .. .. .	1455	<b>Chief Okon Ikpeme</b>	
Reactivation of Power Stations .. .. .	1936	National Voluntary Youth Organisation .. .. .	1939-1942
<b>Mr Kemte Giadom</b>		<b>Chief A. O. Imo</b>	
Announcements Personal Explanation .. .. .	1217	Fight against corruption .. .. .	1401-1402
Border Disputes and Clashes .. .. .	1677	<b>Mr A. A. Inoh</b>	
Water Supply .. .. .	1500-1501	Natural Gas .. .. .	1368
<b>Mr Isyaku Gumawa</b>		Opobo Boatyard Limited .. .. .	1078-1081
Committee on Discipline of members .. .. .	1121-1122	Railway Service linking all State Capitals .. .. .	1904
Lifting the restriction on the Importation of Cars .. .. .	1912-1913	<b>Mr E. U. U. Inyang</b>	
Minimum Wage .. .. .	1926-1927	Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree 1977 .. .. .	1611
Minimum Wage .. .. .	1537-1538	West African Examinations Council .. .. .	1138
National Youth Service Corps .. .. .	1288-1289	<b>Mr Y. U. Iortim</b>	
Vehicle Basic Allowance for Workers .. .. .	1482-1483	Border disputes and clashes .. .. .	1676-1677
Announcement Shugaba's Deportation .. .. .	1434	<b>Mr Aliyu Isa</b>	
<b>Mr C. K. Gutus</b>		Adjournment—Black Maria Victims .. .. .	1992
Minimum Wage .. .. .	1539-1540	Activities of Price Control Board .. .. .	1104
		Appointment of the House Budget Committee .. .. .	2062
<b>H</b>		Black Maria Suspects Fatality .. .. .	1856
<b>Mr A. S. Harith</b>		Manufacture of low cost cars for workers .. .. .	1349
The Nigeria Airways .. .. .	1871	<b>Mr Garba Isyaku</b>	
<b>Mr I. D. Hassan</b>		Post Offices .. .. .	1454-145
International Centre for Child Study .. .. .	2012-2013		
National Youth Service Corps .. .. .	1287		
Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree .. .. .	1977-1612		
The Universal Primary Education Scheme .. .. .	1805-1806		
The Nigeria Airways .. .. .	1869-1870		
The West African Examinations Council .. .. .	1131-1132		

National Assembly Debates (Representatives)

INDEX—continued

	Column		Column
<b>Alhaji Abubakar D. O. Abutu</b>		<b>Mr Olusola Afolabi</b>	
Adjournment—Missing Money ... ..	1198-1199	Adjournment—Parliamentary Immunity ..	1850
Announcement—Explanation by a member of the Remuneration Committee ... ..	1382	Adjournment till Monday .. .. .	1704
(b) Black Maria Suspects Fatality ... ..	1853-1854	Announcement .. .. .	1703
Manufacture of low cost cars for workers	1341-1342	Appointment of the House Budget Committee ..	2060
Minimum Wage .. .. .	1523-1525	Appropriation Bill .. .. .	2089
Personal Explanation—Nigeria Press .. ..	1248	Committee on the Creation of New States	1172-1174
Vehicle Basic Allowance for workers .. ..	1488	Composition of Members for Study Tour of the United States .. .. .	1176
<b>Mr Mutari Adamu</b>		Declaration of Rights to Economic Activities ..	1849
Automatic Telephone Facilities in each Federal Constituency .. .. .	2032	Housing Scheme for Nigerians .. .. .	2026
Government Contracts .. .. .	1058-1059	Insurance Companies .. .. .	1986
<b>Alhaji Sarki Adamu</b>		Interim Special Legislative Duty Allowance	2084-2085
Admission of Students into Federal Institutions	1225	Joint Session of the National Assembly ..	2056
Black Maria Suspects Fatality .. .. .	1856	National Voluntary Youth Organisation ..	1944-1946
Equitable Distribution of Capital Investments ..	1553	Nigeria Police Force .. .. .	1724
Minimum Wage .. .. .	1529-1530	Select Committee on Public Relation ..	1996-1997
Nigeria Police Force .. .. .	1721-1723	<b>Mr A. Afonja</b>	
Plight of Nigerian Students in Overseas Institutions .. .. .	1033	Formation of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association .. .. .	1952
Select Committee on Public Relations .. ..	1999-2000	Government Contracts .. .. .	1062-1063
<b>Mr S. A. Adeagbo</b>		Minimum Wage .. .. .	1536
Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree, 1977	1602-1605	Natural Gas .. .. .	1369-1370
Situation in Zimbabwe .. .. .	1299-1300	Select Committee on Public Relation ..	1997-1998
The Nigerian Enterprises Promotions Decree ..	1477	<b>Mr M. A. Agbamuche</b>	
<b>Mr David Niyi Adelu</b>		Insurance Companies .. .. .	1974
Adjournment—Presidential Inquiry into the First Military Coup .. .. .	1076	Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation ..	1053
Financial Year Act, 1980 .. .. .	1376-1377	Remuneration .. .. .	1628
Joint Session .. .. .	2056	<b>Mr Cornelius Okpa Agbor</b>	
Manufacture of Low Cost Cars for workers	1352	Audit Report .. .. .	1773
The Lagos-Ibadan Expressway .. .. .	1196	Situation in Zimbabwe .. .. .	1309-1310
Vehicles basic Allowance for Workers .. ..	1491-1492	<b>Mr David Agi</b>	
<b>Mr Adebowale Adeola</b>		Adjournment—The Business Committee ..	2039-2040
Personal Explanation .. .. .	1161	Construction of planned Federal Roads ..	1880-1881
The Universal Primary Education Scheme	1814-1815	Equitable distribution of Capital Investments	1547-1548
<b>Mr Lamidi Adesina</b>		Fight against Corruption .. .. .	1397-1398
Congratulatory Messages to the Green Eagles .. .. .	2095-2096	Formation of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association .. .. .	1952
Personal Explanation—Nigeria Press .. ..	1248-1249	Opobo Boat-yard Limited .. .. .	1092-1093
The Nigerian Airways .. .. .	1873-1875	Pensioners and retiring benefits .. .. .	1637-1638
West African Examinations Council .. ..	1135-1138	Water Supply .. .. .	1502-1503
<b>Mr Gbadebo Adeyemi Adewumi</b>		<b>Mr Debo Akande</b>	
Natural Gas .. .. .	1363	Activities of Price Control Board .. .. .	1105
The Lagos-Ibadan Expressway .. .. .	1195-1196	Announcement—Business Committee .. ..	1461
<b>Mr F. C. Adigwe</b>		Army Bill 1980 .. .. .	1734
Adjournment—African Cup of Nations Cup	1204-1205	Burial Arrangement for Mr Bassey .. .. .	1065
Announcement—Lack of Water at the National Assembly Flats .. .. .	1318	Federal Government Corporations .. .. .	1588-1591
Insurance Companies .. .. .	1975	Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation ..	1049
Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation	1053-1054	Omission of Parliamentary Privilege in the Con- stitution .. .. .	1181
Situation in Zimbabwe .. .. .	1314-1321, 1322-1323	Personal Explanation—Shugaba Affairs ..	1431
<b>Mr O. Akinboro</b>		The Nigeria Airways .. .. .	1871-1873
Adjournment—(a) House Delegation .. ..	1645-1646	<b>Mr Bayo Akinbisehin</b>	
(b) Oil Spillage Relief Fund .. .. .	2048	Adjournment—Parliamentary Immunity ..	1850
(c) Reports from Committees .. .. .	1644-1645	Unfair Comment on Members .. .. .	2036-2038
(d) Working Method in the House .. .. .	2047	Equitable distribution of Capital Investments	1553-1554
Nigerian National Petroleum Corporations	1046-1047	Federal Capital Territory .. .. .	1240-1241
Nigerian Embassies .. .. .	1420-1421	Federal Government Corporations .. .. .	1595-1596
Quorum .. .. .	1752	Joint Session .. .. .	2058
<b>Mr Charles A. Adoga</b>		Opobo Boat Yard Limited .. .. .	1088-1089
Activities of Price Control Board .. .. .	1111-1112	National Insurance Corporation of Nigeria Bill	2113-2114
Request for the creation of a new state .. ..	1278	<b>Chief Yomi Akintola</b>	
<b>Mr David Afaityo</b>		Federal Government Corporations .. .. .	1593-1594
Declaration of right to economic activities	1989-1999	Guarantee of Foreign Loans .. .. .	1449
Nigeria Airways .. .. .	1876-1877	Manufacture of low cost cars for workers	1353
		Minimum Wage .. .. .	1521
		National Voluntary Youth Organisation ..	1942
		<b>Mr Jire O. Akintunde</b>	
		Manufacture of low cost cars for workers	1351
		<b>Mr Funsho Akinyosoye</b>	
		The Lagos-Ibadan Expressway .. .. .	1193-1194
		<b>Mr M. J. Akpabio</b>	
		Black Maria suspects fatality .. .. .	1855
		Insurance Companies .. .. .	1979-1980
		Medical Services .. .. .	1472-1473
		Minimum Wage .. .. .	1538-1539
		Plight of Nigerian students in Overseas Institu- tions .. .. .	1031-1033

National Assembly Debates (Representatives)

INDEX—continued

	Column		Column
<b>Chief Stephen Ikpoku Alete</b>		<b>Mr Salawu Atimar</b>	
Adjournment—Participation in Debates	1071-1072	National Provident Fund	1388
Thanks to the President	2024		
Audit Report	1774, 1775, 1776	<b>Mr David Atta</b>	
Equitable Distribution of Capital Investments	1549	Admission of Students into Federal Institutions	1220-1222
Federal Capital Territory	1242-1243	International Centre for Child Study	2007-2009
Nigerian Embassies	1422-1424	Minimum Wage	1528-1529
Plight of Nigerian Students in Overseas Institutions	1029-1030	Police Service Commission Bill	1947-1949
The DC 10 Aircraft	1579-1580	Situation in Zimbabwe	1300-1301
		Zimbabwe—Congrats Mr Mugabe	1889-1890
<b>Mr Gambo Alhaji</b>			
Fight against corruption	1395-1396	<b>Mr Atuwu</b>	
National Voluntary Youth Organisation	1397-1399	Adjournment—Three main Nigerian Languages on Television	1038-1040
	1943	Committee on the creation of New States	1173
<b>Mr Inua Ali</b>		Personal Experience at the U.S. Congress	1018
Adjournment—Investigation into the delay in paying Government contractors	1202		
The Pilgrimage Fare	1755-1756	<b>Prince A. U. Awu-Ekpo</b>	
		Joint Committee on Remuneration	1702
<b>Mr Sidi H. Ali</b>		Self-help Development Projects	1821
Adjournment—Fire in Kanya Town	2086	The Pilgrimage Fare	1756, 1757, 1758
Police Delay of Members	1994		
Army Bill 1980	1736	<b>Mr A. E. Ayomanor</b>	
Committee on Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation	1115-1116	Federal Government Corporations	1592-1593
Membership of the Union of African Parliaments	1956-1957		
National Provident Fund	1391-1392	<b>B</b>	
Nigerian Embassies	1425-1426	<b>Mrs Biola Babatope</b>	
Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree	1614-1616, 1977	Adjournment—Business of the House	1494
Opobo Boatyard Limited	1088	Formation of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association	1953
Personal Explanation—Nigeria Press	1248	International Centre for Child Study	2017-2018
Supplementary Appropriation Bill	2155-2156	Natural Gas	1361-1362, 1364
The DC-10 Aircraft	1575-1576	Recall of University Staff involved in the 1978 Students Crises	1670
The Lagos-Ibadan Expressway	1192-1193		
The Situation in Zimbabwe	1337	<b>Mr T. O. Badejo</b>	
The Universal Primary Education Scheme	1805	Adjournment—Presidential System of Government	1070
Water Supply	1507	Audit Report	1767-1771
		Equitable Distribution of Capital Investments	1554-1555
<b>Alhaji M. S. Aliyu</b>		Financial Year Act, 1980	1375-1376
Water Supply	1505	Government Contracts	1061-1062
		Request for the Creation of New States	1279
<b>Mr L. A. Alli</b>		The Universal Primary Education Scheme	1803
Condition of Roads in Lagos State	1126-1127		
		<b>Alhaji I. G. Bakwai</b>	
<b>Mr M. G. Alo-Nwokocha</b>		Adjournment—Establishment of Tobacco Industry in Sokoto State	1264
National Provident Fund	1388-1389	Suspension of Motion	1822
Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree, 1977	1613	The Pilgrimage Fare	1750, 1751, 1753-1755, 1757
<b>Engineer Sam O. Alu</b>		<b>Alhaji Yahaya Bichi</b>	
Guarantee of Foreign loans	1446-1448, 1449-1450	Lifting of the restriction on the Importation of Cars	1925-1926
Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree, 1977	1611-1612	Minimum Wage	1537
		Oil Spillage	1840-1841
<b>Col. Amadi</b>			
Adjournment—The Business Committee	2040-2041	<b>Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel</b>	
Activities of Price Control Board	1099	Adjournment—African Cup of Nations	1037-1038
Investigation of NNPC Missing Money	2137-2139	Congratulatory Message to the Green Eagles	2096
		Implementation of Section 14 (3) and 157 (5) of the Constitution	1143-1147
<b>Mr T. C. Amasiatu</b>		Lifting the Restriction on the Importation of Cars	1918-1919
Lifting the Restriction on the Importation of cars	1920-1921	National Road Transport Authority	1788-1789
Medical Services	1471	Natural Gas	1371
Small-scale Industries	1258-1260	Nigerian National Supply Company Limited	1661-1662
		Oil Spillage	1846-1847
<b>Alhaji M. A. Amzart</b>		Omission of Parliamentary Privilege in the Constitution	1182
Implementation of Sections 14 (3) and 157 (5) of the Constitution	1156	Self-help Development Project	1818-1819
		The DC 10 Aircraft	1582-1583
<b>Mr G. I. Anukwuem</b>			
Activities of Price Control Board	1098-1099, 1100-1101	<b>Mr Mohammed Bornoma</b>	
National Voluntary Youth Organisation	1943	Pensioners and Retiring Benefits	1643-1644
<b>Mr R. O. Apalara</b>			
Opobo Boatyard Limited	1080		
<b>Mr Shem E. Asuk</b>			
Nigerian National Supply Company Limited	1658-1660		
Opobo Boatyard Limited	1086-1087, 1090-1091		
<b>Dr Emmanuel Atanu</b>			
Federal Capital Territory	1241-1242		
Implementation of Section 14 (13) and 157 (5) of the Constitution	1147-1149		
Restoration of two-tier system in technical Education	1437-1440		

National Assembly Debates (Representatives)

INDEX—continued

C	Column	Column	
<b>Mr B. A. Chaha</b>		<b>Mr Tom Egbuwoku</b>	
Membership of the Union of African Parliaments .. .. .	1955-1956	Burial Arrangement for Mr Bassey .. .. .	1066
The DC 10 Aircraft .. .. .	1580	Insurance Companies .. .. .	1937-1938, 1965-1969
The Universal Primary Education Scheme .. .. .	1807-1809	Membership of the Union of African Parliaments .. .. .	1959-196
<b>Mr I. U. Chima</b>		National Youth Service Corps .. .. .	1281-1285
Vehicle Basic Allowance for workers .. .. .	1481	Oil Spillage .. .. .	1842-1844
<b>Clerk of the House of Representatives</b>		Personal Experience at the U.S. Congress .. .. .	1017-1018
Air Force Bill, 1980 .. .. .	1749-1750	Study tour of the United States .. .. .	1176-1177
Army Bill, 1980 .. .. .	1745-1746	Supplementary Appropriation Bill .. .. .	2145-2147
National Insurance Corporation of Nigeria (Amendment) Bill, 1980 .. .. .	2112-2113	The Nigerian Embassies .. .. .	1416-1419
Navy Board Bill .. .. .	1934-1935		
Nigerian Reinsurance Corporation Bill .. .. .	2110	<b>Mr E. Ejiga</b>	
Security and Exchange Control Bill .. .. .	2119-2120	Construction of planned Federal Roads .. .. .	1879-1880
<b>Mr E. O. Chukwu</b>		Nigerian National Supply Company Limited .. .. .	1662
Activities of Price Control Board .. .. .	1102	<b>Mr Emmanuel Ejoh</b>	
Condition of Service of Judges and Magistrates .. .. .	1960	Medical Services .. .. .	1470-1471
<b>Mr P. U. Chukwu</b>		<b>Mr Edet A. Ekpo</b>	
Adjournment—Oil in Imo State .. .. .	2120-2121	Adjournment—Extension of Railway line to Sokoto State .. .. .	1265
Natural Gas .. .. .	1373	Fire disaster at Uyo Market .. .. .	1265-1266
Water Supply .. .. .	1503-1504	Lifting the restriction on the Importation of cars .. .. .	1920
<b>D</b>		<b>Mr V. U. Ekpo</b>	
<b>Mr D. D. Dafuan</b>		Opobo Boatyard Limited .. .. .	1091-1092
Admission of Students into Federal Institutions .. .. .	1222-1223	Personal Explanation .. .. .	1794
Supplementary Appropriation Bill .. .. .	2153	<b>Mr P. O. Eleke</b>	
<b>Alhaji Lawal N. Daura</b>		Adjournment—Owerri Passport Office .. .. .	1266-1267
Export Cash Crops .. .. .	1695-1696	Communication Facilities .. .. .	1493
Lifting the Restriction on the Importation of Cars .. .. .	19 11	Export cash Crops .. .. .	1691-1694
Self-help Development Project .. .. .	1819	<b>Dr E. C. Emekekwe</b>	
Water supply .. .. .	1501-1502	Federal Government Corporations .. .. .	1594-1595
<b>Alhaji Hamman Dikko</b>		Pensioners and retiring benefits .. .. .	1637
Black Maria Suspects Fatality .. .. .	1855	Situation in Zimbabwe .. .. .	1313-1314
Manufacture of low cost cars for workers .. .. .	1348-1349	West African Examinations Council .. .. .	1141-1142
Medical Services .. .. .	1467-1468	Zimbabwe—Congrats Mr Mugabe .. .. .	1893-1894
National Dock Labour .. .. .	1771-1773	<b>Alhaji A. H. Enagi</b>	
National Provident Fund .. .. .	1348-1349	Railway Services linking all States Capital .. .. .	1901
Post Offices .. .. .	1456	<b>Mr Clement Erundu</b>	
<b>Mr E. C. Ebo</b>		Border Disputes and Clashes .. .. .	1686
Oil Spillage .. .. .	1835-1836	Fight Against Corruption .. .. .	1404
Post Offices .. .. .	1451-1454	Manufacture of low cost cars for workers .. .. .	1345-1346
Railway Service linking all State Capitals .. .. .	1899-1901	<b>Mr I. Mac-Eteli</b>	
<b>Dr John E. Eburuche</b>		Natural Gas .. .. .	1371-1372
Export cash crops .. .. .	1696-1697	Oil Spillage .. .. .	1829-1831
Manufacture of low cost cars for workers .. .. .	1346-1348	The Lagos-Ibadan Expressway .. .. .	1189
National Provident Fund .. .. .	1389-1390	The National Provident Fund .. .. .	1383-1385
<b>Mr E. O. Echhatabu</b>		The Universal Primary Education Scheme .. .. .	1805
Adjournment—Conduct of Affairs in the House .. .. .	2035	<b>Mr Edet Bassey Etienam</b>	
Oil Spillage Areas .. .. .	2050	Adjournment—Motions .. .. .	1992-1993
Students Unrest .. .. .	2049	Procedure in the House .. .. .	1598
Federal Mortgage Bank .. .. .	2051,2052	Announcement—Personal Explanation .. .. .	1234
Black Maria Suspect Fatality .. .. .	1860-1861	Army Bill 1980 .. .. .	1738-1739
Federal Mortgage Bank .. .. .	2019	Burial Arrangement for Mr Bassey .. .. .	1065
<b>Mr A. Okon Eddy</b>		Committee on Discipline of Members .. .. .	1119-1120
Boarder Disputes and Clashes .. .. .	1683-1684	Declaration of Right to Economic Activities .. .. .	1848-1849
Post Offices .. .. .	1455-1456	Financial Year Act, 1980 .. .. .	1377
<b>Mr Efiom Ita Efiom</b>		Labour Situation in the Country .. .. .	2139-2141
Post Offices .. .. .	1457-1458	National Dock Labour Bill .. .. .	2126-2120
<b>Mr M. O. Effiong</b>		National Dock Labour (Amendment) Bill, 1980 .. .. .	2107
Export cash corps .. .. .	1697	Navy Board Bill .. .. .	
Vehicle Basic Allowance for Workers .. .. .	1488-1489	Nigerian Council for Management Development Bill .. .. .	2106-2126
<b>Dr P. L. Egberipou</b>		Personal Explanation .. .. .	2129
National Youth Service Corps .. .. .	1291-1293	Request for the Creation of New State .. .. .	1766-1794
Oil Spillage .. .. .	1831-1832	Situation in Zimbabwe .. .. .	1280
Railway Services linking all State Capitals .. .. .	1902-1903	The Nigeria Council for Management Development .. .. .	1295-1298
		The Pilgrimage Fare .. .. .	2125-2126
		Vehicle Basic Allowance for Workers .. .. .	1751
		Zimbabwe—Congrats Mr Mugabe .. .. .	1485-1487
		<b>Chief Thomas Ekpo Etuk</b>	1892-1893
		National Road Transport Authority .. .. .	1788
		The Pilgrimage Fare .. .. .	1756



## INDEX—continued

	Column		Column
<b>Mr J. O. Eze</b>		<b>Alhaji Iiyasu Hong</b>	
Adjournment—Low Income Group and Destitutes in Nigeria .. .. .	1123-1124	Committee on Discipline of Members .. .. .	1121
Ban on Food Items .. .. .	1124	Medical services .. .. .	1468-1469
Activities of Price Control Board .. .. .	1101-1102	Small-scale Industries .. .. .	1262
Minimum Wage .. .. .	1540-1541		
National Youth Service Corps .. .. .	1286-1287		
		<b>Mr Dauda A. Ibrahim</b>	
		Admission of students into Federal Institutions .. .. .	1226
		Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree .. .. .	1977-1615-1619
		<b>Alhaji Idris Ibrahim</b>	
		Committee on Discipline of Members .. .. .	1122-1123
		Congratulatory Message to the Green Eagles .. .. .	2098-2099
		Government Contracts .. .. .	1059-1060
			1061
		Implementation of Section 14 (3) and 157 (5) of the Constitution .. .. .	1158
		Nigerian Embassies .. .. .	1426-1428
		Personal Experience at the U.S. Congress .. .. .	1011-1017
		The Situation in Zimbabwe .. .. .	1336
		<b>Alhaji Sa-idu Ibrahim</b>	
		Adjournment—Standing Orders .. .. .	1620
		Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree 1977 .. .. .	1613-16-14
		<b>Mr I. C. Ibrahim</b>	
		The Universal Primary Education Scheme .. .. .	1809-1810
		<b>Mr Amos Idakula</b>	
		Adjournment Sitings of the House .. .. .	1073
		Announcemet Explanation by a Member of the Remuneration Committee .. .. .	1382
		The DC 10 Aircraft .. .. .	1577
		<b>Dr Gordon Idang</b>	
		Federal Capital Territory .. .. .	1244-1245
		International Centre for Child Study .. .. .	2013
		Nigerian Reinsurance Corporation Bill .. .. .	2110-2109
		The Federal Mortgage Bank .. .. .	2018,2020-2022
		Request for the creation of a New State .. .. .	1276
		The Lagos-Ibadan Expressway .. .. .	1191-1192
		Select Committee on Public Relations .. .. .	1999
		<b>Mr P. E. S. Ideh</b>	
		Membership of the Union of African Parliaments .. .. .	1955
		<b>Mr S. M. C. Ihekweazu</b>	
		Announcement Business Committee .. .. .	1462
		Construction of Planned Federal Roads .. .. .	1881-1883
		Nigerian National Supply Company Limited .. .. .	1665-1666
		The Nigeria Police Force .. .. .	1711-1715
		<b>Mr O. Ijaola</b>	
		Minimum Wage .. .. .	1533-1534
		The Lagos-Ibadan Expressway .. .. .	119-1197
		<b>Mr Ime J. Ikpat</b>	
		Equitable distribution of Capital Investments .. .. .	1548-1549
		Lifting the Restriction on the Importation of Cars .. .. .	1910-1911
		The DC 10 Aircraft .. .. .	1583-1584
		<b>Chief Okon Ikpeme</b>	
		National Voluntary Youth Organisation .. .. .	1939-1942
		<b>Chief A. O. Imo</b>	
		Fight against corruption .. .. .	1401-1402
		<b>Mr A. A. Inoh</b>	
		Natural Gas .. .. .	1368
		Opobo Boatyard Limited .. .. .	1078-1081
		Railway Service linking all State Capitals .. .. .	1904
		<b>Mr E. U. U. Inyang</b>	
		Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree 1977 .. .. .	1611
		West African Examinations Council .. .. .	1138
		<b>Mr Y. U. Iortim</b>	
		Border disputes and clashes .. .. .	1676-1677
		<b>Mr Aliyu Isa</b>	
		Adjournment—Black Maria Victims .. .. .	1992
		Activities of Price Control Board .. .. .	1104
		Appointment of the House Budget Committee .. .. .	2062
		Black Maria Suspects Fatality .. .. .	1856
		Manufacture of low cost cars for workers .. .. .	1349
		<b>Mr Garba Isyaku</b>	
		Post Offices .. .. .	1454-145

National Assembly Debates (Representatives)

INDEX—continued

	Column		Column
<b>Mr Jonas O. Iwuagwu</b>		<b>Prince Lateef B. Kataiye Yanjue</b>	
Equitable Distribution of Capital		Activities of Price Control Board .. ..	1107
Investments .. .. .	1550-1551	Pensioners and retiring Benefits .. ..	1643
Insurance Companies .. .. .	1976-1978	<b>Mr Mohammed Shuaibu Kaugama</b>	
Medical Services .. .. .	1463-1465	Activities of Price Control Board .. ..	1104-1105
<b>Mr F. O. Iyayi</b>		Army Bill, 1980 .. .. .	1735-1736
Adjournment—President's visit to Bendel		Insurance Companies .. .. .	1983-1984
State .. .. .	1648-1649	<b>Mr Blessing E. Kayode</b>	
Black Maria Suspects Fatality .. .. .	1856-1858	National Voluntary Youth Organisations	1937-1939
Committee on Defence .. .. .	1798	<b>Alhaji S. Konduga</b>	
Financial Year Act, 1980 .. .. .	1375	Committee on the creation of New States .. ..	1174
Pensioners and retiring Benefits .. .. .	1641-1643	Insurance Companies .. .. .	1980-1982
Police Service Commission Bill .. .. .	1949-1950	Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation	1054-1055
<b>Mr Damisa Jimoh</b>		Personal Explanation—Leader of the House	
Adjournment—Ibadan University Students		in Borno State House of Assembly .. ..	1250-1251
rampage .. .. .	2041-2042	The Universal Primary Education Scheme	1812-1813
Statements of some Governors and			
Leaders .. .. .	1069-1070	<b>L</b>	
Three main Nigerian Languages on		<b>Alhaji Sule Lamido</b>	
Television .. .. .	1040	Adjournment—Presidential Appointments—	
Activities of Price Control Board .. .. .	1107-1108	Medical Services .. .. .	1075-1076
Black Maria suspect fatality .. .. .	1858	Water Supply .. .. .	1473-1474
Federal Capital Territory .. .. .	1241	Zimbabwe—Congrats Mr Mugabe .. ..	1500
Financial Year Act, 1980 .. .. .	1378		1890-181
Manufacture of low cost cars for workers	1339	<b>Mr John Laven</b>	
<b>K</b>		Air Force (Amendment) Bill 1980 .. ..	1747
<b>Mr M. S. Kagama</b>		Army (Amendment) Bill 1980 .. ..	1726-1731
Adjournment—Committee Reports .. ..	1493	Army Council Bill .. .. .	1675
<b>Alhaji Muhammadu Ali Kaita</b>		Committee on Defence .. .. .	1798-1799
Water Supply .. .. .	1502	Joint Session of the National Assembly ..	2056
<b>Mr Sani Danbare Kalgo</b>		Navy Board Bill .. .. .	1928-1929
Adjournment—Extension of Railway Line		Vehicles Basic Allowance for Workers ..	1491-1492
to Sokoto State .. .. .	1265	<b>M</b>	
Sokoto International Airport .. .. .	1264-1265	<b>Mr S. D. A. Magani</b>	
Financial Year Act, 1980 .. .. .	1378	Manufacture of low cost cars for workers	1344-1345
Manufacture of Low Cost Cars for		<b>Mr J. M. Mallo</b>	
Workers .. .. .	1342-1343	Nigeria n Enterprises Promotion Decree 1977	1607-1608
Personal Explanation—Nigerian Television	1247	Railway Services Linking all State Capitals	1903-1904
Railway Services Linking all State Capitals	1901-1902	<b>Mr Audu Mbicho</b>	
<b>Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo</b>		Minimum Wage .. .. .	1539
Adjournment—Beer Parlours along the		<b>Mr Idirisu N. Medugu</b>	
highways .. .. .	1268	Adjournment—Supremacy of the House of Repre-	
The Federal Character of the President	1268-1269	sentatives .. .. .	1075
Activities of Price Control Board .. .. .	1112-1113	Opobo Boatyard Limited .. .. .	1096
Announcements—African Parliamentary		West African Examinations Council .. ..	1133
Union .. .. .	2087-2088	<b>Mr Bukar Mele</b>	
Announcements—Borno State House of		Lifting the Restriction on the Importation of	
Assembly .. .. .	1317	Cars .. .. .	1913-1914
Deportation of the Majority Leader in the		The DC 10 Aircraft .. .. .	1576-1577
Burial Arrangements for Deceased		<b>Mr C. A. Modebe</b>	
Committee on Discipline of Members	1117-1118,1119	Water Supply .. .. .	1504-1505
Composition of the Special Committee on the		<b>Alhaji Abdulahi Mohammed</b>	
Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation	1114	Natural Gas .. .. .	1373-1374
Congratulatory Message to the Green Eagles	2100-2094	<b>Mr Z. Momodu</b>	
Easter Break 1980 .. .. .	2102-2134	Insurance Companies .. .. .	1985-1986
Financial Year Act, 1980 .. .. .	1379	Medical Services .. .. .	1474
Formation of the Commonwealth Parliamentary		<b>Mr P. Mshelia</b>	
Association .. .. .	1951-1954	Restoration of two-tier system in Technical Edu-	
Member, Mr S. U. Bassey .. .. .	1063-1064-1065	cation .. .. .	1434-1437
Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation	1057-1058	The Universal Primary Education Scheme	1802-1805
Opobo Boat Yard Limited .. .. .	1084	<b>Dr Junaidu S. Mohammed</b>	
Parliamentary Privileges and Immunities	1630	Adjournment—(a) Conduct of Affairs in the	
Personal Explanation—Hon. S.U. Bassey's		House .. .. .	234-235
Burial .. .. .	1251	(b) Non display of the President's Portrait ..	1203
Visit of Traditional Rulers from Anambra	1415	(c) Senate/House relationship .. .. .	1202-1203
<b>Mr E. N. Kanu</b>		(d) 1980 Budget .. .. .	1993-1994
Equitable Distribution of Capital		Activities of Price Control Board .. ..	1113-1114
Investments .. .. .	1549-1550	Composition of the Special Committee on the	
Lifting the restriction on the importation		Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation	1114-1115
of Cars .. .. .	1923-1924	Congratulatory message to the Green Eagles	2095
<b>Mr Salisu M. Kanya</b>		Implementation of Sections 14 (3) and 157 (5) of	
Federal Capital Territory .. .. .	1242	the Constitution .. .. .	1155-1156, 1157
Lifting the restriction on the importation of			
Cars .. .. .	1906-1907		
<b>Alhaji Saidu Kanti</b>			
Audit Report .. .. .	1773-1774		

National Assembly Debates (Representatives)

INDEX—continued

	Column		Column
International Centre for Child Study ..	2014-2015	International Centre for Child Study ..	2000-200
Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation ..	1055-1056	Nigerian Embassies .. .. .	1424-1425
Oil Spillage .. .. .	1839-1840	Plight of Nigerian Students in Overseas ..	
Psychiatric Hospitals .. .. .	1167-1168	Institutions .. .. .	1018-1022
Situation in Zimbabwe .. .. .	1329-1330	The Situation in Zimbabwe .. .. .	1327
The Nigerian Council for Management Develop- ment .. .. .	2126		
Zimbabwe—congrats Mr Mugabe .. .. .	1894-1895		
<b>Alhaji Muhammed Mustapha</b>		<b>Dr Eze Nwala</b>	
Natural Gas .. .. .	1368	Announcement—Usurpation of Legislative Powers by the Executive .. .. .	1272
The Lagos-Ibadan Expressway .. .. .	1393	Votes and Proceeding .. .. .	1272
<b>Mr M. Yusuf Ibn Muhammed</b>		Committee on Discipline of Members .. .. .	1121
Adjournment—Local government elections ..	1126	Housing Scheme for Nigerians .. .. .	2026-2029
Audit Report .. .. .	1775-1776	Manufacture of Low Cost Cars for Workers .. .. .	1337-1339
International Centre for Child Study .. .. .	2016-2017	National Road Transport Authority .. .. .	1787-1788
National Road Transport Corporation .. .. .	1777-1781	National Youth Service Corps .. .. .	1292
The situation in Zimbabwe .. .. .	1330-1331	Oil spillage .. .. .	1833-1834
		Pensioner and retiring benefits .. .. .	1639
<b>Alhaji Lirwanu Garba Musa</b>		<b>Mr F. N. C. Nwandison</b>	
Export Cash Crops .. .. .	1694-1965	Natural Gas .. .. .	1372-1373
Medical Services .. .. .	1470	Reactivation of Power Stations .. .. .	1936
Request for the creation of a new state .. .. .	1129	<b>Mr Andrew Nwankwo</b>	
<b>Alhaji M. B. Mustapha</b>		National Provident Fund .. .. .	1389
Admission of students into Federal Institu- tions .. .. .	1207-1210	<b>Mr E. N. Nweke</b>	
Adjournment—Nigerian Railway Corporation ..	1071	Manufacture of Low Cost Cars for Workers ..	1343-1344
Insurance Companies .. .. .	1974	Opobo Boatyard Limited .. .. .	1093,1094
Membership of the union of African Parlia- ments .. .. .	1958-1959	Vehicle Basic Allowance for Workers .. .. .	1479-1481
Pensioners and retiring benefits .. .. .	1635	<b>Mr J. M. Nzalak</b>	
Plight of Nigerian Students in Overseas ..		Lifting the Restriction on the Importation of Cars .. .. .	1908-1909
Institutions .. .. .	1026-1027		
Psychiatric Hospitals .. .. .	1166	<b>O</b>	
<b>Alhaji M. I. Mustapha</b>		<b>Mr Peter Olayemi Obaoye</b>	
Export Cash Crops .. .. .	1697-1698	The DC 10 Aircraft .. .. .	1572-1573
National Road Transport Authority .. .. .	1787	<b>Mr K. R. Obioha</b>	
<b>N</b>		Adjournment—Burning of siezed contraband goods .. .. .	2043
<b>Mr Mohammed Lawal Na-Rogo</b>		Erosion Problem in Eastern states .. .. .	1200
Announcement—Personal Explanation .. .. .	1162	Letter of Appreciation to the President .. .. .	1200
Border Disputes and clashes .. .. .	1688-1689	Announcement—National Insurance Corporation of Nigeria Bill .. .. .	2101
Federal Capital Territory .. .. .	1236	Nigerian Re-Insurance Corporation Bill .. .. .	2101
Fight against Corruption .. .. .	1405-1406	Securities and Exchange Commission Bill .. .. .	2102
Formation of the Commonwealth Parliamen- tary Association .. .. .	1952	National Insurance Corporation of Nigeria (Amendment) Bill, 1980 .. .. .	2111-2112
Insurance Companies .. .. .	1969-1971	Nigeria Reinsurance Corporation (Amendment) Bill .. .. .	2107-2108-2110
National Voluntary Youth Organisation .. .. .	1943-1944	Securities and Exchange Control (Amendment) Bill, 1980 (Comm) .. .. .	2118-2119
Psychiatric Hospitals .. .. .	1165	<b>Dr Chikwe H. Obihara</b>	
Railway Services linking all State Capitals ..	1904-1905	Federal Capital Territory .. .. .	1244
Self-help Development Project .. .. .	1820-1821	Supplementary Appropriation Bill .. .. .	2151-2153
The DC. 10 Aircraft .. .. .	1574-1575	<b>Mr T. N. Ochiama</b>	
West African Examinations Council .. .. .	1133-1134	Adjournment—Construction of Airports .. ..	2404
<b>Mr Hamza M. Nganjiwa</b>		Public Accounts Committee .. .. .	2092
Activities of Price Control Board .. .. .	1103-1104	Announcement .. .. .	1600
Border Disputes and Clashes .. .. .	1687-1688	Announcements—Members' Welfare .. .. .	1674-1675
Congratulatory Message to the Green Eagles ..	2097	Black Maria Suspects Fatality .. .. .	1854
Deportation of Shugaba Abdurahman .. .. .	1567	Despatch Riders .. .. .	1766-1767
Equitable Distribution of Capital Investi- ments .. .. .	1531-1552	Manufacture of low cost cars for workers ..	1353
Fight Against Corruption .. .. .	1405	Minimum Wage .. .. .	1511-1512
Implementation of Section 14 (3) and 157 (5) of the Constitution .. .. .	1154-1155		1513-1514
Oil Spillage .. .. .	1838-1839		1515
Pensioners and retiring Benefits .. .. .	1639-1640	Remuneration .. .. .	1628
The Nigeria Airways .. .. .	1870-1871	Small-Scale Industries .. .. .	1260-1261
The situation in Zimbabwe .. .. .	1328-1329	<b>Mr J. O. Odebunmi</b>	
Water Supply .. .. .	1505-1507	National Voluntary Youth Organisation .. ..	1942
Zimbabwe—Congrats Mr Mugabe .. .. .	1890		
<b>Mr Appolus N. Noku</b>			
Adjournment—President's Christmas Party for Children .. .. .	1073-1074		
River Basins .. .. .	1074		
Sittings of the House .. .. .	1073		
Congratulatory Message to the Green .. .. .	2096-2099		
Eagles .. .. .	2096-2099		

National Assembly Debates (Representatives)

INDEX—continued

Chief S. A. Oduntan	Column	Mr John Okoye	Column
Adjournment—Declaration of Assets ..	1068-1069	Minimum Wage .. .. .	1527
Announcement—Daily Times Publication ..	1318	<b>Mr M. C. Okoye</b>	
*Standing Orders .. .. .	1319	The Lagos-Ibadan Expressway .. ..	1189-1190
Lifting the Restriction on the Importation of Cars .. .. .	1914, 1916-1917	<b>Mr M. Femi Okun</b>	
National Provident Fund .. .. .	1385-1386	Railway Services Linking all State capitals ..	1897-1899
<b>Mr Aka Ogbobe</b>		<b>Prof. Opeyemi Ola</b>	
Fight against Corruption .. .. .	1399-1401	Admission of Students into Federal Institutions .. .. .	1227-1230
Natural Gas .. .. .	1372	Appropriation Bill .. .. .	2090
The Lagos-Ibadan Expressway .. .. .	1186-1188	Housing Scheme for Nigerians .. .. .	2029-2031
Water Supply .. .. .	1497-1499	Implementation of Sections 14 (3) and 157 (5) of the Constitution .. .. .	1156
<b>Mr Patrick E. Ogida</b>		Minimum Wage .. .. .	1534-1535
Plight of Nigerian Students in Overseas Institutions .. .. .	1022	Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation ..	1050-1051
Rail Servcies linking all State Capitals ..	1896-1897	Personal Explanation .. .. .	1797
<b>Dr O. Ogunkoya</b>		Plight of Nigerian Students in Overseas Institutions .. .. .	1034-1036
Adjournment—Comments by NAP Leader ..	1620	Recall of University Staff involved in the 1978 Students Crisis .. .. .	1667-1669
Army Bill 1980 .. .. .	1731-1732	Situation in Zimbabwe .. .. .	1302-1309
Green Eagles .. .. .	1626-1627	Zimbabwe—Congrats Mr Mugabe .. .. .	1891-1892
International Centre for Child Study ..	2005-2006	<b>Mr S. A. Olaewe</b>	
Psychiatric Hospitals .. .. .	1169-1170	Medical Services .. .. .	1467
West African Examinations Council ..	1134-1135	<b>Mr Isaac Ayodeji Olaleru</b>	
<b>Mr Akin Ogunseye</b>		Adjournment—Working Method in the House ..	2046
Manufacture of low cost cars for workers ..	1349-1351	Border Disputes and Clashes .. .. .	1689
<b>Mr Ogwe K. Ogwe</b>		Navy Board Bill .. .. .	1933
Admission of students into Federal Institutions ..	1213, 1219-1220	Oil Spillage .. .. .	1844-1845
Adjournment—Teachers salaries .. .. .	2033	Opobo Boatyard Limited .. .. .	1084
Burial Arrangement for Mr Bassey .. .. .	1066	The DC 10 Aircraft .. .. .	1573
International Centre for Child Study ..	2010-2011	<b>Mr Samuel Gbadegesin Olaosebikan</b>	
National Provident Fund .. .. .	1386-1387	Financial Year Act, 1980 .. .. .	1376
Nigerian National Supply Company Limited ..	1652-1657	<b>Mr O. Olarewaju</b>	
Pensioner and retiring benefits .. .. .	1636-1637	Vehicle Basic Allowance for workers .. ..	1489
Personal Explanation—Deportation .. .. .	1413	<b>Mr Olu Olofinlade</b>	
Plight of Nigerian Students in Overseas Institutions .. .. .	1028-1029	Minimum Wage .. .. .	1516-1517
Recall of university staff involved in the 1978 students crisis .. .. .	1669	<b>Mr S. O. Olowu</b>	
<b>Mr M. A. Oje</b>		Adjournment—The plight of people of Ikale ..	1355
Lifting the Restriction on the importation of cars ..	1912	Federal Capital Territory .. .. .	1238, 1239, 1240
Small-scale Industries .. .. .	1260	Nigerian Embassies .. .. .	1419-1420
<b>Mr Ekok Ojogu</b>		Opobo Boatyard Limited .. .. .	1089
Railway Service linking all State Capitals ..	1902	<b>Mr M. A. Olukoya</b>	
Request of the creation of a New State .. ..	1274	Small-Scale Industries .. .. .	1255-1258
The Universal Primary Education Scheme ..	1806-1807	Zimbabwe—Congrats Mr Mugabe .. .. .	1889
<b>Mr J. C. Ojukwu</b>		<b>Prince T. O. Olusi</b>	
Announcement—Votes and Proceedings .. ..	1271	Fight against Corruption .. .. .	1396, 1397-1399
Black Maria Suspects Fatality .. .. .	1853-1853	Minimum Wage .. .. .	1522
Federal Capital Territory .. .. .	1243	National Road Transport Authority .. ..	1789-1790
Committee on Discipline of Members .. .. .	1120-1121	National Voluntary Youth Organisation .. ..	1962
Nigerian National Supply Company Limited ..	1663-1665	Navy Board Bill .. .. .	1930-1933
Personal Explanation—Nigerian Television ..	1247-1248	Request for the creation of a New State .. ..	1277
Select Committee on Public Relation .. .. .	1999	Self-help development project .. .. .	1816-1818
<b>Mr Peter C. Okeke</b>		The pilgrimage Fare .. .. .	1752
Vehicle Basic Allowance for workers .. .. .	1481-1482	<b>Mr C. A. Oluwatosin</b>	
<b>Mr L. O. Okoi</b>		Insurance Companies .. .. .	1986
Activities of Price Control Board .. .. .	1108	<b>Mr Fola Omidiji</b>	
Personal Explanation .. .. .	1320	Adjournment—Amended Nigerian Constitution .. .. .	1620-1621
Plight of Nigerian Students in Overseas Institutions .. .. .	1025-1026	Institute of Strategic Studies .. .. .	1621-1622
<b>Mr Joseph Okoli</b>		Border Disputes and Clashes .. .. .	1690
Activities of Price Control Board .. .. .	1102-1103	Equitable distribution of Capital Investments ..	1555-1556
		Misconduct of Gani Fawehinmi .. .. .	1700-1701
		Nigerian National Petroleum Coporation ..	1051-1053, 1057
		Railway Services linking all State Capitals ..	1905-1906
		Vehicle Basic Allowance for Workers .. .. .	1487-1488
		<b>Mr A. O. Omisore</b>	
		Lifting of the Restriction on the Importation of cars .. .. .	1927-1928
		<b>Chief Olusola O. Omonira</b>	
		Equitable distribution of Capital Investments ..	1553
		Lifting the Restriction on the Importations of cars .. .. .	1917-1918

National Assembly Debates (Representatives)

INDEX—continued

	Column		Column
Opobo Boat Yard Limited .. .. .	—1085	<b>Mr Akintunde Rotimi</b>	
The Universal Primary Education Scheme	1813-1814	Federal Capital Territory ... ..	1237-1238
Small-Scale Industries .. .. .	1262-1263	Membership of the Union of African Parliaments ... ..	1954
<b>Chief B. O. N. Omorua</b>		National Provident Fund ... ..	1392-133
Opobo Boatyard Limited .. .. .	1081-1083	S	
<b>Mr Mathew Olubode Oni</b>		<b>Mr G. B. Sadiku</b>	
Adjournment Committee on Public Accounts ..	2038	Army Bill, 1980 ... ..	1732-1734
Presidential Grants .. .. .	2038	National Road Transport Authority ...	1781-1783 1784-1786 1790
Public Accounts Committee .. .. .	2041-2092	Opobo Boatyard Limited ... ..	1085-1086 1087
Restoration of two-tier System in technical Education .. .. .	1444-1445	The situation in Zimbabwe ... ..	1333-1336
Vehicle Basic Allowance for workers ..	1489-1490	<b>Mr G. B. Sadiku</b>	
<b>Mr Effiong Ononokpono</b>		Adjournment—Cultivation of the Spirit of Nationalism in the House ... ..	1124-1126
Burial Arrangement for Mr Bassey ..	1067	Nigeria Police Force ... ..	1715-1720
Natural Gas .. .. .	1370-1371	<b>Mr Umaru Sadiq</b>	
National Provident Fund Management Board Bill .. .. .	2131	International Centre for Child Study ...	2013-2014
Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree 1977	1617-1619	Personal Explanation— ... ..	1651-1652
Petition .. .. .	1794-1705, 1706-1708	Psychiatric Hospitals— ... ..	1164-1165
The situation in Zimbabwe .. .. .	1332-1333	Small-Scale Industries— ... ..	1262
<b>Mr D. M. Onwuzulike</b>		The Universal Primary Education Scheme	1813
The DC 10 Aircraft .. .. .	1568-1571	<b>Prince J. S. Sangha</b>	
<b>Mr Johnson Oyedeji Opakanmi</b>		Army Bill, 1980 ... ..	1739-1740
Fight Against Corruption .. .. .	1406-1407	Border disputes and clashes ... ..	1677-1678
Pensioners and retiring benefits .. .. .	1643	Committee on Discipline of Members ...	1120
<b>Dr O. O. Oreh</b>		International Centre for Child Study ...	2009-2010
Federal Government Corporations ..	1591-1592	Minimum Wage ... ..	1526-1527
President's visit to Bendel State .. ..	1625-1626	National Provident Fund ... ..	1387-1388
The Nigeria Airways .. .. .	1867-1869	Plight of Nigerian Students in Overseas Institutions ... ..	1024-1025
West African Examinations Council ..	1138-1139	Situation in Zimbabwe ... ..	1311-1312
<b>Mr F. A. O. Osekita</b>		Zimbabwe—Congrats Mr Mugabe ... ..	1888
National Provident Fund .. .. .	1393-1394	<b>Dr J. Taribo Sekibo</b>	
<b>Mr Olatunwo Otegbeye</b>		Adjournment—Presidential system of Government ... ..	1070
Oil Spillage .. .. .	1841-1842	—Control of Emotions ... ..	1070
<b>Mr Roland Owie</b>		Oil Spillage ... ..	1826-1829
Announcement—Drafting of Bill ..	1432-1433	Report on Trip to oil spillage areas ...	2089
Black Maria Suspect Fatality .. .. .	1858	<b>Alhaji M. G. Shamaki</b>	
Plight of Nigerian Students in Overseas Institutions .. .. .	1023	Admission of Students into Federal Institutions .. .. .	1211-1212
<b>Mr J. O. Owoseni</b>		National Youth Service Corps .. ..	1288
Water Supply .. .. .	1508-1509	Supplementary Appropriation Bill ..	2148
<b>Mr Oluwole Oyatoba</b>		West African Examinations Council ..	1139-1140
Post Offices .. .. .	1457	<b>Mr S. A. Shiyabola</b>	
Psychiatric Hospitals .. .. .	1168-1169	Adjournment .. .. .	1068
<b>Mr G. N. Ozugha</b>		Employment in Federal Establishments ..	1068
The DC 10 Aircraft .. .. .	1577-1579	<b>Mr Rabi Shuaibu</b>	
The Lagos-Ibadan Expressway .. .. .	1189	Water Supply .. .. .	1507-1508
P		Restoration of two-tier system of Technical Education .. .. .	1440-1442
<b>Alhaji Yinusa Paiko</b>		<b>Dr E. J. Sowho</b>	
Appointment of the House Budget Committee	2064-2064	Adjournment—(a) Improper Motions ..	2014
The DC 10 Aircraft .. .. .	1581-1582	(b) Supplementary Budget .. .. .	2135-2136
<b>Mr Nuhu Poloma</b>		Implementation of Section 14 (3) and 157 (5) of the Constitution .. .. .	1150-1151
Admission of Students into Federal Institutions .. .. .	1210-1211	International Centre for Child Study ..	2011-2012
Activities of Price Control Board .. ..	1108-1110	Manufacture of low cost cars for workers	1341
Black Maria Suspects Fatality .. .. .	1859-1860	Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation	1048
Distinguished Visitor .. .. .	1421-1422	Oil Spillage .. .. .	1845-1846
Joint Session .. .. .	2058	Psychiatric Hospitals .. .. .	1171
National Insurance Corporation of Nigeria Bill	1114	Select Committee on Public Relation ..	1998
<b>Mr D. Prince-will</b>		Supplementary Appropriation Bill ..	1950-1951
Announcements—Personal Explanation ..	1179-1180	<b>Mr A. Sunday</b>	
Insurance Companies .. .. .	1972-1974	Activities of Price Control Board .. ..	1103
Manufacture of low cost cars for Workers	1339-1340	Minimum Wage .. .. .	1520
Minimum Wage .. .. .	1521-1522	<b>Alhaji A. Tuggar</b>	
Nigerian National Petroleum Corpora- tion .. .. .	1042-1046-1047	Faulty Air-condition plant .. .. .	1475-1476
Vehicle Basic Allowance for Workers ..	1484-1485	Joint Session .. .. .	2058
		Minimum wage .. .. .	1541-1542 1543
		Pensioners and Retiring Benefits .. ..	1632-1635
		Personal Explanation—Visit of Mohammed Ali	1411
		Situation in Zimbabwe .. .. .	1295

National Assembly Debates (Representatives)

INDEX—continued

U	Column	U	Column
<b>Dr I. B. Ufodu</b>		<b>Alhaji Muhammed Kabir Umar</b>	
Minimum Wage .. .. .	1540	Announcement—Distinguished Visitors—	
West African Examinations Council ..	1142-1143	Anambra State .. .. .	1432
<b>Mr J. K. Ugo</b>		Lifting the restriction on the importation of cars	1919
Equitable distribution of capital investments ..	1547	Restoration of two-tier system of Technical	
Lifting the restriction on the importation of cars	1910	Education .. .. .	1442-1443
Opobo Boatyard Limited .. .. .	1091	The Universal Primary Education Scheme	1799-1801 1804
<b>Mr M. O. Ugwu</b>		<b>W</b>	
Equitable distribution of capital investments	1544-1547	<b>Mr A. A. Waba</b>	
Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation	1048-1049 1051	Construction of planned Federal Roads ..	1877-1879
Parliamentary privileges and immunities ..	1631	Guarantee of Foreign Loans .. .. .	1450-1451
Personal Explanation .. .. .	1995	Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree ..	1977-1610
Supplementary Appropriation Bill ..	1950-2149	<b>Mr H. M. J. Wachuku</b>	
The Lagos-Ibadan Expressway .. .. .	1182-1186	Border disputes and clashes .. .. .	1682-1683
<b>Mr F. C. Ugwu</b>		<b>Mr Muhammadu Tudun Wada</b>	
National Youth Service Corps .. .. .	1285-1286	Appropriation Bill .. .. .	2090-2091
Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree 1977	1608-1609	Federal Capital Territory—Progress ..	1235-1236
Nigerian Reinsurance Corporation Bill ..	2011	Joint Session .. .. .	2059
Opobo Boatyard Limited .. .. .	1094	Opobo Boatyard Limited .. .. .	1096-1097
<b>Mr E. D. N. Uwandu</b>		Pensioners and retiring benefits .. .. .	1640-1641
Adjournment Even development in Nigeria ..	2036	<b>Mr S. U. Wanganga</b>	
First Presidential Budget .. .. .	2036	Adjournment—Inter State Trade ..	1646-1647
Air Force Bill, 1980 .. .. .	1748	Fight Against Corruption .. .. .	1402-1404
Announcement—Omission of Parliamentary		Implementation of Sections 14 (3) and	
privilege in the Constitution .. .. .	1217-1218	157 of the Constitution .. .. .	1151-1154
Army Bill, 1980 .. .. .	1737-1738 1741-1742 1743-1744	Membership of the Union of African	
Committee on the creation of New States	1175	Parliaments .. .. .	1957-1958
Declaration of Rights to Economic Activities	1847-1848 1987-1989	Request for the creation of a new state ..	1130
Federal Government Corporations ..	1584-1588	<b>Chief G. B. Wodi</b>	
Natural Gas .. .. .	1367-1368	Natural Gas .. .. .	1361-1364-1366
Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation	1054	Oil Spillage .. .. .	1836-1837
Nigerian Reinsurance Corporation Bill ..	2109	<b>Mr Godwin Wodi</b>	
<b>Mr G. N. Uwechue</b>		Opobo Boatyard Limited .. .. .	1094-1095
Black Maria Suspects Fatality .. .. .	1861-1862	Pensioners and retiring benefits .. .. .	1638-1639
Nigerian Enterprises Promotions Decree,		The Nigerian Council for Management	
1977 .. .. .	1478, 1605-1607	Development .. .. .	2126
Public petitions Committee Report ..	1708-1710	<b>Y</b>	
Recall of University Staff involved in 1978		<b>Mr A. B. Yahaya</b>	
students crisis .. .. .	1670	Appointment of the House Budget Committee	2062
The Lagos-Ibadan Expressway .. .. .	1190-1191	Control of drugs .. .. .	1036
The situation in Zimbabwe .. .. .	1325-1326	Nigerian National Supply Company Limited	1660-1661
<b>Mr J. U. Uyeh</b>		Personal Explanation .. .. .	1796-1797
Adjournment—Students Behaviour		Recall of University Staff involved in the	
The Situation in Zimbabwe .. .. .	1323-1324, 1325	students crisis .. .. .	6861
<b>Mr A. Ukpanah</b>		The Nigeria Airways .. .. .	1862-1867
Adjournment—National Flay .. .. .	2048-2049	<b>Alhaji Mohammed A. Yelwa</b>	
Opobo Boatyard Limited .. .. .	1089-1090	Admission of Students into Federal	
Small-scale industries .. .. .	1252-1255	Institutions .. .. .	1224-1225
The plight of the people of the Abak Local		Adjournment—Peace in the Country	1627
Government Area .. .. .	1200-1201	Army Bill, 1980 .. .. .	1736-1737
<b>Dr M. B. Ukpog</b>		Lifting the restriction on the importa-	
Army Bill 1980 .. .. .	1740-1741	tion of cars .. .. .	1924-1925
Committee on the Creation of New States	1172-1173	Minimum Wage .. .. .	1518-1519
Nigeria Airways .. .. .	1875-1876	National Road Transport Authority ..	1787
Restoration of two-tier system in Technical		Oil Spillage .. .. .	1837-1883
Education .. .. .	1443-1444	Supplementary Appropriation Bill ..	2153-2145
<b>Dr Mike Ukpog</b>		The DC 10 Aircraft .. .. .	1576
Adjournment—(a) Nigeria Policemen ..	1496	Vehicle Basic Allowance for Workers ..	1482
(b) Retirement Benefits .. .. .	1494-1495	<b>Mr Folorunsho Yunusa</b>	
(c) University of Calabar .. .. .	1072-1073	Personal Explanation .. .. .	1358-1360
Board Disputes and Clashes .. .. .	1676, 1678-1682	<b>Z</b>	
Navy Board Bill .. .. .	1933-1934	<b>Mr Abdulkadir Zakari</b>	
<b>Mr David Akpan Ukpog</b>		Construction of planned Federal Roads ..	1883
Lifting the restriction on the importation		<b>Mr D. A. Zubairu</b>	
of cars .. .. .	1925-1926	Small scale Industries .. .. .	1261
Self-help development projects .. .. .	1820	The Universal Primary Education Scheme	1810-1811
Situation in Zimbabwe .. .. .	1312-1313		
Zimbabwe—Congratulations to Mr Mugabe	1888		