

EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS

(Returned at the General Election held on the 15th of March, 1957)

A

Abangwu, Mr C. A.	...	...	...	Nsukka Division.
Abengowe, Mr W.	...	...	...	Aba Division.
Achara, Mr S. O.	...	...	...	Okigwi Division.
Affiah, Mr O. U.	...	...	...	Abak Division.
Agba, Mr J. A.	...	...	...	Ogoja Division.
Agim, Mr D. S. A.	...	...	...	Orlu Division.
*Ajegbo, Mr M. O.	...	...	...	(Attorney-General).
Akilo, Mr D. E.	...	...	...	Udi Division.
Akpabio, Mr H. U.	...	...	...	Uyo Division.
Akpabio, Mr I. U.	...	...	...	Ikot Ekpene Division.
Akpan, Mr S. T.	...	...	...	Eket Division. ( <i>By-election May, 1958</i> ).
Aligwekwe, Mr D. O.	...	...	...	Okigwi Division.
Alo, Mr S. N.	...	...	...	Abakaliki Division.
Amachree, Chief S. J.	...	...	...	Degema Division.
Amaefunah, Mr P. U.	...	...	...	Awka Division.
Anaba, Mr J. W. E.	...	...	...	Obubra Division.
Anoke, Mr R. O.	...	...	...	Afikpo Division.
Apraia, Mr N. L. P.	...	...	...	Brass Division.
Arikpo, Mr O.	...	...	...	Obubra Division.
Awgu, Mr M. C.	...	...	...	Awka Division.

\*Appointed Attorney-General by the Governor by virtue of the powers conferred upon him by Section 60 of the Amending Order.

C

Chidolue, Mr E.	...	...	...	Onitsha Division.
Chikwendu, Mr A. O.	...	...	...	Bende Division.
Chime, Mr E. A.	...	...	...	Udi Division.

E

Edelduok, Mr H. U. E.	...	...	...	Eket Division. ( <i>By-election May, 1958</i> ).
Efiong, Rev. O., C.B.E.	...	...	...	Calabar Division.
Ekpe, Mr A. J.	...	...	...	Opo Division.
Emole, Mr E.	...	...	...	Bende Division.
Enyi, Mr U.	...	...	...	Afikpo Division.
Eronini, Mr E. U.	...	...	...	Owerri Division.
Etubube, Mr J. A.	...	...	...	Ikot Ekpene Division.
Etuk, Mr M. U.	...	...	...	Uyo Division.
Eyo, Mr E. O.	...	...	...	Uyo Division.
Eyo, Mr J. E.	...	...	...	Abak Division.

I

Idoko, Mr M. A.	...	...	...	Nsukka Division. ( <i>By-election July, 1959</i> ).
Ihekwoaba, Mr J. O.	...	...	...	Orlu Division.
Ikoku, Mr S. G.	...	...	...	Enyong Division.

I—continued

Imeh, Mr I. U.	...	...	...	...	Abak Division.
Imoke, Dr S. E.	...	...	...	...	Afikpo Division.
Ita, Mr E.	...	...	...	...	Calabar Division.
Ita, Mr O. O.	...	...	...	...	Eket Division. ( <i>By-election, May, 1958</i> ).
Ito, Mr J. M.	...	...	...	...	Ikot Ekpene Division.
Iwuagwu, Mr R. O.	...	...	...	...	Okigwi Division.
Iwueke, Mr S. E. K.	...	...	...	...	Okigwi Division.

K

Kiri, Mr K.	...	...	...	...	Degema Division.
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M

Masi, Mr S. O.	...	...	...	...	Ahoada Division.
Morphy, Chief I. I.	...	...	...	...	Ogoja Division.

N

Nalelo, Mr O. B.	...	...	...	...	Ogoni Division.
Nnaji, Mr D. A.	...	...	...	...	Udi Division.
Nnamani, Mr D. O.	...	...	...	...	Udi Division.
Nwankwo, Mr V. A.	...	...	...	...	Abakaliki Division.
Nweze, Mr N.	...	...	...	...	Abakaliki Division.
Nwodo, Mr J. U.	...	...	...	...	Nsukka Division.
Nwoga, Mr P. O.	...	...	...	...	Owerri Division.
Nwuke, Mr J. H. E.	...	...	...	...	Ahoada Division.

O

Obayi, Mr M. U.	...	...	...	...	Nsukka Division.
Obonna, Dr A. N.	...	...	...	...	Owerri Division.
Ogon, Mr M. E.	...	...	...	...	Ikom Division.
Okafor, Mr C. A.	...	...	...	...	Orlu Division.
Okeh, Mr J. O.	...	...	...	...	Ahoada Division.
Okeke, Mr G. E.	...	...	...	...	Onitsha Division.
Okeke, Mr P. N.	...	...	...	...	Onitsha Division.
Oketa, Mr O.	...	...	...	...	Abakaliki Division.
Okeya, Mr G. C.	...	...	...	...	Owerri Division.
Oko, Mr G. I., M.B.E.	...	...	...	...	Awgu Division.
Okoya, Mr E. P.	...	...	...	...	Brass Division.
Okpara, Dr M. I.	...	...	...	...	Bende Division.
Okpokam, Mr K. J. N.	...	...	...	...	Ikom Division.
Okwu, Mr B. C.	...	...	...	...	Awgu Division.
Onubogu, Dr W. N.	...	...	...	...	Onitsha Division.
Onwe, Mr P. A.	...	...	...	...	Abakaliki Division.
Onwudiwe, Mr N. O.	...	...	...	...	Okigwi Division.
Onwuma, Mr M. N.	...	...	...	...	Aba Division.
Onyeri, Mr V. K.	...	...	...	...	Port Harcourt Division.
Onyiuke, Chief A. N.	...	...	...	...	Awka Division.
Opara, Rev. M. D.	...	...	...	...	Owerri Division.

U

Udonkim, Mr E. W.	...	...	...	...	Opobo Division.
Ukuta, Mr R. O., M.B.E.	...	...	...	...	Nsukka Division.
Umoh, Mr A. G.	...	...	...	...	Enyong Division.
Umolu, Mr J. O.	...	...	...	...	Port Harcourt Division.
Ururuka, Mr P. O.	...	...	...	...	Aba Division.
Uzoigwe, Mr L. O.	...	...	...	...	Aba Division.

Y

Yowika, Mr M. N.	...	...	...	...	Ogoni Division.
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EASTERN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT  
(Formed by Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara, December, 1959)

**MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

PREMIER—Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara.  
MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS—Hon. I. U. Akpabio.  
MINISTER OF FINANCE—Dr the hon. S. E. Imoke.  
MINISTER OF TOWN PLANNING—Hon. E. Emole.  
MINISTER OF WORKS—Hon. P. O. Ururuka.  
MINISTER OF STATE CHARGED WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR INFORMATION AND WELFARE—  
Hon. B. C. Okwu.  
MINISTER OF COMMERCE—Hon. J. U. Nwodo.  
MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT—Hon. P. O. Nwoga.  
MINISTER OF EDUCATION—Hon. G. E. Okeke.  
MINISTER OF HEALTH—Hon. E. P. Okoya.  
MINISTER OF STATE CHARGED WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR ESTABLISHMENT AND CHIEFTAINCY  
MATTERS—Hon. O. U. Affiah.  
MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND ATTORNEY-GENERAL—Hon. M. O. Ajegbo.  
MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE—Hon. P. N. Okeke.

**PROVINCIAL COMMISSIONERS**

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

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

**Premier's Office:—**

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

**Ministry of Internal Affairs:—**

Minister: Hon. I. U. Akpabio.  
Minister of State: Hon. B. C. Okwu.  
Parliamentary Secretaries: Hon. S. O. Masi; Hon. R. O. Ukuta, M.B.E.

**Ministry of Finance:—**

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

**Ministry of Town Planning:—**

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

**Ministry of Works:—**

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

**Ministry of Commerce:—**

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

**Ministry of Local Government:—**

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

**Ministry of Education:—**

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

**Ministry of Health:—**

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

**Ministry of Justice:—**

Attorney-General: Hon. M. O. Ajegbo.  
Parliamentary Secretaries: Hon. L. O. Uzoigwe; Hon. D. A. Nnaji.

**Ministry of Agriculture:—**

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

**PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS**

The Speaker: Hon. D. E. Okereke.  
Leader of the House: Dr the hon. S. E. Imoke.  
Leader of the Opposition: Hon. S. G. Ikoku.  
Government Chief Whip: Hon. G. C. Okeya.  
Deputy Speaker: Hon. C. A. Abangwu.  
Government Whips: Hon. W. Abengowe; Hon. K. J. N. Okpokam.  
Clerk of the House: Mr A. E. Eronini, M.B.E.  
First Clerk-Assistant: Mr L. O. Okoro.  
Second Clerk-Assistant: Mr R. C. Oyedu.  
Acting Editor, Official Report (*Hansard*): Mr S. B. C. Melifonwu.  
Secretary/Typists: Mr J. A. Okoh; Mr P. D. Peterside.  
Serjeant-at-Arms: Mr B. O. Ajumogobia.



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

Tuesday, 15th March, 1960

The Houses met at 10 a.m. pursuant to a Proclamation made by His Excellency dated 4th March, 1960.

PRAYERS

**The President:** Sitting is suspended until His Excellency's arrival.

*Sitting suspended at 10.05 a.m.*

*Sitting resumed at 10.15 a.m.*

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

His Excellency the Governor having entered the Council Chamber in procession was pleased to make a Most Gracious Speech from the Throne as follows:—

**Mr President, hon. Members of the House of Chiefs, Mr Speaker, hon. Members of the House of Assembly**

The last twelve months have been important and eventful in the history of the Eastern Region of Nigeria. The Region was honoured by a visit from Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, and the Governor-General of the Spanish Territories in the Gulf of Guinea also paid a visit to Enugu and Calabar. Other distinguished visitors were the Rt. hon. Harold Macmillan, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the Rt. hon. the Earl of Perth, Minister of State for the Colonies. In addition, a large number of distinguished visitors came to the Region, reflecting the growing importance of Nigeria in the world today.

Of all the year's events, the most significant was the Federal Election of December, 1959, and the subsequent meeting of the Federal Legislature at which a Motion was passed requesting Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to grant Independence to the Federation of Nigeria on 1st October, 1960. We look forward with pleasure to welcoming Her Royal Highness Princess Margaret when she visits the Region during the Independence Celebrations.

THE CABINET

Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Premier of the Region, was elected a Member of the Federal Legislature at the General Election, and ceased to be a Member of the House of Assembly, or of the Executive Council. His place as Premier is filled by Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara.

In the interests of the efficient despatch of public business, the Ministries of my Government are to be reorganised and two new Ministries are to be created. The first of these two new Ministries will be called the Ministry of Information. This Ministry will be responsible for the dissemination of information not only of Government activities, but particularly of the life and aspirations of the peoples of this Region. The outside world is showing an increasing interest in Nigeria and the new Ministry will meet this growing demand for information.

The second Ministry will be the Ministry of Economic Planning. My Government attaches great importance to raising the living standards of the people, and towards this end the new Ministry will conduct a survey of our resources, human, animal, vegetable and mineral, with a view to producing a plan designed to bring these resources to the fullest benefit of the people. In particular, the Ministry will pay special attention to agricultural production and industrial projects, which will directly increase productivity and the earning capacity of the people.

THE LEGISLATURE

History was made in the Eastern Region when on the 8th of January the first meeting of the Eastern House of Chiefs was held. All the twenty First-class Chiefs were present and were sworn in as Members along with such of the Second-class Chiefs as were already selected. It is expected that the remaining seats in the House of Chiefs will shortly be filled. Despite the great variety of custom in respect of Chieftaincy throughout the Region, the selection of Chiefs for membership of the House of Chiefs has been smoothly carried out with results which have given general satisfaction. Consequent upon the establishment of the House of Chiefs, two vacancies arise in the House of Assembly. Bye-elections will be held shortly to fill these vacancies. The bye-election to fill the vacancy caused by the election to the Federal House of the former Premier was held on the 12th of this month.



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*The Nigeria (Constitution) (Amendment No. 3) Order in Council, 1959, makes provision for an increase in the membership of the Eastern House of Assembly from 84 to 146 Elected Members. This provision will have effect immediately after the dissolution of the present Legislative Houses of the Region. With this in view, I appointed a Delimitation Commission to make recommendations for the division of each of the seventy-three Federal Electoral districts into two electoral districts of approximately equal population. This Commission has now submitted its report.*

PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

*In conformity with the policy of my Ministers of introducing a new system of Provincial Administration, twelve Commissioners who are Members of this House have been appointed to the twelve Provinces into which the Region is now divided. A Senior Administrative Officer with the title of Provincial Secretary has also assumed duty in each Province. Regulations governing the election of members to Provincial Assemblies have been gazetted, and the inaugural meetings of these bodies will soon be held.*

*The officers of the Provincial Administration have been fully committed in dealing with problems arising from the enhanced pace of development in the Region. The organisation of the Federal Election placed a particular strain upon them, and the speed with which the results from the Eastern Region were announced showed the high degree of efficiency which was achieved.*

THE PUBLIC SERVICE

*In the Public Service, the key-note has been expansion and efficiency: expansion in order to cope with the increased services and facilities which my Government provides for the people; improved efficiency to ensure that the utmost use is made of available educated manpower.*

*There has, therefore, been an appreciable increase in the number of established officers thus bringing the figure up from 7,000 last year to 7,700. Of this number 640 are in the administrative and professional grades as against 550 last year. As more qualified indigenous officers become available, the number of Nigerians employed in these grades has risen from 368 to 469, an increase of 101. More opportunities have also been given to Nigerians of proved and tried experience to serve in the Executive and*

*Higher Executive grades. There are now 442 Nigerians in these grades as against 352 last year. Thus our declared policy of Nigerianisation is being vigorously pursued. A Nigerian is now Head of the Regional Public Service. Of the ten Permanent Secretary posts, six are at present filled by Nigerians. The eight posts of Senior Assistant Secretary, created as a result of a decision taken at the 1957 Resumed Constitutional Conference in London, have been all filled. The Standing Committee on Training which advises Government on the needs of and the training of Nigerians for the Public Service has drawn up a comprehensive programme for 1960-61 which will provide many officers with the opportunities of in-service training and instructions to equip them for positions of greater responsibility.*

*In order to step up efficiency and streamline procedure in the Ministries, it is proposed to set up an Organisation and Methods Unit. Steps have already been taken to train a Nigerian for this work.*

*My Government proposes to take over completely before 1st October, 1960 the functions now performed by the Crown Agents and Colonial Office in the recruitment of staff. To this end the staff of the Recruitment Unit in London is being increased considerably to cope with this all-important task of the recruitment of expatriates as well as Nigerians.*

*In order to ensure the adequate remuneration of the Public Service, my Government recently appointed a Salaries Review Commission in association with the Federal Government and the Northern Regional Government. The Commission recently reported and its recommendations have been substantially accepted by my Government.*

*The Public Service Commission which enjoys an independent status under the amended Nigeria (Constitution) Order in Council, 1954, continued in the year under review to exercise its functions which include the appointment of officers in the Public Service other than Judicial Officers, disciplinary control over officers and transfers to and from other Governments. During the year 140 candidates were appointed to various posts and the Commission recommended a total of 255 promotions. Two of the Commissioners visited the United Kingdom and the continent of Europe in June and July, 1959, and interviewed candidates.*



While an increasing number of expatriates have joined the service on contract, only a limited number of the pensionable overseas staff has left since the middle of last year. That this is the case is largely the result of the introduction of Special List "B". Briefly, an expatriate officer who joins this list is allowed to continue to serve as long as he wishes subject to his giving one year's residential service as notice of his intention to retire. The Government also has the right to give the officer the same period of notice if it wishes to terminate his appointment. The successes of this policy will be seen from the fact that most of the entitled officers eligible to join the Special List "B" have done so, that is, within less than one year of its introduction. The Public Service Commission has assumed responsibility for recommending to me applications to join the Special List, and seventy-four applications have been recommended by the Commission.

With regard to the recruitment of expatriate personnel who are no longer eligible for permanent pensionable appointment, the Commission continued the policy of recruitment on a contract or temporary basis on the certificate of the Director of Recruitment that suitably qualified Nigerians are not available. Altogether seventy-one contract or temporary appointments were made during the year under review. Of these, sixty-seven were expatriates and four indigenous re-engaged pensioners.

As hon. Members may have been aware, the Chairman of the Commission, Mr J. F. G. Sykes, is due shortly to retire from the service of this Region, having held the office of Chairman of the Commission for two years. He will be replaced by Mr F. O. Ihenacho who was until recently the Eastern Region Commissioner in the United Kingdom. Mr Ihenacho's appointment as Chairman of the Commission marks a new and welcome phase in the development of the Commission as its effect is to Nigerianise fully the Regional Public Service Commission.

#### UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

In my speech last year, I gave hon. Members a progress report on the arrangements being made for the establishment of the University of Nigeria. Since that time steady progress has been made in the achievement of this goal. My former Premier visited the United Kingdom and the United States of America in July and August

in order to enlist the advice and assistance of educational authorities in both countries. The success which has attended these efforts has now brought the planning of the University to an advanced stage. A Secretary to the Provisional Council has been appointed and a start has been made in recruiting staff. The Provisional Council has held its first meeting and has made arrangements for the early opening of the University.

#### MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

Turning to the Ministry of Agriculture, the recruitment of technical staff for the Agricultural Division has improved, so bringing about greater contact with our farmers. This Division will continue to the best of its ability to build upon its present foundation, and to devote all its power to the interests of what is now and must be for some time to come, the very basis of our economy.

Farmers are being taught to use modern farming methods. Improved planting materials and high grade stocks are being made available: cocoa pods giving about 5,000,000 seedlings; oil palm seedlings; budded citrus seedlings; coffee seedlings; mixed yam fertilisers; improved rice paddy seed and over 7,000 packets of vegetable seeds have been distributed. Good breeds of poultry, pigs and cattle are also available.

A three-year Regional Development Plan has been dovetailed into the former Colonial Development and Welfare Scheme due to end in September, 1960, and under this plan some of the projects now mentioned are either complete or near completion—the Umudike Research Centre and School, the Yenagoa Provincial Farm at Abobiri, the Rice Development in the Niger Delta, and the Do-Anambra Aerial Survey. But in agriculture, successful projects do not often come to a full stop. Some of these schemes will continue with Regional funds.

An important feature was the arrival of an International Co-operation Administration poultry expert from the United States of America, and other experts are expected shortly from the same source. Her Majesty's Government is providing an officer skilled in soil analysis and land use.

The work of the Produce Inspection Division is complementary to that of the Agriculture Division. The latter aims to improve our crops.



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The former endeavours to improve the standards of the principal export crops upon which our prosperity so largely rests. This Division now has about eighty Inspection Stations, and a Pest Control Unit.

In the field of soil erosion and soil conservation, the activities of the Forestry Division supplement those of the Agriculture Division. The staff position has never been so good. The Region's forest resources are being scientifically exploited, with due regard for rehabilitation and regeneration. The supply of timber is well maintained. Final revenue figures for 1959-60 are expected to be higher than in 1958-59. Plans are well in hand for the initiation of a research programme—formerly a sole function of the Federal Department of Forest Research.

The Veterinary Division's main handicap is that of an establishment of ten professional officers, only two posts could be filled. Government has, however, sent three students overseas to train as veterinarians and ten to Vom to train as Veterinary Assistants.

The level of animal health was fair. Important to all of us was the beginning of the voluntary mass inoculation of dogs against rabies. Until the Division can build up its professional staff, its scope must be limited.

The staff situation in the Fisheries Division improved slightly with the recruitment of an experienced Master Fisherman, who will direct the intensive operations of our two newly acquired motor Fishing Boats—the fifty-foot "Eastern Star" and a thirty-six-foot "Eastern Monarch".

There are now at Opobo bunkering points for fuel and water, a rehabilitated deep water wharf and provision has been made for the installation of a one-ton ice plant. The distribution of fresh-fish-landings at inland market centres has begun. In Okigwi Division work on the fish culture station has progressed steadily. A third fishing station has been established on the coast to assist in improving the important bonga industry.

MINISTRY OF COMMERCE

The past year has been, for the Ministry of Commerce, a very active and rewarding one. In July the Minister of Commerce visited the United Kingdom for a Conference and took the opportunity to hold important discussions with

potential investors and industrialists. He also visited Germany and Israel where useful and fruitful contacts were made with industrialists. At the same time too, the hon. Premier, accompanied by an Economic Adviser, visited the United States of America where he met investors and industrialists. As a result of these visits and contacts, arrangements have been concluded for the establishment of a number of industries—for example, Glass, Wire and Nail, etc., in this Region of which the Minister of Commerce will inform the House later in this Session.

A number of visitors were also received from overseas and the discussions which followed such visits have also resulted in concrete proposals for the economic and industrial development of the Region.

It is hoped in the coming year to continue with the encouraging progress made during the past year. To prepare for the important responsibilities of the future, the Ministry is being reorganised as hon. Members will see reflected in the Estimates which they will be called upon to consider later in the present sitting of the House. Particular attention will be paid to the expansion and improvement of co-operative organisations, and industrial co-operatives will be started.

The main difficulty has been, and no doubt will continue to be, that of finding the necessary capital and technical know-how with which to develop to the full the immense natural potential with which this Region is endowed. The record of the past year is one of encouraging success in this direction and it is hoped, during the coming year, to improve on what has been achieved. The Ministry is grateful to such bodies as the Rockefeller Foundation Fund and the Colonial Development Corporation for the assistance they have rendered—the Rockefeller Fund, for helping to finance a number of the preliminary "feasibility" studies so vitally necessary before undertaking any major industrial projects; and the Colonial Development Corporation for helping to finance some of these schemes. We look forward to the co-operation of such bodies in the years ahead.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

In 1959 the public enjoyed wide educational concessions: fees were abolished in Standard I and the Assumed Local Contribution reduced in three other primary classes. Recently my Government was able to announce that fees would be



abolished in Standard II with effect from January, 1960. The entire Junior Primary School system is now "fee-free".

Secondary education has also received encouragement, particular emphasis being placed on Sixth Forms. The quality of our Sixth Form education determines the number of Eastern Nigerians who can secure admission to University College, Ibadan, and other higher educational institutions. During the current school year my Government has therefore reduced by half the Assumed Local Contribution in Sixth Forms.

The Ministry of Education has been under great pressure to approve the opening of new secondary schools. The need for more secondary schools, particularly in certain divisions that have none or an inadequate number, is undoubted. No less than 186 applications for new schools were received and twenty-seven of these were approved in principle by the Ministry.

In November, 1959 the International Co-operation Administration provided a Handicraft Specialist to supervise our nine new Handicraft Centres, and a second arrived in February this year. The International Co-operation Administration has also undertaken to assist the new Government Secondary Technical School at Port Harcourt with technical staff and equipment. It is hoped that the buildings, on which work is about to commence, will be completed in time to enable the school to open next year.

The Technical Wing at Government College, Umuahia, was completed in time for it to be opened in January this year, and the Technical Wing at Afikpo will be opened as soon as staff is available. These Technical Wings, built with the aid of Colonial Development and Welfare funds, enable woodwork, metal work and engineering drawing to be studied in addition to the usual "grammar" subjects.

The Technical Institute and Trade Centre at Enugu has been divided into two separate institutions, and the courses have been reorientated to meet the changing demands of industry.

During the 1959-60 financial year my Government has awarded 128 post-secondary scholarships, 471 secondary, forty-two technical and 292 teacher training scholarships. Apart from a few post-secondary awards for potential

engineers and scientists, all these awards were made on a Divisional or District Council basis.

The Dike Committee to review education in the Eastern Region completed its work last August and its Report will, I hope, be published shortly. My Government wishes to take this opportunity of paying tribute to Professor Dike and his colleagues for the devotion with which they undertook their task. They have produced a Report which will, I am sure, be an invaluable guide to educational policy in Eastern Nigeria for the next decade. The Ford Foundation, which financed the survey, also deserves the gratitude of this Region.

The Ashby Commission on Higher Education, established by the Federal Government, visited the Eastern Region in January this year. We look forward with keen anticipation to their report which is complementary to that of the Dike Committee.

Apart from the Dike Committee and the Ashby Commission, the Ministry of Education has received many distinguished visitors from overseas, and this provides striking testimony of the interest aroused throughout the world in Nigerian Education. The Ford Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation, the Stokes Phelps Fund, the Consultative Commission for Technical Assistance in Africa South of the Sahara, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation were among those who sent delegates to this Region. Sir Christopher Cox, the Education Adviser to the Secretary of State, also paid the Region a very welcome visit.

This Region was represented at the Commonwealth Education Conference at Oxford in July and the decisions of that conference, particularly in respect of the supply of teachers, free teacher training places overseas, and scholarships, are likely to prove of great benefit to this Region.

The 44,000 teachers in this Region were given the option of converting to the National Salary Scale with effect from April, 1959. In addition this Government subsequently undertook to reimburse Voluntary Agencies to enable them to pay the increased salaries arising from the Mbanefo Commission.

At the end of last year this Region had 6,620 primary schools with 1,338,485 children in them; 106 secondary schools with 19,344 students; 146 teachers training institutions with 12,850



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students; and four technical institutions with 560 students (this includes seventy-six students taking advanced courses). The cost of maintaining such a vast educational system is very heavy. More than three-quarters of the cost is found by Government; while the contribution (the "Assumed Local Contribution") made by the people by way of school fees amounts to less than one-quarter of the cost.

MINISTRY OF FINANCE

As foreshadowed in my speech last year, the level of the Consolidated Revenue Fund at the beginning of the current financial year was £2 million higher than had originally been estimated. It is probable that at the close of this year it will have remained at the same level as a result of the year's operations.

In the coming year the revenues of the Region will continue to expand. An important contribution to their growth will be made from now on by the expanding Oil Industry of the Region. On the other hand, the growth in the cost of the social services, to which I referred in my speech last year, has kept pace with the growth of revenue and may well overtake it unless the effort to expand the economy of the Region and hence the buoyancy of its revenues is intensified.

The Government's endeavours to build up the staff and efficiency of the Internal Revenue Division have been continued and the systematic recruitment of Revenue Inspectors and junior staff and their training in taxation principles and practice have proceeded according to plan. It is now hoped that a trained Revenue Service will be fully established during the coming financial year.

With increasing experience, Tax Assessment Committees have worked more satisfactorily in handling assessments on lower incomes. At the same time the collection of tax has been accelerated by the imposition of larger monetary penalties for failure to pay by the due date.

A plan to take over Motor Licensing from the Police Authorities has been successfully implemented. Eleven Regional Government centres were established for this purpose in place of the five Police Offices.

Expenditure on staff is, next to social services, the heaviest commitment falling on the revenues

of the Region. The cost of implementing the Mbanefo Commission recommendations will be exceedingly heavy but Government has decided to accept these recommendations subject only to the exclusion from the award of officers on the super-scale grades. Government has also decided that assistance should be given, by way of additional Grants-in-Aid, towards the cost of applying the Commission's award to Voluntary Agency teachers, nurses and midwives and to the staff of Local Government bodies.

With the additional financial commitment imposed by the award of the Mbanefo Commission, it has been possible to provide only a modest expansion in Government services in the Estimates for the coming year which are about to be placed before you.

This is the beginning of the third year of the Development Programme of this Region. Expenditure under the Capital Budget is gathering momentum and concrete results will show themselves during this year of Independence.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

The steady progress of previous years towards the goal of a comprehensive Medical and Health Service for the Region was maintained in the year now ending.

Two more projects were added to the Rural Hospital programme. The Okrika, Umunato, and Abiriba projects are being expanded to units of sixty beds and on completion their operation will become the financial responsibility of Government. The Mbaise Rural Hospital, which had been built in association with the Mbaise District Council under this programme, was taken over in April, as the sixth hospital to be operated in association with a Voluntary Agency as a Joint Hospital. Last year, the amount provided for shortfall grants for these Joint Hospitals was £95,750: next year this figure will rise to £117,270.

Under the Rural Health Centre programme, twenty-three grant-assisted Local Government Health Centres are now in operation and the results of recent emphasis on the development of Rural Health Services are becoming very evident. When the first stage of this programme is completed in the year ahead, every Administrative Division will then have at least one prototype



Health Centre and sixty Centres will be functioning. Trained Government nurses are to be put in charge of certain Centres and improved training programmes are raising the standard of services generally.

The Yaws Eradication Campaign has now surveyed and treated more than three and a quarter million people. Leprosy control and research has been so successful that numbers treated are now showing evidence of a decline. In this field particularly, the Region is indebted to the World Health Organisation and United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund for invaluable assistance. Close association with Voluntary Agencies also continues: grants-in-aid to them will rise from £143,000 this financial year to £153,000 next.

Work has also continued on extensions and improvements to Government Hospitals under the 1959-60 Colonial Development and Welfare programme, notably at Aba, Calabar, Degema, Enugu, Ikot Ekpene and Opobo, and this programme will be completed this year. A good start has been made with the 1958-62 Development Programme. Tenders have been invited for the Regional Pathology Laboratory at Enugu, which will fill a long-standing need. The Hospital at Yenagoa is now in operation, and a new medical launch for the area, which will cost over £20,000, is now under construction in the United Kingdom. The recruitment of all grades of staff has greatly improved. Nigerianisation and the specialised training of serving Nigerian officers overseas have steadily continued. By the increase in the amount provided for drugs and medical supplies to Government hospitals by over 70 per cent, the shortages which were a cause of past complaint have now been checked and it is proposed this year to overhaul the machinery of distribution.

Considerable thought has been given to the serious problem posed by irregular practices in the administration of medicine and the control of drugs in the Region. It is intended to take positive steps during the course of the year ahead to ensure the maintenance of high professional standards and the elimination of abuses, both within Government service and without.

#### MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

The Information Division of the Ministry of Internal Affairs will become a full-fledged

Ministry and will be responsible for publicising this Region both internally and externally. Overseas publicity will be done in co-operation with two publicity agencies, one British and the other American. A greater part of internal publicity will be through the daily newspaper to be run by the Eastern Nigeria Information Service Corporation.

During the year this Division concluded arrangements with a British Firm for the establishment of Radio Broadcasting and Television Services in the Region. A company known as the Eastern Nigeria Broadcasting Company Limited has been formed and last month the Eastern Nigeria Broadcasting Law, 1960 was passed by the House. We are looking forward to this Region having its radio and television services at no distant date.

The Eastern Region Library Board also made steady progress. The library was widely used and during the past year, 2,764 persons registered as readers in the Adult Division of the Lending Library, 830 persons in the Junior Division and 1,214 persons in the Mobile Library. The Board's arrangements are almost complete for the establishment of a branch library at Port Harcourt.

In the field of labour relations, my Government is concerned at the consequences of the reduction in demand for coal, with the consequent retrenchment of miners. The problem of redundancy in the industry is being tackled by the Federal Government in co-operation with the Coal Corporation, the Miners' Union and the Regional Government. A further labour problem concerns the Cameroonisation policy being pursued by the Government of the Southern Cameroons. Nigerian workers in that territory, most of them indigenous to this Region, are being displaced and widespread redundancy is feared.

People in the Region continued during the past year to show increased interest in Community Development work. The allocation by my Government of £150,000 for Community Development under Capital Development Programme 1958-62 provided much help in furthering the scheme particularly to people living in the rural areas. Last year six Bailey Bridges, totalling 760 feet, were built. At the Community Development Training Centre, Awgu, fourteen courses were held during the year and 243 candidates attended. The centre continued to attract distinguished visitors to the Region. During the



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year Mr E. R. Chadwick, a former civil servant of this Region, and a well-known expert on Community Development, visited the Region to advise the Government on Community Development policy.

The Government Press continued to give satisfactory service during the past year. Despite pressure of work, it maintained high standards in printing, speed and efficiency.

An Advisory Committee on the Prerogative of Mercy was formed during the year, as a result of further constitutional changes. This Committee replaces the former Privy Council.

#### MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

The Honourable Mr Justice L. N. Mbanefo was recently appointed Chief Justice in succession to Sir John Ainley. It is a matter for great satisfaction that this high office of state should be held by a Nigerian.

The Federal Supreme Court sat in Enugu during February, 1960, in the High Court building. Some thought is being given to extending the High Court building to accommodate a second court so that the sessions of the Federal Supreme Court will not interfere with the sittings of the High Court at Enugu. It is hoped that the sittings of the Federal Supreme Court in this Region will be more frequent.

Plans are in progress for the erection of a new High Court building at Onitsha, and Magistrate Courts buildings at Onitsha and Port Harcourt.

A legal draftsman has been employed on contract and a Nigerian who is training as a draftsman in the United Kingdom will soon return to join him.

A Law Revision Division was set up during the year and efforts are being made to secure the services of a suitable legal expert as Law Revision Commissioner.

It is hoped that Customary Courts will soon be established in all parts of the Region. Customary Courts disposed of 15,000 cases during the year.

#### MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Five District Councils—Anambra, Orumba, Ogbaru, Eleme and Achi—and four Urban District Councils—Oguta, Oron, Ikom and Ugep—were established on 1st September, 1959,

thus bringing the number of Rural and Urban District Councils to 102.

The appointment of chiefs and natural rulers as "ex officio" members of Councils has proceeded rather slowly mainly on account of its connection with the classification and selection of chiefs and disputes arising therefrom. Now that the House of Chiefs has been established it is hoped that the appointment of traditional members to Councils will proceed more quickly and without too much dispute.

A Bill to introduce a new Local Government Law will be moved at this meeting of the House. It does not propose any major changes to the existing organisation and practice of Local Government but is mainly concerned with renaming District Councils as "County Councils" in accordance with Sessional Paper No. 2 of 1957, and embodying all the many amendments made to the previous law. Provision is also included for the Minister of Local Government to make adoptive bye-laws and there are certain other new matters mainly of a financial nature.

Apart from paying the usual Block Grants to Councils the Ministry of Local Government continued to pursue its policy of assisting Councils with loans, which are primarily intended for revenue earning projects which Councils cannot finance from their own resources.

My Government has also agreed to guarantee, on certain terms and conditions, loans to Councils from Banks. This affects mainly the large towns where schemes for drainage systems, road construction and public buildings are too costly to be financed out of existing resources. Port Harcourt Municipality has negotiated a loan of £100,000 with a Bank for the reconstruction of roads and the building of a Town Hall. Onitsha Urban District Council is negotiating with a Bank for a loan of £150,000 for a drainage system and road construction. It is hoped that other large urban areas will follow this lead.

Work has started in earnest on tightening up Local Government Treasury control. There is now a field strength of thirteen Executive Officers (Accounts) whose sole task is to check treasuries, reveal irregularities, help treasurers to keep their accounts up to date and guide them in the operation of the Law and Financial Memoranda. The Audit inspections of Local Government Councils have nearly been completed



up to the end of March, 1959 and with Local Government Commissioners freed from their preoccupation with elections and able to devote more time to Local Government affairs, the year ahead should see much firmer financial control.

The courses for Local Government Staff hitherto held at the Nigerian College of Technology, Ibadan, are being discontinued at the end of the current course in June. Arrangements have been made to hold training courses of three months duration in this Region for Local Government staff. The courses, to which great importance is attached, are being organised by the training Division of the Premier's office as part of the facilities offered by the Institute of Administration.

My Government believes that fragmentation in Local Governments has gone far enough and that the time has come when Councils must make an effort to work together for the common good rather than seek an elusive refuge in fragmentation. To that end my Government proposes in the coming year and in the years ahead to concentrate in improving the existing Local Government units and in making them work more efficiently.

#### TOWN PLANNING

The rapid growth of our main towns in response to the pull of employment and trade has created considerable problems for the Land Division of the Ministry of Town Planning. The need for residential accommodation had in the past led to the building of rough habitations on the verges of Crown land, but these have now nearly all been demolished and replaced by planned development. In addition, new layouts have ensured that the future expansion of these towns shall proceed on lines of orderly development in accordance with modern ideas of town planning.

During the year more land was acquired in Port Harcourt to provide for the expansion of the town. Land was also acquired in the vicinity of the Niger Bridge-head at Onitsha in order to prevent haphazard development in the area and along the road from the bridge.

Work on the access to the Trans-Amadi Industrial Layout in Port Harcourt has started. The supply road to the Independence Layout, Enugu was completed and work on the main avenue through O'Connor Street has begun.

During the year there was a considerable increase over the previous year in the number of cadastral surveys carried out, and in the number of Licensed Surveyors' plans examined. Seven layouts were demarcated at Port Harcourt, Enugu and Abakaliki, and eight acquisitions were surveyed including the Independence Layout at Enugu and a large area at Port Harcourt. Ground control was established at Port Harcourt, Aba, Oron, Eket and Nnewi for new mapping and revision.

It is hoped to produce 400 feet to 1 inch plans covering Enugu, Aba and Owerri with the assistance of the Federal Survey aircraft and Directorate of Overseas Surveys, and to commence the much-needed revision of the 1/100,000 topographical sheets.

An Adviser on Town Planning was engaged by the Government to plan the Trans-Amadi Industrial Layout as a unit of the future Port Harcourt. He has completed a design covering the Industrial Layout, and two residential Layouts—one of medium-density within the Industrial Layout and one of low-density around the Shell-BP clinic on the Port Harcourt—Aba road: Government has approved the plans and has provided £500,000 for the execution of the project.

Work continues on the design of the Independence Layout in Enugu and sites have been set aside for the major public buildings which will be located there.

In rural communities interest in town planning is gaining in strength. The number of Town Planning Authorities has been increased.

#### MINISTRY OF WORKS

The Ministry of Works has been charged during this financial year with the design and supervision of capital projects amounting to nearly £5 million. Additional professional staff has been recruited which has permitted a great deal of progress to be recorded. It takes time however for large capital projects to be surveyed and designed, so the emphasis during the last year has been on planning, whilst in the coming year it will be on construction.

Progress continues on twenty-seven road and bridge projects on which it is estimated £800,000 will have been spent this financial year, whilst



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recently awarded road and bridge contracts include the construction of the Trans-Amadi road and bridge at Port Harcourt, the Chokocho bridge in Ahoada Division, the Asa-Azumini bridge in Aba Division, the Aba Omege-Itigidi road in Afikpo Division, and the Ukpo-Aguleri road in Onitsha Division. Many other road and bridge projects are presently out to tender whilst the Road Engineers of the Ministry continue on surveying other road projects listed in the Development Programme.

Provincial and Regional Road Safety Committees and a Level Crossing Committee have now been set up, and in co-operation with other Agencies are working towards a reduction in the number of road accidents in the Region.

Four new launches at a total cost of £14,000 will have been delivered to four District Councils in Yenagoa and Degema Provinces by the end of this financial year. Moreover, the Opobo Boat Yard is building a touring launch for Government and another "W" class launch is under construction in England.

The water supply schemes planned by the Ministry of Works are now rapidly materialising. New waterworks have been completed at Aba and Calabar, which meet the present requirements of these towns and can be extended when necessary. Abakaliki waterworks has been modernised to the full extent of the existing water source, whilst work continues on the 2.5 million gallons per day undertaking at Port Harcourt and on the Umuahia undertaking, both of which will be in commission in the next six months. At Enugu the existing headworks are being extended in order to provide an additional 400,000 gallons of water per day, the first phase of this extension has recently been commissioned. However, such is the rapid growth of Enugu that a further scheme is now being planned for a further two million gallons per day. The position is the same at Onitsha, and an immediate start is to be made on designing a new undertaking to provide a further three million gallons per day.

Urban water supply schemes costing £400,000 have been prepared for the six towns of Uyo, Ikot Ekpene, Owerri, Okrika, Orlu and Nnewi. Work at the first three mentioned places has already started, and when all these schemes are commissioned it is expected that ten million

gallons of water will be supplied daily to over half a million persons.

Good progress has also been shown on the rural water supply projects throughout the Region. Pumped and piped supplies to thirty-nine minor townships and twenty institutions are all under construction and will be completed during 1960, whilst work has continued on simple spring improvements and well points. Better rural water supplies are a very much desired amenity, and for this reason my Government is presently arranging for a further programme which will assist in raising the health and standard of living of the rural population of the Region.

The Buildings Division of the Ministry of Works has also been very active. No less than 140 different projects have been started, costing approximately £1 million. This includes the preparation of plans and contract documents for forty-four major building projects which include houses for Ministers, Provincial Commissioners and Civil Servants, Judicial Courts, Hospitals and Offices. Consulting Architects have been engaged on the preparation of plans for a new House of Assembly, House of Chiefs and a Ministerial Block on Independence Layout; they are also responsible for the new Government House being constructed on Abakaliki Road and a new Newspaper Office for the Eastern Nigeria Information Service.

Mr President, hon. Members of the House of Chiefs, Mr Speaker, hon. Members of the House of Assembly: This is the last occasion on which a Speech from the Throne will be made in this Chamber in a dependent Nigeria. In six months time, Nigeria will be fully independent. I trust that a free Nigeria will continue to follow the ideals of parliamentary democracy, that there will be unfettered discussion of opinions honestly held and that questions of state will be decided after free debate. Conflict of policy within a parliamentary democracy is an indication not of weakness but of strength: to the maintenance and increase of that strength, my Government will continue to devote its best endeavours.

Mr President, hon. Members of the House of Chiefs, Mr Speaker, hon. Members of the House of Assembly, I pray that Almighty God will guide you in all your deliberations.

His Excellency then retired from the Chamber.



## ADJOURNMENT

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** I beg to move, that this House do now adjourn—the House of Chiefs until the 25th of April, 1960, and the House of Assembly until later today.

As hon. Members will have noticed from the letter addressed to them by the Clerk of the House and in the programme of events for the official opening of the 1960/61 session, copies of which have been distributed to Members, the House of Chiefs will adjourn until the 25th of April. In the normal course of things that House would have repaired to its own Chamber to debate the Speech from the Throne, but this is not possible for at present there is only one Chamber for both Houses. The House of Assembly will reassemble later today to commence the debate on the Speech from the Throne. It is anticipated that the House of Assembly will be able to finish its business before Good Friday, 15th April. If this happens, the House will adjourn *sine die*

on Thursday, 14th April—a month from today. But there are a number of Public Holidays during the period.

15th April is Good Friday, 16th is Saturday on which the House does not sit; 17th is Easter Sunday, and 18th Easter Monday—a Public Holiday. After the Easter Holidays the staff of the House of Assembly will require a few days to get things ready for the House of Chiefs hence the suggestion that that House will reassemble on Monday, 25th April. It is hoped that the House of Chiefs will be able to finish its own business on or about the 5th of May.

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

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Adjourned accordingly at five minutes past eleven o'clock a.m.*



EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 15th March, 1960

The House met at 12 o'clock noon pursuant to the Resolution of the Joint Sitting of the Houses Today.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS

Mr G. C. Okeya (Owerri Division): I rise to move:

"That this House expresses its loyal and dutiful thanks to His Excellency the Governor for His Excellency's Most Gracious Speech addressed to both Houses of the Legislature from the Throne"

Today's Speech from the Throne to the Second Session of the First Eastern House of Chiefs and the Fourth Session of the Fourth Eastern House of Assembly marks the beginning of another chapter in the future History of the achievements and social reforms of this Government in the narrow gap between the promise and reality of independence.

This is the first Budget Session in which the First-class Chiefs, the Second-class Chiefs and Special Members, with pomp and dignity, have assembled together with the hon. Members of the House of Assembly, in order to ear the Spe ech from the Throne.

I am most acutely aware that this is the first time I have had the privilege or rather the honour of moving a motion on the Speech from the Throne. I therefore stand in utmost need of every indulgence and forbearance which the House can properly extend to a new Government Chief Whip on such an occasion. The Gracious Speech with ninety-nine full paragraphs set out boldly the general aims of the Government—namely,

- (a) Its intentions to accomplish the 1958-62 Development Programme.
- (b) Its anxiety to provide more effective means of raising the living standard of the people of this Region.
- (c) Its honest efforts to implement the Nigerianisation policy.

The Budget Session like the opening of new Parliament is a time for looking forward with

hope and confidence. I am glad to say that in almost every direction in which the activities of the Government of this Region are engaged, the Ministries have highly satisfactory and encouraging reports on record to render to this House, of the year's work and prospects for the future. The Gracious Speech is in itself a record of achievement and a high standard of efficiency to which those Ministries have attained, and the spirit of keen and eager interest in their respective tasks by which all the rank and file of the Public Service of this Region appear to be animated. The past twelve months have witnessed in the Eastern Region a measure of advancement and of some solid achievements. The hon. Members of the House of Assembly will bear witness to the systematic progress the Eastern Region Government has made at all levels. The Region is today well on its road of progress.

I want to draw the attention of this House to some specific aspects of the Gracious Speech. Paragraphs 1 and 2 reflected the social events with regard to the visit of their Royal Highnesses, the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, and the formal motion in the Federal Legislature requesting Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to grant independence to Nigeria.

The anxious anticipation of millions of people in this Region a couple of months ago melted into ecstasy at the great news of the arrival of a buxom baby Prince at the Royal Palace in Buckingham. This Legislature share exceedingly in the excessive joy of Her Majesty the Queen, and wish to convey through His Excellency our heartiest congratulations and compliments.

With deep respect also we did rejoice at the good news of the cherished engagement of our most amiable Princess.

We look forward with intense delight to her gracing the auspicious occasion of the independence celebrations with her Royal presence.

Paragraph 3 recounts the succession of Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe by Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara. I think that I carry the House with me when I say that the toga of Premiership fits exceedingly the Doctor. He has spoken at public gatherings with vision, sincerity, self-confidence and faith like a philosopher-statesman. He had not been long



in office when he condescended to carry the burden of the threatened coal-miners and in the midst of the multiplicity of state affairs, he was able to sacrifice a few days to fly to the capital of the Federation of Nigeria to put the case of hundreds of the miners in this Region, whose source of existence was threatened, to the Prime Minister. The whole Federation of Nigeria is watching with the keenest interest and satisfaction, the new Premier's initiative in interpreting practically the Government's policy and his emphasis on Agricultural economy as a basis for Regional development. His idea of creating a new Ministry of Economic Planning confirms my observations.

Speaking of the Government's Policy reminds me of the great man who laid the foundation of our economic policy. This great figure remains a rock that resists the floods either of time or ennoblement—Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, who has now added another distinction to the many which he has gained over the years by becoming the first President of the Senate of the Federation of Nigeria. (*Inter-ruptions*).

**Mr Speaker:** Shall we hear this first speech of this new Session? I find it difficult to hear the hon. Member.

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

*Paragraph 4* strikes me as a very important move to reality. It is the creation of two new Ministries to enhance public business and tackle effectively the problems of Regional economy. The two new Ministries with full portfolios are the Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Economic Planning. In effect, the Information and Welfare Division, under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, is now separate and distinct.

For the Ministry of Information, I have a word or two to say about its useful services to this Region after independence. Nigeria, on the 1st of October this year, will become an independent nation, and thus will come within the warm embrace of other nations and come into the searchlight of world politics.

In this age of intensive propaganda and ostentatious advertisements, it is this Ministry that will place the Eastern Region, as an autonomous unit in the Federation of Nigeria, on the world map. It will sell the Eastern Region with a great premium in the political and commercial mart of the world. It will attract investments into our rich natural

resources. It will advertise our people, their culture, civilisation, arts and crafts by peaceful persuasion, by pamphlets and television and broadcasting. It can help to educate the adult masses, help the commercial community, bolster up our trade, thwart vicious propaganda and mitigate racial hatred which for centuries has made the so-called civilised nations to look down upon us as low in intelligence and inferior race to the barbaric Europe and sophisticated America.

Thanking the Government for creating this very important Ministry of Economic Planning, I am sure the Leader of Opposition, as an economist, will have much to suggest to the Government and laud it for taking the bull by the horns.

*Paragraph 5* of the Gracious Speech gives us all hope and confidence:

"My Government attaches great importance to raising the living standards of the people, and towards this end the new Ministry will conduct a survey of our resources, human, animal, vegetable and mineral, with a view to producing a plan designed to bring these resources to the fullest benefit of the people. In particular, the Ministry will pay special attention to agricultural production and industrial projects, which will directly increase productivity and the earning capacity of the people."

The Ministry of Economic Planning is all-important. It is *sine qua non* in the real development of the Region. With the Regionalisation of Nigeria in 1952 our integrated economy was abruptly torn asunder. The cocoa resources of the West fell to the Western Region Government; the groundnut resources of the North to the Northern Government; while the palm produce of the East lay in the Eastern Region. A close study of our annual budget reveals that our economy has been always awkwardly tilted towards conspicuous expenditure on personal emoluments, other charges, and ancillary charges. This defect in our national economy is the dead weight of imperialist regime. We inherited this legacy of unbalanced economy from the Colonial Government.

The purpose of the Ministry is to wind the clock of our Development Plan and set it correctly to move with the times and with



[MR OKEYA]

emphasis on directly productive ventures and consumer goods.

It will rectify all the diversified economies of the Region. It will utilise the results of scientific Agriculture for the production of staple foodstuffs and export of cash crops. Economic planning is the key to a Welfare State. It is on the planning of our Regional economy and by having planned expenditure of public funds and balanced economy that lies the realisation of our hopes for high standard of living, better health services and employment. Its object therefore is to integrate into a rational framework all specific projects, establish priorities, allocate additional funds where necessary and provide further guidance for their speedy implementation. The two new Ministries therefore have an important role to play in the Region in an independent Nigeria by attracting the flow of foreign capital and skills into the under-developed economy of the Region.

*Paragraph 6* deals with the House of Chiefs. The Government has to be congratulated for the recognition of the First-class and Second-class Chiefs after a long process of trying patience. It is impossible to please every section of the community. I think the Government has done in this connection what is possible and expedient in the circumstances surrounding the classification of Chiefs in the Region.

Its bold legislation has placed the Eastern potentates and charismatic leaders on the same footing with the other rulers in the Federation and has given them equal status and dignity with their counterparts anywhere in Nigeria.

This bicameral form of Legislature reflects credit on the Government of the day and has given it a typical pattern of the Houses of Lords and Commons in evolution. The nomination and selection of the First-class Chiefs was above all partisan politics. The classification and selection of the Second-class Chiefs was smooth and satisfactory in most places. The Administrative Officers in the Region deserve thanks for their ready co-operation and sense of duty.

*Paragraph 8* refers to the new system of Provincial Administration. While the Provincial Assemblies have not begun to function, I

must not fail to place on record that the twelve Provincial Commissioners with their Provincial Secretaries have done a wonderful work of bringing the Government nearer to the people and making them understand Government views and policy more readily. The people feel quite satisfied by having the Ministers of State in their midst. Areas needing immediate development are made known to the Regional Government.

I would suggest that some measures of power be given to the Provincial Commissioners so as to reduce the volume of correspondence and complaints coming through the Administrative Officers to the Headquarters. Since the proposed Provincial Assembly Halls are not yet ready, the Government could allow the use of suitable Halls or County Halls in the Provinces for the meeting of the Provincial Assemblies.

*Paragraphs 10-18* of the Gracious Speech are reflections on Nigerianisation in the Region. The Government deserves our appreciation in its steady efforts to achieve this objective:—

1. In the Judicial, is an African luminary, a man of high moral calibre, made the Chief Justice.
2. At the Head of the Public Service is a Cambridge-educated lawyer, whose wide experience in the Civil Service, and whose diligence and acute sense of duty have combined to make him the Chief Secretary to the Premier.
3. In the Public Service Commission is another brilliant scholar whose spiritual balance and selflessness both as a Legal Practitioner and Commissioner have elevated him to the trustworthy post of the Chairman of the Public Service Commission.

Six out of the ten posts of Permanent Secretary are today held by Nigerians. This is a true evidence of systematic progress in the Public Service.

*Paragraph 19* is about the University of Nigeria. The Gracious Speech points out that—

“The success which has attended these efforts has now brought the planning of the University to an advanced stage”.

This is a great consolation and we gladly look forward with our fingers crossed to the opening



of the University in September this year. The University of Nigeria has attracted world attention. It has been now God-fathered by the joint responsibility of the United States of America and the United Kingdom to accomplish the project in its natural setting.

The International Co-operation of the U.S.A. and the Inter-Varsity Council of Great Britain are represented in the Provisional Council of the University of Nigeria.

The International Co-operation Administration promised to donate about 173,000 dollars. The Acting Principal from America is now present in the Region. All these go to confirm the impressions that the University of Nigeria after its completion is destined to be the highest centre of learning in the whole continent of Africa. The Official Document No. 7 of 1960, of the Eastern Region details the Progress Report of the University of Nigeria.

The Ministries of Agriculture, Commerce, Education, Finance, Health, Internal Affairs, Justice, Local Government, Town Planning and Works bear evident testimony of systematic progress that is characteristic of the Eastern Regional Government since 1953. (*Interruptions from the Opposition Bench*).

**Mr G. I. Oko, M.B.E.** (Awgu Division): Point of Order—Standing Order 32 (5):

“Members shall not make unseemly interruptions while any Member is speaking”. Members of the Opposition are making a mockery of this House.

**Mr Speaker:** I think I should thank the hon. Member and I would request all parts of the House to be a little more serious.

**Mr Okeya:** The Ministry of Agriculture is an all-round improvement in production of foodstuffs, export and cash crops, poultry project, soil survey and analysis, staff, rehabilitation and regeneration of forests, fishing and fish-curing.

The Ministry of Commerce is full of hopes after making active contacts and solid arrangements for the establishment of a number of industries. These contacts have resulted in

concrete proposals for the economic and industrial development of the Region.

The Ministry of Education has shown new phases in our educational system. The whole Junior Primary School—from Infants I to Standard II—is now fee-free. The scholarship awards have been on the increase. While the public is anxiously awaiting the findings of the Education Committee and Commission, the army of teachers and Voluntary Agencies in this Region are very grateful to the Ministry of Education for its gratuitous award of 12½ per cent salary increase.

The Minister of Finance holds the purse string and when he loosens it in his Budget Speech a few days hence there will be ample opportunity for all to test the elasticity of that string and the buoyancy of the purse.

The Ministry of Health has carried forward its medical and health services to nearly the darkest corner of the Region. It is laudable that the Ministry is going to take positive steps this year to ensure that high professional standards are maintained and abuses both within Government Service and without are eliminated.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs including both the Information Division and the Ministry charged with responsibility for Chieftaincy is significant for having concluded arrangements for the establishment of Radio Broadcasting and Television Services. The Regional Library Board is growing and spreading its arms day by day. Classification and selection of Chiefs was not a pleasant task and the Minister responsible had shown wonderful tact and resourcefulness. The Government Press under this Ministry needs an immediate reorientation to save most of the oppressed workers there from frustration and hypertension.

The Ministry of Justice is highly Nigerianised, and several plans are afoot. The whole Region is all anxious for the implementation of the Customary Court system. There are doubts in the minds of men whether the selection of the Customary Court Judges will be based on merit, long experience and hereditary rights. Some suggest that the transfer of the staff of the Customary Courts should be screened and made error-proof.



[MR OKEYA]

The Ministry of Local Government has shown greater initiative in its policy of paying Block Grants and assisting Councils with Loans from Banks under certain terms and conditions. For the loyalty I owe my Constituency Oguta Urban and Oguta District Council, I humbly recommend them to the Ministry of Local Government for block grants or loans to create revenue earning projects. The stand of the Ministry not to allow further fragmentation in Local Government is most welcome.

The Ministries of Town Planning and Works seem to carry the Region's heavy burden and it is difficult for the people to appreciate really the stupendous work being done in the Region. There seems to be too much delay in the approval of plans and in the execution of road work. The Ministries have given us assurance in the Gracious Speech that all work must receive more prompt attention.

To conclude, the Gracious Speech admonishes the hon. Members of the House of Chiefs and hon. Members of the House of Assembly to follow the ideals of parliamentary democracy, to allow unfettered discussion and tolerance in our debates. Reflecting on this piece of advice, I could not help saying that

I detect in this new House a freshness, a feeling of compromise between the Government and the Opposition. Our debates of late have been non-provocative. We shall not be fractious nor shall we be unduly turbulent. The Opposition, I believe, will no longer oppose for opposing sake, but to oppose whenever they believe the Government's administration or policy is wrong.

We shall, however, use every opportunity open to us to argue and fight for the things in which we believe and which we hold to be necessary for the benefit of the greater number of the people in this Region.

**The Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies) (Mr O. U. Affiah):** I beg to second.

*Question proposed.*

*And pursuant to Standing Order 29 (2) the debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed upon Thursday, 17th March, 1960.*

#### ADJOURNMENT

Resolved that this House do now adjourn.  
(*The Minister of Finance, Dr S. E. Imoke*).

*Adjourned accordingly at twenty-five minutes to one o'clock p.m.*



EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 16th March, 1960

The House met at Ten o'clock a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

PAPER

Presented:

Investment Possibilities in the Eastern Region of the Federation of Nigeria (Official Document No. 11 of 1960). (*The Minister of Finance*).

Ordered: That the said Paper do lie upon the Table.

BILLS PRESENTED

(1) Audit

Bill to amend the Audit Law, 1955, presented by the Minister of Finance, Dr S. E. Imoke; read the First time; to be read a Second time Today.

**Mr Speaker:** Does the hon. Minister want all the stages of the Bill to be dealt with today?

**The Minister of Finance:** Yes.

**Mr Speaker:** That being so, I should like to draw the attention of hon. Members to Standing Orders 46 and 48 (1). Standing Order 46 reads:

"At the conclusion of the proceedings on the first reading or on any subsequent stage of a Bill, a day to be named by the Member in charge of the Bill shall be appointed for the next stage: provided that with the general consent of the House all the stages of a Bill may be taken on the same day . . ."

Is it therefore the general consent of the House that all the stages of this Bill be dealt with today?

**Several hon. Members:** Yes.

**Mr Speaker:** I take it that it is the general consent of a majority of the House.

(2) Interpretation Ordinance

Bill to amend the Interpretation Ordinance (Cap. 94), presented by the Minister of Justice

and Attorney-General, Mr M. O. Ajegbo; read the First time; to be read a Second time Today.

**Mr Speaker:** Is it the intention of the hon. Minister that all the stages of the Bill should be dealt with today?

**The Attorney-General and the Minister of Justice:** Yes.

**Mr Speaker:** I think it is the general consent of the House especially as we have to debate the Speech from the Throne tomorrow?

**Hon. Members:** Yes.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(1) The Audit (Amendment) Bill

*Order for second Reading read.*

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** I beg to move that the Bill be now read a Second time.

Hon. Members will recall that section 225 of the Nigeria Constitution Order in Council provides that there shall be a Director of Audit for the Eastern Region and that he shall be paid such salary as may be prescribed by any law enacted by the Regional Legislature. The Bill before the House specifies that the Director of Audit of the Eastern Region shall be paid not less than £2,400 which is what is paid at present in accordance with the Approved Estimates. The principal law contains some drafting errors which it is also intended to amend.

Section 154 (e) Constitution Orders provide that all the audited accounts of Government and the audited Report shall be laid on the Table of this House. Section 10 of the principal law, however, provides that some, but not all, of the accounts shall be laid on the Table of this House. In other words, while the Constitution Orders provide that all the audited accounts and the relevant Audit Report shall be laid on the Table of the House, the principal law provides that some, but not all the accounts, shall be so laid. The intention of section 9 of the amendment law is to correct those drafting errors.



[DR IMOKE]

Hon. Members will agree that the Bill before the House is within the ambit of the Constitution Orders and that it is necessary to ensure that the properly audited Accounts and Reports are laid before the Table of the House. The Bill is, therefore, not contentious and should receive the warm support of this House.

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

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill accordingly read a Second time and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.*

*Bill immediately considered in Committee.*

(In the Committee)

*Clause 1.*

**The Minister of Finance:** I beg to move that the figure "1959" be *deleted* and "1960" *inserted*.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Clause 1 as amended agreed to.*

*Clause 2.*

**Mr V. K. Onyeri** (Port Harcourt Division): I only want to draw the attention of the hon. Minister of Finance—maybe he will be explaining the point in the course of time—to the salary attached to the post of the Director of Audit and ask why the salary should not be in line with the salary of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Finance. He is on a salary of £2,400 while the Permanent Secretary is on £2,640. In fact, I feel that somebody who is actually watching our finances should be on the same level with the Permanent Secretary. The Minister should explain.

**The Minister of Finance:** In the past, the Audit Department had been under the Ministry of Finance; it was supposed to be a Division of the Ministry and the Permanent Secretary is at the head of the whole Ministry and it was not thought wise that the Permanent Secretary—the head of the whole

Ministry—should be receiving the same emolument with a head of a Division of the Ministry. Now, the Constitution has changed the position and this law is only trying to legalise what has been existing this current year and it is left to the Government to take into consideration what the hon. Member has raised.

**Mr S. G. Ikoku** (Enyong Division): The explanation of the hon. Minister is not satisfactory. Is the Minister of Finance suggesting that after 31st March—that is, at the end of the fortnight—the law shall cease to operate? If the law will continue to operate after that date, I think the wisest thing is to bring this gentleman's salary to the same level as that of a Permanent Secretary—that is, £2,640. I thought the figure was merely inserted because of the position of Permanent Secretaries before the Mbanefo Commission and it was also thought or taken for granted that the £240 will be added. Hon. V. K. Onyeri has actually said the correct thing and it will be wise if the salary of the Director of Audit be made the same as the salary of Permanent Secretaries.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice (Mr M. O. Ajegbo):** I do not see anything inconsistent with what the Leader of the Opposition has complained about. The law provides that the Director of Audit shall be paid annually the salary of £2,400—it could be more—but it should not be less than £2,400, the basic salary. He could be paid more but not less than £2,400.

**Mr Ikoku:** We will take it up when considering the Estimates.

*Clause 2 agreed to.*

*Clause 3.*

**The Minister of Finance:** I beg to move to leave out the figure "3" in line one of clause 3 and to insert therefor the figure "4".

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Clause 3 as amended agreed to.*

*Clause 4 agreed to.*

*Bill to be reported.*

(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)

*Bill reported with amendments; as amended read the Third time and passed.*



**(2) The Interpretation Ordinance  
(Amendment) Bill**

*Order for Second Reading read.*

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice (Mr M. O. Ajegbo):** I beg to move that the Bill be now read a Second time.

This Bill is non-contentious. It amends the Interpretation Ordinance, Cap. 94, in order to reflect the changes in the Constitution.

Governor in Council is defined in section 3 of the Interpretation Ordinance to mean "a Governor of a Region acting with the advice of the Executive Council of the Region, but not necessarily in accordance with that advice nor necessarily in such Council assembled (and in the absence of provision to the contrary where a written law is expressed to be applicable—

- (a) to Lagos as though Lagos were a Region the expression means for the purpose of such application the Governor-General in Council;
- (b) to the Southern Cameroons as though the Southern Cameroons were a Region the expression means for the purpose of such application the Governor-General acting in his discretion").

This definition, as far as the Eastern Region is concerned, is completely out of date and not in keeping with the present constitutional position of the Governor as outlined in paragraph 10 of the Report by the Nigeria Constitutional Conference and provided for in section 105 of the Nigeria (Constitution) Orders in Council, 1954 to 1960. Clause 2 of the Bill amends the definition of the Governor in Council.

"Governor in Council" now means the Executive Council of the Eastern Region.

Clause 3 empowers a Minister of this Region to delegate certain functions of his office. Paragraph 2 of this clause places a limit on the functions which a Minister can delegate and paragraph 3 provides that such delegation is revocable at will and that no delegation prevents the exercise of a power by the Minister.

The amendments in clause 4 (a) are consequential. We now have Secretary to the Executive Council in the place of Clerk to the Executive Council.

The Interpretation Ordinance provides under section 47 for the manner in which order made by the Governor can be signified. But it has no provision for the signification of an order made by the *Governor in Council*. Clause 5 closes this gap and provides that an order made by the Governor in Council can be signified under the hand of the Secretary to the Executive Council of the Eastern Region or a Minister charged with responsibility for the matter in question.

**The Minister of Education (Mr G. E. Okeke):** I beg to second.

**Chief S. J. Amachree (Degema Division):** I do not know whether this amendment is retrospective because there are so many matters hanging on the interpretation of the words Governor in Council still pending in court. So it will be detrimental to certain people if this law as amended becomes retrospective to affect those matters. So I would like the Attorney-General to clarify the position.

**Mr M. N. Onwuma (Aba Division):** The point I want to raise is that we should call a spade a spade and there is no need defining Governor in Council as something else. Let us put the thing down as Executive Council straight away. To define Governor in Council meaning the Executive Council need some explanation and it seems to me that it will be necessary to say that wherever the Governor in Council is inserted it will be necessary to delete it and put Executive Council.

The next point I want to raise is that I do not know exactly what the Minister would want to delegate to somebody else. So I become a little nervous about allowing some powers of the Minister to be delegated to somebody else either a civil servant or any other person. The Minister may feel like delegating the power to somebody else but I personally do not know exactly what it would mean and I wish to know the type of powers to be delegated and to what persons they are likely to be delegated to. Already we are having a series of petitions on this matter an



[MR ONWUMA]

I would like the Minister to keep the powers as they are at the moment.

**Mr C. A. Abangwu** (Nsukka Division): The point I want to make is not in connection with what the last speaker has said. I would like to say that the time has come when the Regional Government should undertake to revise our laws and incorporate all the amendments which have been going on for a long time now. If you take up some of the laws of the Region you will certainly be confronted with great difficulties because of a series of amendments which you will find made from time to time. A comprehensive measure on the amendment should be taken to incorporate all these changes. Somebody has said that this measure should be undertaken so as to keep the laws up to date. I feel that this is a suitable time to appoint a judge to revise our laws and bring them up to date.

**Mr J. A. Agba** (Ogoja Division): The idea of this amendment, as previous speakers have said, is not very well clarified in the Bill and I would like to tell the Minister of Justice from a historical point of view the evils underlining such delegation of powers. In doing so, I will refer the Minister to what happened in Canada during the time when the French and the English had one Legislative House of Assembly. I am not going into the full history of Canada but I will mention this strategic point of view which came out as a result of delegation of power by Ministers. However, I hope that the Minister will be in a position to say to what length of time the person or persons so delegated will have to be in office. In Clause 3 (3) it is stated that a delegation made under sub-section (1) is revocable at will and no delegation prevents the exercise of a power by the Minister. In effect, there is a duplication of powers. The Minister at certain times will act in conjunction with the persons to whom the powers had already been delegated. As I say this, my mind goes back to Bengal where at certain times the office of the Chief Justice of the High Court overlapped with that of the Governor-General of the place and then there was some sort of misunderstanding in the Government and the people did not know really who was in power, whether it was the Chief Justice who had the power to decide or the Governor-General.

I think Clause 3 (3) should have been clarified. When should the Minister, after delegating his power act and when should the person to whom power has been delegated act, in spite of the Minister?

The second point is that I would have also liked to know the necessity for the delegation. I do not know whether it is to make the Minister have less work to do, or to give him time to wander widely and in effect to receive a salary out of all proportion to the output of his work. I would like to know what really brings about the need for the Minister delegating his power. Is it because he has too much to do or is it because he does not know his work? Or is it because he wants to occupy himself in some other business? From the way I am looking at it, I think some clarification is needed.

I also have another fear which I should consider as my third point. That is, that this delegation of power, if not safeguarded—I do not know the principal law—will lead to all sorts of nepotism and favouritism. It will bring a lot of bribery and corruption in the Government and it will kill efficiency in every particular Ministry. Unless the Minister so concerned checks up the person delegated to do his work in his absence and tries as much as possible to find out what has been done in his absence, I am afraid there is going to be a lot of inefficiency, less output of work and all sorts of evils you may think of that are likely to exist in the Civil Service coming up. I have no need to explain what I mean by bribery and corruption, but I think it is well understood; so I have much fear in this Bill if it is passed.

**Mr S. G. Ikoku** (Enyong Division): I would have liked to think that this Bill is non-contentious, but I do not think it is entirely so. I am, however, glad to note that the Government is now satisfied that in the past it had undertaken pure illegal actions which it is now anxious to legalise. For by bringing this new interpretation of Governor in Council, the Attorney-General, when he next appears in court—he has many court cases outstanding—will be in a position to wriggle out of the difficult positions and manoeuvres undertaken either by this Government or by its predecessor. I have in mind some of those chieftaincy cases in court where a very fine point of law has been



involved as to whether, in fact, the Government did give recognition to those chiefs. And now it seems the Government having been to court on a few occasions and the Attorney-General having cleverly avoided appearing in court in the past six months in some of these cases, have now decided that the best way to get over this huddle is to amend the law to enable the Government to give whatever interpretation they like as to whether the man is recognised or not. I am glad to hear the Minister wants to grasp power—and one of those rigmarole Ministers for that matter—but that his power to my mind is an abuse of power, absolute power . . .

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** Point of Order. Standing Order 30 (3) "Reference shall not be made . . ."

**The Provincial Commissioner, Ogoja (Mr M. E. Ogon):** I think the correct Standing Order is 30 (5):

"It shall be out of order to use offensive and insulting language about Members of the House".

**Mr Ikoku:** Will these hon. Gentlemen make up their minds ?

**Mr Speaker:** I think I can appreciate the Minister's difficulty in finding the relevant portion. This is a new Standing Order and it is quite different from the old. Hon. Members, although according to *Erskine May*, there is a list of words regarded as insulting, it says there can be no exhaustiveness. It can never be exhausted. In my opinion, I do not think the Leader of the Opposition meant to use the word he used. I think it is offensive to use the word "rigmarole".

**Mr Ikoku:** I am quite prepared to abide by your ruling but I am surprised that it is regarded as offensive. It was a mere statement of fact. Somebody who goes forward and backward like a crab is involved in rigmarole. I was not trying to be offensive; I was merely stating a fact.

**Dr Imoke:** The Leader of the Opposition has not withdrawn.

**Mr Ikoku:** I accepted the Speaker's ruling. He said the word was used in an offensive manner and I said that I was merely stating a fact about the behaviour of the particular Minister. The Speaker is satisfied.

**Mr Speaker:** Although the Leader of the Opposition seems to be right, we must follow the common colloquialism in the country. In my sense, it is an offensive word and as I said, I do not think the Leader of the Opposition meant to use it in an offensive manner, and would he therefore withdraw ?

**Mr Ikoku:** I did not mean to use it in an offensive manner. I was discussing the issue of abuse of power. It is quite easy.

To my understanding, I think the logic in the argument of the hon. the Attorney-General is that the constitutional position is such that the Governor cannot really continue to perform this duty. I accept that argument. But what I am trying to point out is that it is not proper, it is not doing our governmental system any good, for us to hide under this cloak and take a large number of completely contradictory decisions merely to enable the Government to manoeuvre. Now that the law is being amended to enable the Executive Council to attach whatever interpretation it deems fit on the situation I am anxious to point out that it is an onerous duty, it is a very heavy responsibility, and should be exercised with the greatest discretion. It will be most embarrassing both to the people and the Government for us to have a large number of conflicting decisions. If the Executive Council takes a decision today, the lawyer goes to court to argue his particular view, then the next day a different decision is taken by Executive Council. It will not do us any good. I know some of my Friends opposite. They are not so anxious that justice be done, but they are most anxious to jump in for political advantages. I am not grinding the whole Government. I have made it very clear that I refer to some of the Ministers. I am sure they know themselves. We would not like them to misuse that power, because it is a very important function which they now want to perform.

It should be possible for the Government to take a decision about recognising a Chief or not recognising a Chief and leaving it like that, standing on their prestige; but the trouble is that they may take decision to recognise a Chief today . . .



**Dr Imoke:** Point of Order—Standing Order 30 (2).

**Mr Speaker:** Possibly, he is referring to irrelevancy: "A Member must confine his observations to the subject under discussion and may not introduce matter irrelevant thereto." I hope the Leader of the Opposition will correlate his points.

**Mr Ikoku:** I can appreciate the position of my Friends opposite. They feel very deeply over the chieftaincy matter and I have only mentioned it by way of illustration because the whole chieftaincy issue depends on interpretation, and this law deals with interpretation. That is why I have brought it in, and if a scheme was intended for this chieftaincy matter, the proper thing to do would have been to start right from the very beginning.

**Mr G. C. Okeya** (Owerri Division): Standing Order 30 (4): Chieftaincy is a specific question upon which the House has taken a decision.

**Mr Ikoku:** I think the best thing is to drop this illustration not to cause my friends further embarrassment.

My point is that the Region's Executive Council is going to give its own interpretation; this thing should be done in a dignifying manner, and the practice of listening to everybody running up from a constituency to give a complaint and new decision is taken must be stopped. This thing is law and the hon. the Attorney-General who has moved this amendment knows that law must be held in dignity and that going forwards and backwards does not help to maintain the dignity of the law.

Just two more points: Firstly I notice that in Clause 1 Subsection (2), we are told that this law applies only to the Eastern Region. I just want to find out from the hon. Attorney-General whether the same interpretations, the same changes, have been made in the other Regions or whether they do intend to make such changes. I know that this House cannot make law for other Regions, but we have made several laws in this House without including such Clause as: "This law applies only to the Eastern Region." The implication is that this law will not be acceptable to other Regions. That is the implication.

Finally, this question of delegation of power: It is very important and this House holds a Minister responsible for whatever action is taken by his Ministry. That is the Parliamentary system of Government. The Minister is a member of this hon. House. He can defend himself and can explain his views. But it will not be very nice for us to pick up a Minister and then be told that he knew nothing about it but merely delegated his power to Mr X—an unknown person. We want it to be clear whether you are delegating to Mr X or Mr Y; the Minister must be prepared at all times to assume full responsibilities for whatever is done, so we do not want it used as an excuse in this House that he never knew what happened.

I know the hon. the Premier has not commented. If all his Ministers were like him, there would not be need for all my preaching this morning. At least there is one thing about the hon. Premier: whether he is right or wrong, he makes his position clear, but there are those, who do not adopt that principle.

I hope that the Government Bench will take into consideration the points raised by Members of this House, and particularly the fact that a very heavy responsibility now rests on them as regards the interpretation, and they should only make their views known to the Region after mature consideration. Very frequently changes of opinion will not help either the prestige of the Government or the prestige of the law.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice (Mr M. O. Ajegbo):** I am grateful for the comments made by hon. Members on this Bill. I shall take them one by one.

Chief the hon. Amachree is rather nervous about our using this new definition of "Governor in Council". I can understand his anxiety and I would like to allay his fears. The law is not meant to be retrospective; if so, we should have indicated it. It will operate as from the date the Governor in Council decides and we hope that this will cheer him a bit.

Hon. Onwuma raised the question about "delegation of powers". I can understand his anxiety there also. There are times that certain routine matters are to be dealt with and they may well be fairly urgent. If a Minister



happens to be on tour and cannot get them done, surely he could delegate his powers to the Permanent Secretary or whomever he likes. No one would expect him to sit down in the office all day signing contract papers of £10 and so on. These are matters that could be delegated to a Local Government Commissioner. In fact no delegation can derogate from the responsibility of the Minister. I think that was the fear of the Leader of the Opposition. The Minister is fully and wholly responsible for such matters as are delegated by him to anybody and he is strictly responsible to this House and to the Government.

Another hon. Member made the point that some of our laws are so heavily amended that they need complete revision. I am very much in sympathy with him there. We hope in a very short time to bring our laws up-to-date.

I do not agree with the Leader of the Opposition when he said that "we just want to wriggle out of trouble". If he read the Western Region Gazette No. 49 of 1959, he would find that such a law was enacted on the 5th of November, 1959, and there they used identical words.

Coming to hon. Agba's comments, although I enjoyed his historical analysis yet I do not think he said anything that is worth answering.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill accordingly read a Second time and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.*

*Bill immediately considered in Committee.*

(In the Committee)

*Clauses 1 to 5 agreed to.*

*Bill to be reported.*

(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)

*Bill reported without amendment; read the Third time and passed.*

#### ADJOURNMENT

Resolved: That this House do now adjourn. (*The Minister of Finance, Dr S. E. Imoke*).

*Adjourned accordingly at eleven o'clock a.m.*



EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 17th March, 1960

The House met at Ten o'clock a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

PAPER

Presented:

The Audited Statement of the Voluntary Agencies Building (Loans) Fund, 1958-59. (The Minister of Finance).

Ordered: That the said Paper do lie upon the Table.

ORDER OF THE DAY

Governor's Speech (Debate on the Address)

(THIRD ALLOTTED DAY)

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on Question—(15th March):—

That this House expresses its loyal and dutiful thanks to His Excellency the Governor for His Excellency's Most Gracious Speech addressed to both Houses of the Legislature from the Throne.

**Mr Speaker:** I wish to invite the attention of hon. Members to the fact that the debate on the Amendment on the Order Paper covers the debate on the Speech from the Throne; so that you have one opportunity of making your contributions to the debate on the Speech from the Throne. I should therefore like the Leader of the House and also the Leader of the Opposition to give me lists showing how they want their members to speak every morning. This will serve as my guide.

*Question again proposed.*

**Mr Speaker:** An Amendment is on the Order Paper. I therefore call on Mr Eyo to move the Amendment.

**Mr E. O. Eyo** (Uyo Division): I am planning to move the Amendment on the

last day of the debate; that was the ruling last year.

**Mr Speaker:** The procedure is that you must finish with the Amendment before you go to the motion; but in this case, the debate on the Amendment covers the debate on the Speech from the Throne. So that you have one opportunity of making your contributions to the debate. You just cannot debate the motion without finishing with the Amendment—that will be against our Standing Orders.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** Will you please give me a few minutes to collect my papers?

**Mr Speaker:** Hon. Members, the Leader of the Opposition has drawn my attention to the procedure last year, and I wish to ascertain from the *Hansard* whether that was so.

*Sitting suspended at 10.10 a.m.*

*Sitting resumed at 10.15 a.m.*

**Mr Speaker:** Hon. Members, as a Lawyer I am always insistent upon authority and there is the authority here. These rulings by Speakers are always called "precedents", so that I can take quite such a precedent from any ruling and there is a precedent here, I think from my conscience as a Lawyer, I am bound to follow. I said last year:

"Hon. Members will find on the Order Paper two amendments. I propose to adopt the procedure I am reliably informed is that of Westminster. That is, the amendments will come up on the last day of the debate on the Speech from the Throne."

*Question again proposed.*

**Mr S. G. Ikoku** (Enyong Division): Two days ago the Government Chief Whip, my friend the hon. G. C. Okeya moved a motion of thanks to His Excellency the Governor for His Excellency's Most Gracious Speech from the Throne. I rise today to associate Her Majesty's Opposition with the sentiments contained in the motion.

Sir, the Speech from the Throne is largely historical; but it could well prove historic. It is historical because at least ninety of its ninety-nine paragraphs are devoted to recording



what has already been achieved in the various Ministries. A good deal of space is spent telling us what has been done; and too little space is given to a clear formulation of Government's policies and programme for the ensuing financial year. Nevertheless, there are a few pregnant passages scattered here and there throughout the Speech—pregnant passages in that they intimate or suggest far reaching changes in Government programme of action. I shall refer to just two of these stimulating passages.

The first is at paragraph 5, page 2 of the Speech. It deals with the Government's apparent determination to get to grips with the vexing but all-important problem of all-round economic development. It reads:

"The second Ministry will be the Ministry of Economic Planning. My Government attaches great importance to raising the living standards of the people, and towards this end the new Ministry will conduct a survey of our resources, human, animal, vegetable and mineral, with a view to producing a plan designed to bring these resources to the fullest benefit of the people . . ."

The second stimulating passage is at paragraph 98 page 23 and it seems to reflect a desire on the part of Government to tread the path of parliamentary democracy as an accepted way of political life. The relevant passage reads:

"... In six months time, Nigeria will be fully independent. I trust that a free Nigeria will continue to follow the ideals of parliamentary democracy, that there will be unfettered discussion of opinions honestly held and that questions of state will be decided after free debate. Conflict of policy within a parliamentary democracy is an indication not of weakness but of strength: to the maintenance and increase of that strength, my Government will continue to devote its best endeavours."

This passage also points clearly to the awe-inspiring subject of independence—the terrifying prospect but noble objective of the Nigerian being master of his affairs in his land of birth. Because the trend of thought and chain of ideas contained in these passages I have quoted here are exceedingly complex and absorbing, and because further my colleagues

will very efficiently deal with Government policies as regards the various Ministries, I propose to confine my contribution in this debate on the Address to three subjects as follows:

- (a) The problem of poverty;
- (b) The threat to parliamentary democracy;
- (c) The all-important matter of independence.

Included in the problem of poverty is not only abject pennury leading to vagrancy and soliciting but also unemployment, loss of employment due to the fortune of certain hard pressed industries, under-employment, low standard of living arising from the high cost of living and the plight of those of our eight million population who dwell in the rural areas.

Mr Speaker, vagrancy and soliciting are certainly on the increase in our towns. Today begging is no longer the exclusive occupation of our less fortunate brethren from the North. Soliciting by women (or prostitution) is a common feature of our towns. Unemployment is now a standard feature of our social life. The army is increasing; and every year some 15,000 school leavers go to swell this pool of unemployment.

Some 6,000 coal miners who formerly secured a subsistence wage toiling long hours underground have now joined the ranks of unwanted labour. Some thousands more will go on the scrap heap when the Railway Corporation carries out its projected, but tactfully deferred retrenchment policy.

It is calculated by some that unemployment in Eastern Nigeria is as high as 25 per cent—that is that one out of every four persons in this Region is either without a job or only partially employed. By comparison the unemployment figure in the United States is about 10 per cent and only 3 per cent in the United Kingdom. The national income in the East is something of the order of £27 *per capita*, compared with about £400 *per capita* in the United Kingdom and over £800 *per capita* in the United States of America. When it is borne in mind that some of us earn as high as £1,000 or even more per annum, it becomes clear that *per capita* income in this Region can be as low as £10 to £15, i.e., about £1 per person per month. And no major plan—and here I do not imply criticism of this Government—has been



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launched for dealing with such a grave and staggering problem.

As regards the rise in cost of living, the Government has accepted the view of the Mbanefo Commission that the rise in the cost of living by September, 1959, compared with 1954 is something of the order of 13.9 per cent to 19 per cent. The Government has granted wage increases designed to restore the purchasing power of those sections of our population which benefit from these wage increases. These wage increases, however, are not available for the overwhelming part of our population. My calculation is that less than 100,000 people will have their purchasing power more or less restored. What of the other seven million? We have not only failed to bring this seven million any relief, we have in fact made things more difficult for them. For the wage increases (increases which I must say right away are wholly desirable) will bring about some increases in price and cost of living. Whereas the public servant or the voluntary agency worker can hold his own, the overwhelming part of our population have no succour coming to them.

It follows that as we struggle to keep the civil servant's head above water in this desperate battle of living, we are at the same time bringing discomfiture and despair to the many millions who constitute our rural population.

What is the way out? Must we refrain from the practice of restoring the purchasing power of our public servants? Certainly not. The solution lies in all-round economic development of the Region. This is why I see as by far the biggest change for the better this Government's decision to create a Ministry of Economic Planning charged with the responsibility of developing our resources—human, animal, vegetable and mineral—to the benefit of our people. The Government must be congratulated for this. At least they now fully realise the problem facing this Region, and they have chosen the right road which may lead to its solution. But I must warn, intention is not realisation, just as wish is not achievement. In order to reach the desired goal in the shortest possible time the proposed Ministry of Economic Planning must be manned by the right type of people. It must have a General Staff capable of understanding and of grappling

with our complex economic problems. And such a high-powered General Staff is not just possible without an equally high-powered Minister. My advice to the Premier is that he must search the ranks of his Parliamentary Party for a strong and knowledgeable man to head this Ministry. This is not the Ministry the filling of which should be considered on grounds of patronage or of respect for the House of Chiefs. It is a Ministry vital to the whole life of the Region.

A second condition of success is that a bold and practical plan for both industrial and economic development must be drawn up. I notice the Government hopes that the new Ministry of Economic Planning will produce the necessary plan. This is certainly a wrong way of looking at the problem. A plan carefully got up by way of tapping the knowledge and ideas of all sections of our economic and political life should be handed to the new Ministry for implementation. This should be the case because very complex and extremely varied considerations must be gone into in drawing up an Economic Plan. Some of the crucial problems could be listed briefly:—

- (i) How much capital is required?
- (ii) How much capital can be raised—how much internally and how much externally?
- (iii) If external capital is required, what are the terms and conditions which we are willing to accept in our own interests?
- (iv) What should be the relation of agricultural to industrial projects in the plan?
- (v) Is expenditure on social services to be frozen, cut down or increased at a diminishing rate?
- (vi) To what extent can agriculture be modernised without the development of basic industries?
- (vii) What forms will foreign partnership take in order to make sure that capital flows into the desired industries and control is firmly in our hands?
- (viii) Which industries can be readily developed bearing in mind our available natural resources?
- (ix) What constitutional difficulties are likely to arise in view of our Federal constitution and how could these be overcome?
- (x) What is the quantity and quality of the labour force required for carrying through the plan?



We can go on reeling out the problems. But I think I have drawn attention to enough problems in order to prove my contention that very detailed, expert and high-powered work must go into preparing a balanced and practical plan for all-round economic development.

In view of these complexities I am humbly putting forward the idea that the Government should set up a Parliamentary Commission on the Economic Development of the Region. This body should have full powers to take evidence from all interested persons and organisations. It should, in addition, retain the services of expert advisers who are not necessarily civil servants out here but who have the requisite intimate knowledge of those industries in which the Region could be interested. This Commission should work closely with the new Ministry of Economic Planning and the Eastern Nigeria Office in London. The Commission should function very much like a Congressional Committee in the United States of America or like the Working Parties which were set up in Britain during the Second World War. The aim should be to produce a comprehensive Report on the industrial possibilities of the Eastern Region. Basing itself on such a comprehensive Report, the Government should make up its mind and draw up a practical 5-year economic plan. A White Paper embodying such a plan should be tabled and debated by this House, and both Government and Opposition should agree on such a plan. In other words, we should have a bi-partisan economic policy for the industrialisation of the Region. I hold that our serious economic situation must force on us an economic programme to which all political parties are committed. If we succeed in this we may yet save Parliamentary democracy in this country. But should we fail, it is a dead certainty that the ship of Parliamentary democracy shall founder on the rough seas of human disillusion and discontent.

Let me now turn briefly to the problems of Parliamentary democracy. I very much welcome the Government's declaration in paragraph 98 of the Speech from the Throne. We would like to take the Government very serious when it declares that it will continue to devote its best endeavours in following "the ideals of Parliamentary democracy". But the mere declaration of intention is not

enough. If some positive steps are not taken and certain mental attitudes are not reversed, the Government's declaration will remain a dead letter. May I draw attention to some of these factors which go to undermine parliamentary democracy in the Region.

Firstly, there is too much rigmarole in connection with Local Government elections in those areas where the Government party is on shaky grounds. Elections into the Calabar Urban District Council have been postponed a fourth time thus giving that Council something like an eight-year life since it was constituted in 1953. This postponement is on the grounds of the need for a fresh voters register, even though the Government has made a policy statement to the effect that existing Federal electoral register will be used for all Regional and Local Government elections throughout the Region. The Oron Urban District Council elections have been postponed after the nominations of candidates for the elections had been completed in accordance with official notices put out by the District Officer, Eket. Elections into the Ugep Urban District Council have been suspended and no reasons given. It must be noted, however, that elections have just been held into the Bonny, Okrika, Degema, Izi, Ezza, Izikwo and Ogoja District Councils. The Federal register of voters has been used. Is it the policy of this Government to have different arrangements for Local Government elections in different parts of the Region? If the answer is no, then why the rigmarole in Calabar, Oron and Ugep? If the answer is yes, then is such a policy justified under a parliamentary democracy?

A second threat to parliamentary democracy is what I may term Government's irksome habit of tampering with the traditions of our people in an attempt to prop up their favourites as Chiefs. Chiefs who have been clan-heads for many years are being manouved out of office because they are not prepared to act as political agents of the Government party. Chiefs are recognised by Government contrary to the wishes and accepted traditions of the people concerned. Good examples of this are the Amanyanabo of Kalabari, the Obi of Oguta and the recognition of the so-called Obi of Awka Etiti. How can we expect our people to take kindly to a political system that rides rough-shod over their cherished traditions?



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I have no doubts that parliamentary democracy (Westminster model) is bound to undergo some modifications before it can meet the needs of this country. In some respects these modifications will be far-reaching. It is presumptuous for any person to pontificate as to the exact nature of these modifications. The desired changes will arise out of our day to day experience. My plea is that while we pledge our support for the fundamentals of parliamentary democracy, let us be fully conscious of the truth that the forms may, indeed will, have to undergo many changes in order to suit the temper and attitude of our society. In the meantime we must do nothing that will help to bring into disrepute this political system which we are all anxious to engrain upon our traditional and accepted way of life.

May I now turn to the third and last point in my speech. It is this matter of Independence. We are thrilled with the idea of Nigeria becoming a fully independent State by 1st October this year. After decades of struggle—long drawn out and at times bitter—we are now within sight of our goal.

We should be eternally grateful to all who have fought for this great event—from the humble trade unionists and youths, through men like Adeniyi Jones, Vaughan, Herbert Macaulay and Awolowo. (*Interruptions—Shame! Shame!*). I will speak for the benefit of these noise-making trade unionists. They should listen carefully to what others are saying.

I repeat, we should be eternally grateful to all who have fought for this great event—from the humble trade unionists and youths, through men like Adeniyi Jones, Vaughan, Herbert Macaulay and Awolowo to the greatest of them all, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe. (*Hear! Hear!*).

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice (Mr M. O. Ajegbo):** Now, we shall request Mr Speaker to extend his time.

**Mr Ikoku:** This is not the time to argue as to who is the greatest and who is the least in this great army of liberators. The truth is that very many people have contributed to this victory. It has been a peoples victory. But we must not gloat too much over what I have called a victory. For on closer examination, it

is clear that even though independence is in sight, freedom is still a good way away. I submit, Mr Speaker, that this is a moment both of joy and of challenge. We have every cause for joy in that we have lived to see the formal independence of our motherland. But it is a real challenge—the challenge of the century—for us to see to it that our land of birth attains real freedom. I do not believe, Sir, that the present set-up in Nigerian politics is or can lead to real freedom for Nigeria. And by real freedom I mean political freedom, economic freedom, military freedom and cultural freedom. And let me warn that political freedom becomes a mere farce if this country is still dominated by a foreign power in the economic, military and cultural spheres. The greatest tragedy that has befallen this country in the last phase of this fascinating dash to freedom is that the real Generals of the national liberation army are not in the position to guide the destiny of this great country in the critical early years of its emergence as a sovereign state. Let us openly admit the fact that British imperialism has scored a victory over the nationalists as a result of the last Federal elections. British imperialism has succeeded in rigging up a Federal Government which is in all essential aspects a convenient front behind which imperialist interests could continue their exploitation of this country. Today, British imperialism acting through native feudalism has succeeded in holding all the commanding positions in our national life.

This has been achieved despite the fact that we shall soon be formally independent. This then is the challenge of our time—that true nationalists in this country must now redouble their efforts, seize the opportunity of political freedom which October 1 will bring and win economic, military, and cultural freedom for the 35 million people of this, the greatest Negro State in the world.

Imperialism is by no means defeated in Nigeria or in Africa. Great and stupendous efforts are still being made by imperialists everywhere for the intensified economic exploitation of our country and continent. A Nigerian Investment Company with a share capital of £1,000,000—all fully subscribed—has just been formed for the purpose of directing investment in Nigeria. This is a company of British investors.



**The Minister of Commerce (Mr J. U. Nwodo):** Don't scare our investors, please.

**Mr Ikoku:** And it is headed by a leading British bank.

Last month, European imperialist powers met in Paris and agreed to raise seven billion dollars a year for the increased exploitation of Africa. The N.A.T.O. countries are planning an economic counterpart—North Atlantic Trading Organisation—to co-ordinate the efforts of these countries in the exploitation of Africa. A few weeks ago, representatives of United States of America, Canada, United Kingdom, Belgium, France and Holland met in Washington to plan co-ordinated economic penetration of Africa. And Mr Paul Hoffman, America's ace Administrator of foreign aid, has just published a booklet dealing with capital for the backward countries. In it the idea is put forward of the Western Powers clubbing together to raise four billion dollars each year for the next ten years for the purpose of capital investment in the under-developed countries. And so we see that the imperialist countries are planning hard for the continued exploitation of Africa. Let it be openly and categorically stated that all this fine talk about development of under-developed countries of the world is simply a clever and convenient phraseology for covering up carefully conceived plans for economic exploitation of backward countries. One example will illustrate my point. The apologists of imperialism talk of bridging the wide gap between the "Haves" and the "Have-nots" among the nations of the world. But the Hoffman Plan envisages a 1 per cent a year rise in national income in the backward countries over the next ten years, while the national income of the imperialist countries is to rise by some 7 per cent a year, for the same period of ten years. Such a plan can only mean that the wealthy countries grow wealthier while the poorer ones grow poorer relatively. This fact should not surprise anyone because the essence of imperialism is that the poverty of the colonial country is the foundation stone upon which the prosperity of the metropolis country is built.

Side by side with these grandiose schemes for the intensified exploitation of Africa there exist plans for the military domination of this continent. In keeping with this plan, Nigeria

is being dragged into signing a defence treaty with Britain. Under such a defence treaty Britain will secure rights to maintain military bases in Nigeria and to station British and Commonwealth troops on Nigerian soil. If such a damnable arrangement is acquiesced in, then, Mr Speaker, we must say good-bye to Nigerian freedom.

If we must go forward rapidly after 1st October towards real and genuine independence, we must give serious thought to some fundamental propositions.

Firstly, we must fight for a new Constitution—a new Constitution that will guarantee the unity of Nigeria, liberate the creative forces of the masses, give full powers to a Federal Government and make the dream of West African Union readily attainable.

Secondly, we must not allow foreign military bases or troops on Nigerian soil. Nor must we entrust the command of any of our armed forces to expatriate officers.

Thirdly, we must further accelerate the pace of Nigerianisation of our Public Service. As part of this programme, all posts of Permanent Secretaries should immediately be filled only with Nigerians.

Fourthly, we must secure foreign capital at the lowest rates of interest and with no strings attached. Nigeria must be absolutely free to borrow anywhere in the world at the most favourable terms to her.

Fifthly, we must have the power to trade freely with all countries of the world to the advantage of our national economy.

In conclusion, may I appeal for a coming together, for a sinking of petty differences by all nationalists in this country. The fight ahead of us will be stiff; and imperialists will use even more subtle methods and stratagems. Thus the nationalists must battle on with determination in order to raise this country to the pinnacle of eminence, in order to enable the star of a great and united Nigeria to shine brightly and cast its rays of light and of hope throughout the Negro world.

**Mr C. A. Abangwu (Nsukka Division):** I rise to support the Motion. In doing so, I



[MR ABANGWU]

should like once again to congratulate His Excellency, Sir Robert Stapledon, on the dignified way he had carried his gubernatorial office in this Region, and the excellent delivery of his Speech from the Throne which lasted one hour.

I have always thought that his life in this Region is a living example to not only those Nigerians whose fortune it would be to step into his shoes as successive Governors of the Region, but also, the entire civil service of the Region. His Excellency seems to have been a thorough breed of those true Englishmen who had become part and parcel of constitutional monarchy. Sir Robert's apparent non-interference in political issues and his dutiful discharge of his constitutional functions irrespective of his personal convictions is worthy of emulation by both future Governors of this Region and the entire civil service. And by way of illustration, his methods seem to contrast sharply with those of his immediate predecessor which had caused, in its wake, a great deal of political upheavals in the Region in the past. The period of apparent political calm in this Region is a great tribute to his political sagacity for which we wish him more laurels.

In general, I would like to place on record my appreciation of the overall improvement in the Regional Government's social services particularly in the fields of education and health services. This is particularly so in the rural areas of the Region. I have been one of those who had always, on the floor of this House, persisted in persuading the Government to include our rural population in the distribution of social amenities. It is therefore gratifying to notice that a good deal of our rural areas are now in the scheme of things. We hope this phenomenon will be in the upward trend for the good of the majority of our people.

The inauguration of Provincial Administration has been long overdue. We are pleased, however, that Government is prepared now to put the necessary instruments into operation so that these Assemblies may be established in the near future. Here, I would like to refer to the Enugu Province and the establishment of the Headquarters of the Province. I raised this matter in 1959 in

this hon. House and will like to raise it here again. The consensus of opinion of the vast majority of the people of the Province, and particularly those of Nsukka and Awgu Divisions, is that the Provincial headquarters should be established at the Ninth Mile Corner and not in Enugu or Udi. The reason for this choice is obvious and we hope that for reasons already advanced, the wishes of the people will be respected. This will serve to obviate any unpleasant opposition that may arise if the Headquarters is not sited as suggested above.

We, in this Region, are proudly satisfied with the pace of the Nigerianisation of the Region's Public Service. It is hoped that in no distant future the entire public service will be Nigerianised, and that expatriates will only be recruited in professional and advisory capacities. In this regard, I would urge the Government to go outside the normal avenues of recruitment and explore the continents of Europe, Asia and America and even Japan for suitable experts and professional men who are willing to work with us and accelerate our pace of development.

Only in 1958, I made a speech in this House, as it were, prophesying that in no distant future, the posts of the Chief Justice of the Region and the Chairman of the Public Service Commission would be Nigerianised at the earliest opportunity. These dreams have now come true and the ovation with which this hon. House received the news from the mouth of His Excellency indicates the unanimous support the Government has for its boldness and foresight. Let us hope that this fine example will be followed in other fields of our public life. And we pray that the gentlemen so elevated will live up to their high callings.

I would like, however, to rap the Government in one important particular. Government has appointed eight Africans to the high posts of Senior Assistant Secretaries as some of the other Governments of the Federation had done. We are happy about this. But while our Government has kept these tried civil servants in Group 8, the Federal and Western Governments have placed them a scale higher, i.e. Group 7. It is my contention that this disparity is unjustified and that this will cause dissatisfaction and inefficiency in the young and enthusiastic officers concerned.



It is hoped that this anomaly will be rectified in due course.

As a member for Nsukka Division in this House, I would like once again to register the deep appreciation of the people of Nsukka for the kind gesture of this Government in its various projects connected with the University of Nigeria which, as is well known, is sited in my Division. We are gratified that work on the University is proceeding with dispatch according to plan. Already there are two special water boreholes, a firm of Electricians are on the site, constructional Engineers are gearing up for work, six miles radius of all approach roads to the site are being tarred and personnel are being recruited. On behalf of my Division, we assure the Government that the people are prepared to co-operate with the Government and that all land required for the project are being made available. The Nsukka Town Planning Authority recently inspected various additional sites for the 10,000 acre plots required for the use of the University for residential and commercial estates. Our thanks go particularly to Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, former Premier of this Region, and now Chairman of the Provisional Council of the University for his personal interest and initiative in the project.

In the sphere of Commerce and Industry, the important visits and the general improvements made were noted with satisfaction. We seem to have succeeded in arousing overseas interests in the economic and industrial potentialities of the Region. We are blessed here with rich mineral deposits and manpower. At this stage of our industrial development we need secondary and light industries. Official Document No. 11 of 1960 entitled: "Investment Possibilities in the Eastern Region of the Federation of Nigeria" recently published by this Government is a step in the right direction.

The appointment of a young Eastern Nigerian as an Economic Adviser to this Government is an encouraging and bold step which receives the approbation of the public. While we mourn the death of the erstwhile Economic Planning Commission a short while ago, I make bold to suggest that the time has come when this Government should undertake a comprehensive survey of the economic and industrial needs or requirements of this Region

for the next ten years. When this has been done, then it would be possible to proceed step by step to orderly development instead of a haphazard one. Nothing short of this will bring us the desired dividend. There is a big fund of goodwill towards this Government not only by the masses of our people but by our financiers and young Nigerian economists of Eastern Nigeria origin. There are many of them in the civil service, in the professions, in colleges and elsewhere who are prepared to proffer useful and free advice to Government behind the scene. We want secondary and light industries in this Region in partnership with foreign entrepreneurs to produce glass, wire, nails, plates, bottles, forks, knives, shirtings, singlets rubber and leather shoes, paper and ink, for domestic and other uses. Not until we can produce these things locally will we succeed in convincing the masses of our rural population that we are ruling ourselves or convince them of the realities of self-government much less independence.

I agree with the Government that our "main difficulty has been and no doubt will continue to be, that of finding the necessary capital and technical know-how with which to develop to the full the immense natural potential with which this Region is endowed". In fact, I sympathise with them and add that this is the problem common to all newly-emerging nations both in Africa and Asia. If we must realistically and effectively tackle this problem, we must learn to go outside the British Isles to look for these things. We must switch our searching eyes to any part of the world prepared to come to Macedonia and help us. We must look for men and materials without strings attached and from areas we could get them on the best terms—from America, Britain, Germany, Russia, Egypt, India, China, Japan, Australia and the Scandinavian Countries. I have already paid tribute generally to the Government for its educational services scattered over the Region. The pace of development so far is satisfactory in the primary schools and it is hoped that in five years time, there will be complete free primary education in this Region. The pace, however, of advancement in our secondary grammar schools and secondary modern, and commercial schools leaves much to be desired. There are hundreds of primary school leavers who miss the opportunity of secondary education merely for lack of place. They have no



[MR ABANGWU]

secondary schools to go to. According to the Government "the Ministry of Education has been under pressure to approve the opening of new secondary schools". Government also agrees that there is a need for more secondary schools and that the number is inadequate. It admitted that "no less than 186 applications for new schools were received and twenty-seven of these were approved in principle by the Ministry"! Mr Speaker, this is to me totally inadequate for a Region traditionally reputed for its thirst for education. It represents only 10 per cent of the secondary schools ready to open. These applicants do not ask for Government grants. Many of them have suitable premises and buildings to start operation. Many of the hon. Members who are here today would have considered themselves lucky if they had had some of the buildings and premises now rejected for their secondary education only twenty years ago. I am one of those who think that half bread is better than none, that half secondary education is better than no secondary education at all. And be it remembered, however, that the hood does not make the monk and that gorgeous and grand school rooms and university graduates do not of themselves make the scholar. Government should therefore allow some of these new schools to open after a thorough and patriotic inspection as early as possible.

In the field of labour relations, I am happy that Government is aware of the gathering storm. All has for a long time not been well in the labour front. The recent decision of the Railway and Electricity Corporations of Nigeria to dieselise their services has made a tremendous impact in this Region.

Some 3,000 workers in the Nigerian Coal Corporation situated in the capital city of this Region have lost their jobs and have been sacked. There is a similar impending doom on another 2,500 and it is reliably learned that the Railway Corporation would sack over 1,000 of its daily-paid employees. Both the Railway and the Coal Corporations have as a result of much pressure from workers announced Commissions of Inquiry to probe their respective industries. Thousands and thousands of people are jobless. This is a problem to both the Federal and the Regional Governments. It seems to me that the great handicap facing these Governments is lack or absence of comprehensive national planning

for the entire major industries of the country. Otherwise how could the Railway and Electricity Authorities decide on dieselisation when they know or should know that whatever they gained in diesel would be lost in the Coal Corporation? Can a house be divided against itself and yet stand? In my view, this is robbing Peter to pay Paul and the blame for this bad economy is at the door of lack of a national co-ordination in our economic planning.

We must be nationalistic too in our economic planning. Our policy should be to patronise local industries or local products even where it is a bit more costly. That is the way to conserve our revenue. It is high time Nigerian experts with nationalistic bias planned for us. That was why I congratulated the Eastern Government when it appointed a Nigerian its Economic Adviser. While it is my humble hope that these Commissions of Inquiry would in their work reflect genuine Nigerian interest against those of foreign interest, I call upon this Government to persuade the Federal Government to abandon the policy of mass dismissal of employees as redundant both in the Coal and the Railway Corporations; to ask the Federal Government to start at once to subsidise the Coal Corporation in order to retain its present employees at work; to establish early a steel industry at Nsude in the suburbs of Enugu which will make use of our coal; and to abandon the further dieselisation of our Railway and Electricity Corporations.

Government deserves praise for its part in appointing the Mbanefo Commission in conjunction with the other Governments. The cost of living has undoubtedly risen in the country as Government's cost of living index has shown. But Government deserves even more praise for its boldness in implementing the recommendations of the Commission. This is more so in respect of Government's refusal to give any increases to those in the super-scale posts. Many Nigerians think that at the present rate of pay, it would be very difficult for the Nigerian Governments to survive and embark on any worthwhile industry. Our senior civil servants are not underpaid particularly in the higher rung of the ladder.

Equally so, our junior civil service is underpaid, particularly when you gape at the chasm which separates the two in scales of salaries.



What we want and what I think will bring a sane halt to labour unrest and incessant wage claims is the bridging of the wide gap which exists between the junior and the senior service. And the earlier we abolish the words "Junior" and "Senior" in our industrial dictionary, the better for the future of our service. All our workers, junior and senior, deserve decent standards of living. They buy from the same market and should have similar responsibilities as citizens of this country. What then is the sense of paying one group from 5s to 20s per day and another from 40s to £7 per day? It is therefore hoped that in future while one would not at the moment advocate a drastic cut in salaries of senior civil servants, Government should in future revisions endeavour to raise wages and salaries of the so-called junior civil servants and unestablished staff and peg those of the so-called senior civil servants in the upper rung by which I mean those above £1,200.

A word or two for the Ministry of Justice. We are happy that the Rule of Law is strictly observed in the Courts of this Region. We trust the Courts will continue to be independent and a guardian of the rights and liberties of the individual. It is my humble duty to bring it to the notice of Government that those who administer justice—the Magistrates and Crown Counsel who are professionals—are not happy with their scale of salaries... (*Several hon. Members: Are they junior servants?*) It is an accepted fact that any lawyer of repute and standing, the type that will do justice and bring dignity to the Bench has an average annual income of no less than £3,000.

But what do we find? Magistrates and Crown Counsel start on less than £1,000. How then do you expect to attract these professionals into the service? Presently many of them do it as a national sacrifice. I would urge Government to review the matter with the urgency it demands. Our Magistrates of less than five years standing post-call should be appointed on fixed salary of £1,500. Those between five and seven years on fixed salary of £2,000, and Chief Magistrates and Chief Registrar on £2,400. The Presidents of our customary courts and those of the customary courts of appeal should not be paid less than £240, while ordinary members of customary courts should be paid no less than £120 per annum.

We are all gratified that in our lifetime—on 1st October, 1960—this great country of ours will be free. I am grateful to His Excellency the Governor for making this categorical statement—not hedged with political catch phrases. We look forward with hope and pride to this famous date as our Date of Destiny. I gather that in May of this year, our Government Representatives will visit London for a further and last Constitutional Conference. Some of us do not see the need for this further journey to England but if they must go, we wish them safe journey and Godspeed. We, the youths of this country must, however, warn that we do not want Independence with strings attached. We do not and will not tolerate any military bases on this soil at least until we are free and independent and capable of negotiating the deal.

In closing, let us reaffirm the N.C.N.C. foreign policy of non-alignment with either the West or the East. To be fore-warned is to be fore-armed.

**Mr M. N. Onwuma** (Aba Division): Permit me to associate myself wholeheartedly with the brilliant speech made last Tuesday by my hon. Friend from Owerri when he moved the Motion relating to the Speech from the Throne.

Once again the grinding mill of time has trundled us to this moment when it is usual for as many of us as catch the searching eyes of the Speaker to vent our feelings on Government records for the year just gone and to examine the proposals for the present year.

We must unhesitatingly say "thanks" to Government for the fulfilment of many proposals during the past year: fee-free junior primary schools, the award of scholarships, bold steps in the direction of establishing the University of Nigeria, payment of salary increases to practically all and sundry in the Region, the establishment of the House of Chiefs, appointment of Provincial Commissioners, and perhaps most important of all, the part played by the representatives from this Region in passing the Independence Motion in the Federal House.



[MR ONWUMA]

At this juncture, may I put myself completely in agreement, either through ravishing nationalism or ever-abiding virtue or vice with the views of the Minister for Information expressed earlier outside this House. Members of the Federal Government appear to be emphasising the membership of the Commonwealth at the expense of some other ideals. May I emphasise that I would like to associate myself with that statement, that the membership of the Commonwealth does not bring us any real material benefit. As a matter of fact, we cannot be a member of a Commonwealth where one group disregards the colour of members of that Commonwealth and other Commonwealth members look on these evil treatments meted to some members of the Commonwealth. Rather, I should associate myself with the view that every practical effort should be made at all material times, whether in this House or outside this House or even when we are making a journey to the moon to support the effectiveness of bringing into operation a West African Union. A Union of West African States is something that is most desirable. That is a contribution which West Africans can make in modern time towards civilisation. The British Commonwealth has been built; it has been built with Europeans at the back of their minds. Undoubtedly, we can build a strong West African Union even though the problems are immeasurable. Therefore, I associate myself completely with the view that the more we move away from the Commonwealth, the more we move towards the West African Union. We must understand that the youths of this country will not rest until this West African Union has been built completely. I am to say that I give my loyalty to the Premier in every conceivable respect except, perhaps, in so far as it has to do with the name of Umuahia Province. As far as I am concerned, I have to see to it that this question is kept open. I will continue to fight until finally, perhaps, I succeed in the battle.

I am demanding the immediate release of the Delimitation Commission Report. This will enable us to focus searching criticisms on the recommendations, because the rumour is disappointing, that some of the important persons in the various Ministries are carving out or demanding special constituencies for themselves. It is quite unnecessary for any

person to take advantage of his position to carve a constituency for himself. I feel very strongly against some considerations being recommended to suit individuals, especially in Aba North Constituency.

The Western Region has copied our tax system and they are using it to great advantage. May I submit, Sir, that in the same sense we should not be ashamed in copying the Agricultural Settlement Projects now operating in the Western Region. It will enable us to echo the hon. Premier's chorus of "Back to the Land".

May I once again say that the Minister of Education in the past year recorded a large number of achievements. But I think that the Ministry of Education is now trying to build a sort of cocoon around itself. May I say that some nice things such as scholarships and providing free primary schools have been undertaken by this Ministry. But I am afraid it is incredible that a Member of this House cannot see the Minister of Education or any other person in the Ministry without having to sign innumerable papers, and waiting for about one hour. If for any reason, real or imaginary, the Minister cannot receive us, please let him come to us. If the amount of work in the Ministry of Education is too much for him, I think it will be better to invite him to come out because the Ministry of Education is a public department as well as the Ministry of Local Government. If people cannot see the Minister he should make it a point to come out and see some of us.

I would like to ask the Minister of Education that the W.O.T.C. at Aba should be converted to a Secondary Commercial School and not a Teacher Training College, because the number of Teacher Training Colleges in Aba is sufficient and what we want is more Secondary Colleges. If this can be converted to a Secondary School with commercial bias it would be better.

The Motor Licensing section of the Ministry of Finance in Aba has adopted a retrograde step in motor licensing. As a matter of fact, we would prefer to go back to the time when it was in the hands of the Police. The congestion during the issuing of licences is heavy and touts infest the whole place. They get money from people to get them licenses



and from the money given them they deduct money for services rendered. Officers begin to receive money from people from 9.30 a.m. to 10 a.m. as licensing hours and before 11 a.m. they have closed. This is done contrary to the notice put outside that money will be received from 8.30 a.m. to about 12 p.m. as licensing hours thus making it impossible for people to get their licences on the same day. I would like the Ministry of Finance to look into this anomaly as far as Aba is concerned.

We all welcome the step taken by the Premier to intervene in the Coal dispute and should further action be taken we should like to be informed. Meanwhile miners should be informed that alleged frequent raiding of people's houses is not an answer to their ills.

There is a very important matter I should like to raise for the consideration of the Ministry of Local Government. A number of Councils have arrogated to themselves the prerogative of appointing people who are not recognised as Chiefs in any way as traditional members to the Councils. I do not know whether that is the routine or practice, but there are certain District Councils with people who are not in any way traditional chiefs in particular areas. I should have thought that the consideration is that those who are recognised by Government as chiefs, who may otherwise not be in the House of Chiefs, may be injected into the Councils as traditional members. In this event, we would like the Minister of Local Government to give us a statement so that when we go home we could tell the people what exactly the position is.

In my constituency, there is trouble in Mbutu-Umuogima local council. Sectional quarrels abound and it is high time the Ministry of Local Government instituted an inquiry into this state of affairs, in order to find a solution to the problem. I would also like to raise a matter, which has not been considered and which may come up for consideration some time. That is the advisability for Urban and Rural District Councils to appoint some special members to Councils. In fact a means should be devised whereby local councils are authorised to inject notable people including women in the community as special members.

The Minister of Works is like Jesus who saves others but never saves himself. (*Laughter*). There are schemes for everything in every Division but none for Aba Division. The Government should tar and expand the road from Aba via Umunkpeyi to Nbwasi and Umuahia. It should expand and tar the road from Aba to Akwete via Ndoki to Asa. There are other minor urban places like Azumini, Ogwe, Imo River and some important areas like Obegu and Ihie which are not included in the rural water supply scheme. The Minister of Works is asked to make every effort to see that these places are included. We do not get enough support from people of Ndoki as a result of this apparent neglect. There is a great need for a good water supply in these areas and Government should do well to look into these things.

Once more, Mr Speaker, the Ministry of Works, and the Government in general, should embark on a Housing Programme for all Government workers. It is far more important than a hundred-fold increases in wages. A bold housing scheme should make houses available for workers.

At page 21 paragraph 93, of the Speech from the Throne, His Excellency said:

"Four new launches at a total cost of £14,000 will have been delivered to four District Councils in Yenagoa and Degema Provinces . . ."

This matter was raised last year and I resisted this proposal because the District Councils in upland areas provide themselves with means of transport. It is a dangerous precedent for Government to begin to buy launches for District Councils in Yenagoa and Degema Provinces. If that is done we who live in the upland areas are entitled to grants of money to purchase lorries for transport. Government should treat the grants made so far in the purchase of these launches as loans which should be refunded by the Councils with interest.

It is not clear to us why the Government has decided to build another Government House at Enugu. I think that the House at Abakaliki Road, which is the official residence of His Excellency the Governor is a suitable house from all points of view. In my opinion the age of that house does not matter. At least the



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historical background of that house makes it most eligible as a Government House. It may be possible for Government to give us reason for constructing a new house, but these reasons are likely to be hard to understand.

I would like the Minister of Justice to do everything possible to see that the customary courts are set in motion as soon as possible and, in any case, these customary courts should be set up by May or June at the latest. Hon. Members will agree that the establishment of customary courts in all parts of the Region has been unduly delayed and I would like to know why this is so. It is now very necessary that the pace of the establishment of these courts should be accelerated. I would like to remark that the customary courts should be completely detached from the control of Local Government Councils so as to avoid some of the recriminations of councillors. At the moment in some areas where customary courts are already in operation, the registrars are being transferred by Local Government inspectors, whereas in actual fact the transfer should be undertaken by the Ministry of Justice. I think that if there is any collision between the Ministry of Local Government and the Ministry of Justice, the latter Ministry should take precedence.

Finally, may I remind ourselves that ours is a socialist outlook. But the impression is going on that to be a Member of this House is to "get rich quick". I know that this impression is wrong, but when big cars are the order of the day, when £9,000 worth of houses are built by us without any loss of time, when our wives constitute themselves into a social upper class, it is time for us to ask ourselves: what does socialism mean in Nigeria?

I beg to support.

**Mr A. G. Umoh** (Enyong Division): I rise to speak on the Motion of thanks to His Excellency the Governor for His Excellency's Most Gracious Speech. I would not like to say much on what has been spoken at length by the Leader of the Opposition on the question of democracy in Eastern Nigeria. But I have one aspect of the question which I wish to bring to the floor of this House. It is the attitude of the Government to the Opposition. It is always said in this House that our Government is the most democratic of all the Governments of the Federation. Even the "Eastern Nigeria Today" published in London, publishes

the question—Do you know that it is the Eastern Nigeria Government that was the first to accord official recognition to the Opposition? The answer may be "yes", but there it ends. I feel that no lover of democracy who watches the present happenings in Eastern Nigeria will not be shocked. I agree that we are following the British pattern of democracy. I have never been to United Kingdom, but I understand that there are three major political parties there, the Conservative, the Labour and the Liberal, and it does not matter at any given election which party wins. The party that forms the Government distributes amenities evenly throughout the whole country. But what do we find in Eastern Nigeria which pretends to follow the British pattern of democracy? We have a vastly different picture. The party in power is not satisfied with forming the Government, or appointing Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries, etc. The party in power is doing everything possible to see that there is only one party government in this House. I wish the hon. Premier had been here to hear what I say and I hope that his Deputy will carry my words to him so that he can make a categorical statement whether the Government of the Eastern Region wants to remain a democracy or elects to go dictatorial. That is a very important point, because if one listens to the amount of vicious campaigns that is carried on in the rural areas by what some people call Provincial Commissioners, but who are, strictly speaking, N.C.N.C. Organising Secretaries, one cannot underrate the gravity of the situation. These Commissioners, or may I say, Organising Secretaries, make it their point of duty to arrange for the arrest of our chiefs.

The point is that if the Government does not want to have any Opposition in this House it should make it clear and we will then know what is happening in the Region for if the Government is not merely paying a lip service to democracy then I say the people of the constituencies from where the Opposition Members come should get their amenities just as well as people from other constituencies. I think that as long as our Opposition in this House does not prevent our people from paying taxes, the Government has no justification whatsoever in denying amenities to people who are paying taxes regularly to the Government. I would like the Premier of this Region to make a statement on this so that we know



what attitude to adopt in future towards that campaign. Meanwhile I appeal to whatever conscience is left with the Ministers to see to it that they do not intimidate our people in this form.

The next point I want to bring up is the question of using civil servants and public money for political party purposes. I am very sorry that I have got to mention the word "civil servant" but it is true that our District Officers are being used by our Commissioners to call political meetings all over. Well I have no doubt that if these civil servants were left to themselves they would normally have kept to the rule of the civil service but not dabbling in politics. A vicious rumour is even gaining ground that you will have to assure the Public Service Commission of the Eastern Region that you are more interested in the Government Party than in your work before you are appointed into the civil service. As late as the 10th of this month, a Minister came to my Division and used the District Officer in my Division to call a meeting . . .

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):**  
On point of Order, Standing Order 30 (9).

**Mr Speaker:** Standing Order 30 (9) says: "The conduct of Her Majesty, Members of the Royal Family, the Governor-General, the Governor, Members of this House or the other House, Civil Servants and Judges or the performance of judicial functions by other persons shall not be raised except upon a Substantive Motion; and in any amendment, question to a Member or remarks in a debate on a motion dealing with any other subject, any reference to the conduct of the persons aforesaid shall be out of order. For the purposes of this paragraph 'substantive Motion' does not include any motion for the Adjournment."

Well, I think the hon. Member has contravened that Standing Order. In the case of civil servants I could say that he was, because that is very general, very vague, but in the case of the Public Service Commission, they are a very restricted body and an attack on the Public Service Commission means an attack on the individuals who constitute the Commission and I would like the hon. Member speaking to take special note of that.

**Mr Umoh:** I thank you for what you have said but I would like to observe that I am making a speech on his Excellency's Speech from the Throne and if I might refer to it in paragraph 10 of his Speech, His Excellency discussed at length on the Public Service Commission and I feel that as a Member of this House I am entitled, naturally, to go any length that His Excellency has gone.

**Mr Speaker:** That is so, hon. Member, but not in a way to impugn the conduct of the individuals because they are not here to answer for themselves.

**Mr Umoh:** I want to make it absolutely clear that I am not in any way trying to cast aspersion on the public service of the Eastern Region. As a matter of fact, I do express regret that I have to mention the civil servants. It is true that these things are forced on them. I have no reason to believe that a particular civil servant decides to take up politics as a part of his job but that they do so shows that they have been so warned that unless they are prepared to co-operate with the Minister, even if it means killing, they are not safe. For this reason they just have to do it against their will. These Commissioners hunt the Police Stations telling the Police Officers: you must arrest that man or you are sacked. What has the poor policeman got to do but to go and arrest. It is from that point of view that I am referring to the civil servants. I would like to assure the Members of the civil service that I am doing a very painful duty for which they should forgive me.

As I was saying, recently a Minister sent the District Officer in my own Division to call a meeting of my people. According to the circular letter sent out the Minister was to discuss Chieftaincy matters with the Chiefs. I happened to have been in attendance at that meeting and although the Minister himself was unable to turn up his Parliamentary Secretary who represented him told the people that he was up there to find out why they had been so stupid during the last Federal Election to elect the Action Group Opposition. The people wanted to know about Chieftaincy disputes but he told them that he was there to discuss their lack of support for the Government Party. At that juncture we felt that it was not proper for the District Officer to have called this meeting. The District Officer, Enyong Division, ran



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away. He felt he was in trouble but he forgot to warn his interpreter that he was a civil servant, so the poor man continued to interpret. That is the sort of thing that happens all over the rural areas. I would like our civil servants to be completely kept off this game of politics. Any civil servant who feels that he is interested in politics should resign his civil service appointment and go to contest election. I am appealing to the Speaker that the Commissioners in this House would be told just how far they can go so that they may not continue to mislead our civil servants into politics. The next point I have to make is about the Delimitation Commission that His Excellency mentioned in his Speech. I understand that the Delimitation Commission made a 30-minute visit to my Division.

*Sitting suspended at 12 noon.*

*Sitting resumed at 12.30 p.m.*

**Mr Umoh:** Before the break I was speaking on the Delimitation Commission that was set up by this Government to see to the arrangement of the new constituencies for future Regional elections. I was just saying that I understood that the Commission, without any notice, had a thirty minutes rush to my Division some time last year. But the rumour that is gaining ground is that the Commission was told to split a section of Ibiono clan and join it to Itam clan in order to make two constituencies for the Regional election. This rumour has reached both the Itam people and Ibiono people and they have asked me to put it as strongly as possible to the Government that the Itam and Ibiono people have been two distinct units from time immemorial—and I am pleased that the hon. I. U. Akpabio here knows very well about this. The Itam people themselves do not want to be mixed with any section of Ibiono and the Ibiono people do not want to be split. I am therefore bringing here to the Minister the view of my people that whatever steps are being taken by the Delimitation Commission, Ibiono should be left as it is and Itam as it is. If you want to give them two constituencies—that is Ibiono as a clan and Itam as a clan—that is perfectly all right. But to cut a section of Ibiono and merge it with Itam is not acceptable to my people.

I now come to a rather more serious aspect of my speech. It is about the urbanisation of Okopedi Local Council. With your permission,

I should like to refer to a question I asked in this House in the year 1958. I asked the then Minister of Local Government if it was true “that the Government had approved the creation of an Urban District Council at Okopedi Itu in Enyong Division; if so, will its area cover the existing township as is the wish of the indigenes; if not, what explanation can the Minister give to dispel the suspicion of the natives of Ibiono that the idea behind the creation of the Urban District Council at Okopedi Itu is to make it possible for strangers living there to dominate the natives; was the Minister aware of the protest by the Ibiono and Okopedi people against the creation of the Council”. The answer from the Minister of Local Government was as follows: With your permission—“Government decided in February, 1957, that an Urban District Council should be created at Okopedi in Enyong Division. However, I visited the area myself later in the year and received many representations against this proposal. The matter was considered again by Government and it was decided that the wishes of the people of the area should be respected and that an Urban District Council should not be set up for this town. The Okopedi Local Council will continue to form part of the Ibiono Rural District Council”.

After that reply I thought the whole issue was closed. The Ibiono people were satisfied that a Minister of State had spoken, and it used to mean quite a lot when a Minister made a statement. But later on, all unexpectedly an Instrument came out in the *East Regional Gazette* of the 2nd of July, 1959, and in page B 451 we have this Instrument establishing the Okopedi Urban Council. The Government decided to urbanise the Okopedi Local Council against the wishes of my people.

I want to tell you Mr Speaker, a little bit about Okopedi Ibiono. Literally Okopedi means “those who hear, come”. Okopedi was the first port ever opened in Uyo Province. So that everybody who wanted to get contact with the early European traders had to go to Okopedi. The first road from Aba to Calabar Province led to Okopedi. It was a very important port. In Okopedi there are people from the Premier's home town—Bende, Ohafia, and many other parts of Ibo land. They live and trade there. There was the pitiable case of many freed Ibo lepers from the Itu Leper Colony who returned to their home towns and were refused admission



by their people even though they were declared cured. These people had to come and stay in Okopedi. The kind-hearted people of Okopedi allowed them to stay realising that they were cured.

The Ibo traders and Ibo freed lepers constitute the bulk of the population of the place. From time immemorial our people through their democratic nature felt it was useful and good to give the people a representation in the native administration. Okopedi had as many as three people to represent them in the Ibiono Native Authority. During the new Local Government set-up they had four people to represent them. All unexpectedly, an Instrument came out in the month of July last year establishing an Urban Council in Okopedi. This Council is supposed to be composed of thirty-eight members and of these thirty-eight members, the Ibionos who are the owners of the land, the Ibibio people, and all the Efik speaking people there, are given eighteen seats. The Ibo people in Okopedi are given nineteen seats. The Cameroonians and other West Africans are given one seat. In other words the strangers are given twenty seats and the owners of the place are given eighteen.

Now, the Council that is set up is allowed the authority to exercise the functions that are contained in paragraphs 4, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 33, 37, 38, 39, 40, 54, 55, 56, 66, 69, 78 and 83 all of section 80 of the Local Government Law. This is practically taking them away from the Ibiono District Council and giving them autonomy of their own. The question then arises: if it is fair that these people in Ibiono, who out of courtesy have allowed strangers to settle in Okopedi and trade with them, should today be ousted from their own Council to allow the strangers to rule over them? I call on whatever Member or Members of this House with a conscience to judge if they could have allowed a thing like this to happen in their own home town. You see, what happens in this House, Mr Speaker, is that many people do not use their consciences again. I hold that there is a lot of trouble we could overcome in this Region if only we used our consciences. Everybody is riding roughshod of his conscience. Now, I want to make you see how the Ibos got their 20 seats. (*Inter-ruptions from all sides*).

**Mr Speaker:** I wish to say how very much I deprecate the conduct of some Members whose speech-making is merely interrupting and heckling. Every Member has his time to speak and he should make a free use of it when he does stand up to speak. And I wish to remind hon. Members that the opportunity of debating the Speech from the Throne is a very grand opportunity of differentiating the politician from the statesman. It is then that we show statesmanship; it is then that all pull their heads together to make plans and contribute schemes to see that the ship of State is steered safely. Therefore, particularly when the front Members of the Opposition, the Ministers especially and the front Members of the Government Bench do speak, it is very necessary that you should pay very, very strict attention and really understand and appreciate what they are saying so as to be able to contribute your own part in the development of this Region.

**Mr Umoh:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for trying to help me to get on. I want to show you the very scandalous way in which the 20 seats have been given out to strangers in Okopedi. Normally the representations of people in Councils are done on population basis but here in Okopedi whoever was the Minister at the time (but I saw the signature of the present Minister of Local Government) thought it fit to go on mere "letters". All those people of Abiriba origin whose surnames begin with letters A-E are given one seat. Those with surnames beginning with letters F-N, one seat, even if there is only one person. Those with surnames starting with the letter O, one seat, and those with surnames starting with the letters P-Z, one seat. That is how the Abiriba people got their 3 seats, and I used to be told that the Minister of Local Government was a Christian. Now, the same device is used to give the Item people three seats and the Ohafia people three seats. Thus you have nine seats going out to these people merely on letters A-E, F-N, O, P-Z. At any given time you are not sure how many O's you will get in that place: you might get three, you might get four, but whatever the number they are entitled to one seat in this Council. Is this not domination? Is this not oppression? I call on you Members of the House to judge if this is not an Ibo Colony established in Ibiono. I hope, Mr Speaker you will permit me to mention the word "Ibo" even though you are an Ibo. That



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is the sort of thing we feel should not be allowed to go on.

**Mr Speaker:** With me there is no question of Ibo or anything; I am merely a Speaker.

**The Premier:** Point of Order—Standing Order 30 (5) and (7):

“It shall be out of order to use offensive and insulting language about Members of the House”.

“No Member shall impute improper motives to any other Member”.

**Mr Speaker:** Mr Umoh.

**Mr Umoh:** Mr Speaker, I have shown you how these people got their seats. Now . . .

**Mr W. Abengowe (Aba Division):** Point of Order—Standing Order 30 (6):

“It shall be out of order to use expressions which are blasphemous or insulting to the religious beliefs of Members”.

The hon. Member referred to the Minister of Local Government as a christian in a way that is out of order.

**Mr Speaker:** I feel the hon. Member should have raised that point of Order earlier.

**Mr Umoh:** I beg to appeal to you again to take note of the number of minutes that have been taken from my time. I am very sorry that the Government has organised to stop me from putting across these very serious views of my people on this obnoxious Instrument.

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** Point of Order—Standing Order 30 (7):

“No Member shall impute improper motives to any other Member”.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** Have you not made a ruling on this, Sir? You have ruled on this Standing Order.

**Mr Speaker:** There is a point of Order raised by the hon. Minister.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** The very point of Order on which you have ruled !

**Mr Speaker:** I rather think the Chief Whip of the Opposition is very hot.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I am sorry, I do not mean to be hot.

**Mr Speaker:** Mr Umoh, as a politician I know you will know how to get about it.

**Mr Umoh:** I have told you how many seats have gone to the Ibos in Okopedi. Now, whoever was the architect of this bad Instrument continued to give ten seats to other Ibos thus: you have the Arochukwu strangers—one seat; the Ihe strangers—one seat; Alayi strangers—one seat; Awka—one seat; Onitsha—one seat; Owerri—one seat; in another man's land. It is most scandalous. No one will really appreciate what I am trying to point out except he who tries to place his own clan on the same footing as my own clan. You see your people welcoming the Ibibio people to settle in your own area and simply because of the fact that the Minister of Local Government is an Ibibio man, who gets the chance to set up an Instrument establishing the Council in your area, he empowers these strangers in your area to rule over your people ! Unless you are prepared to put yourself in that position you are not likely to appreciate what I am talking about.

**Mr Speaker:** Make your observations to the Speaker, please.

**Mr Umoh:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. That is the position in which my people find themselves. As a matter of fact, unless the Government is willing to follow its conscience then our people have no alternative than to give notices to all the traders to quit their houses. But other people who do not see this Instrument will misunderstand us; they will say the Ibionos have driven away the Ibo traders. I want to call on every Ibo man in this Region to realise that the Ibiono man does not hate him because he is an Ibo man but because he has been allowed to feel that he can come to dominate the Ibiono man on his own land. If the Minister is not prepared to change that Instrument and consciously give the Ibiono people a majority in their own Council there will be trouble. A wise Government should avoid trouble as much as it can and my advice to this Government is to change this obnoxious Instrument before it is too late.



I wish to remind this House of the case of the Onitsha Town Council where the overwhelming majority of the non-Onitsha Ibos wanted to control the Council. Since it was felt that the Onitsha people should be the proper people to control the Council, the then Premier injected twelve traditional members into the said Council to give the natives control. If there was anything that the N.C.N.C. Government did which I considered just, it was that one act. I am calling on this Government to be equally just in the case of the Ibiono people by injecting traditional members into the Okopedi Urban Council to enable the Ibiono people to control the Council. Otherwise, this Government will be paving a way for our people to stop strangers from entering into their own land. And any blame that comes out of this act will be for the Government to answer and not the people. Now that is the point that I wanted to make. (*An hon. Member: Empty threat!*)

You will take note, Mr Speaker, that you have cut me short and I hope you will compensate me in due course, otherwise I will press to claim my full thirty minutes of my time. But just before I end, I like to remark on corruption that is going on in District Councils. Scholarship schemes were set up to help poor people to get on in life. We have cases of children with brain who have not the chance to get into colleges. (And it is God's own way that those who have brain haven't the money). It takes £30 to £40 to get a scholarship from a District Council today. (*An hon. Member: And he is a councillor!*) I am not a councillor. When you ask District Councillors why they do this, they tell you: go and check the Ministers. (*Several hon. Members: How?*) I don't know how, but that is where they refer us to. I am appealing to this House that we should agree on a general principle of stopping corruption and bribery: let us all go to confession and beg God for forgiveness. (*Interruptions*).

**Mr Speaker:** I think I have been very fair to the hon. Member in extending the course of his time, and in order to give him a chance of ventilating his feeling he has exceeded the normal time; and I have given him up to a maximum of forty minutes. I think I had rather stop him.

**The Minister of Local Government (Mr P. O. Nwoga):** I did not intend to speak.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** On point of Order, Sir. He cannot address the House at this stage.

**The Minister of Local Government:** Really, I did not intend to speak. I am only trying to explain a point; I am not speaking. He has brought this to me and I told him . . .

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** On point of Order, the Minister has not spoken; there is no point in explaining.

**Mr Speaker:** In Westminster, I think the correct system of interruptions is that when a Member is speaking another Member may stand up to say something and he sits down immediately he sees another Member stand up. So, you are making your own interruptions wrongly, thereby making a lot of noise, bandying words. Our Standing Order says that a man would not be allowed to speak if the other does not sit down, but if you sit down you give him a chance of speaking. That's what happens in Westminster too.

**The Minister of Commerce (Mr J. U. Nwodo):** What is Onyeri talking there?

**Mr V. K. Onyeri (Port Harcourt):** He knows that I am his senior. (*Laughter*).

**Mr Speaker:** Hon. Members, let us be more serious.

**Mr A. O. Chikwendu (Bende Division):** I beg to speak in support of the Motion of thanks to His Excellency for His Excellency's Gracious Speech from the Throne. It is with pleasure that we notice that by the unanimous vote of the new House of Representatives our hopes to achieve Independence by the 1st October, 1960 has been more than reassured. We thank God and we thank our ex-Premier, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, for all he has done to advance and to enthrone Nigeria. We feel encouraged by the fact that we find a worthy substitute in the person of Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara in the office of the Premier. May God grant him strength and wisdom to direct the ship of state safe ashore!

The reorganisation of the Ministries is a welcome news. Let us hope that the purposes envisaged will be attained. Change is one of the prime characteristics of human nature and like the rest of the Regions in the Federation, we in the East have accepted the institution of Chieftaincy and I have no doubt that it will assume a permanent feature of our political



[MR CHIKWENDU]

life. The Government has our congratulation for inaugurating the House of Chiefs.

We have accepted the principle of Provincial Administration and we are now urging Government to go ahead and establish the Provincial Assemblies. They are long overdue and the sooner they are inaugurated and operated, I think, the better.

We are happy at the pace of Nigerianisation in the Public Service in this Region but this should not be at the expense of efficiency. Despite the fact that the Unit for Methods and Organisation is being proposed, yet I am persuaded to suggest that a Parliamentary Committee be set up to investigate the utilisation of manpower in the civil service. It seems to me that the available manpower is not being properly absorbed; otherwise, I do not see why a letter to a Ministry can remain for a fortnight without being replied to; I do not see the reason why a voucher will lie on a table for three months without being cashed or being directed to purposeful end; I do not see the reason why a letter of application can remain for a fortnight without a reply being sent to the poor applicant; I do not see the reason why officers charged with the care of public funds cannot handle the money as if it were their own money; I do not see the reason why Government stores should lie waste. I think that with independence in view, there ought to be increased responsibilities in the civil service. If we cannot excel, I think that at least the standard of discipline, control and devotion to duty shown by expatriate Administrative Officers should be maintained.

It is a welcome proposition to take over the functions performed by the Crown Agents because the Crown Agents are coping with so many interests.

We support Government statement on the Report of the Salary Commission and we give Government our whole-hearted commendation for the readiness and willingness to extend this award to private agency teachers, nurses and midwives.

We are looking forward with interest to the opening of the University of Nigeria and commend highly all the efforts directed to that end.

We are grateful for what the Ministry of Agriculture is doing to help the farmers and

to stimulate interest in farming. Agriculture is unquestionably the mainstay of our economy and I am one of those who believe that improved agriculture is a gate-way to sound money. The Minister of Agriculture is a go-ahead person, remarkable for his zeal and industry and I hope he will show his usual mettle in driving through the measures proposed.

The Ministry of Education has our gratitude for all the facilities provided to expand all and various forms of education. In considering the Report of the Ashby Commission the Minister should reflect upon getting all the 'A' and 'B' Secondary Schools to introduce double, triple and if possible, quadruple systems. This will reduce the number of secondary schools built and will give opportunity to more people and, as a matter of fact, will reduce capital costs. I will suggest to the Minister of Education that the elementary school age should range between six and fourteen years. The age of five is too young and there is a lot of wastage. (*Some hon. Members: No!*). Definitely we are copying the British system but our children do not develop so rapidly as British children—it is only a very few of them.

The Minister of Education should provide more supervision for our schools. As a matter of fact, there is little or no supervision. If the money we are spending should be of benefit, I think a proper means of giving effective inspection to our schools should be devised. The Minister of Education, in consultation with the Minister of Local Government, should evolve some measure of management for Local Authority Schools. As a matter of fact, Local Authority Schools have no management at all.

Despite whatever views are held on the floor of this hon. House I thank the Ministers of Local Government and Finance for taking away motor licensing from the Police authorities and for creating more centres for that purpose. As a matter of fact a lot of difficulties and suffering have been removed from motor owners. I commend that action. We thank the hon. Premier for the sympathy for the displaced miners. Let us hope that his consultations with the Federal Government will soon yield results. I think that the time has now come when the Local Government Ordinance should be drastically amended



The amendment suggested is not enough. The law should be amended to give room for small financial autonomy. As a matter of fact the regulation by which independent tenders boards are appointed by Local Government Councils should be revoked. It is a retrograde policy and it is a negative law. It is high time our law became positive. As a matter of fact the original law was more progressive. The amendment was brought in as a punitive measure because some councils were abusing their powers. But the time shall come when the criminal might after serving his sentence become clean. Therefore I am urging that we should revert to the original law of 1950. If any council should abuse its power that council should be penalised and so I am urging the Minister of Local Government to bring drastic measures to the amendment of the existing Local Government Ordinance.

Why is it that no paragraph of the Speech from the Throne was devoted to the condemnation of the French explosion of atom bomb in the Sahara desert? If this country cannot at the moment freeze French property, I think this Government should from now withdraw all contracts if possible from any French firms. If withdrawal is not possible, after completion of any contract, any French firm doing such contract should be cleared from the Region. Nothing of French origin should be allowed to thrive in this Region.

I thank the Minister of Works for the work of water installation in Umuahia-Ibeku and the attempt made now for electricity. I will call his attention once again to our roads. The greatest problem we have in Bende now is development and unless the road from Umuahia via Alayi to Arochuku is tarred all the money already spent on that road becomes wasted. So I am urging that the Minister should give serious consideration and ensure that as soon as possible that road is tarred. The density of traffic on that road is very very high indeed and the authorities know that.

We thank the Government indeed for comparative peace and orderliness and we wish the Government every success.

Thank you.

**Mr E. Ita** (Calabar Division): It moves me to the depths to hear of the effective preparations, through motions, taken in our Federal Legislature and in the British Parliament, for our independence. This announces the arrival of our messianic day. I am greatly thrilled. To those of us for whom the fight for independence has been a life and death battle, a battle for which we have given everything, the whole of our life, it must be most moving to see the victory and to feel that the fruit of it will reach the whole of our people . . .

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I thought he had given his life to it.

**Mr E. Ita:** I feel that this is a great moment to be alive. Exactly thirty years ago I started dreaming and working for this day. I am very happy that it has arrived at last. I congratulate our Government that in its declaration of its policy for this momentous year it has taken this divine consummation as the centre of reference for everything. Everything must be directed to consummate (i) this mighty purpose and (ii) prepare this Region not only to march with others into the promised land, but to usher in the new order of life befitting a free and happy people, in efficient despatch of public business and the reorganisation of Ministries such as the Economic Planning Ministry.

Our Legislature will be expanded for wider and more effective representation of the people of our Region. If provincial administration will make for devolution of powers then the local communities and Local Government bodies can realise the meaning and content of self-government. The Local Government grants and loans will fortify this effort. But the most important thing about which I am very glad is the passing into the hands of Nigerians the control of Public Service together with the expansion and efficiency of that service. Whoever thought that our dreams of Nigerianisation will become a reality in our own life time? Whoever thought that enough Nigerians of character and calibre would be produced within so short a time to man our Public Service? Thanks to our educational drive, especially to our revolutionary scholarship movement, it has been possible to achieve this eminent goal. And to crown it all it has been found



[MR E. ITA]

possible to get a Nigerian who can preside as Chairman of the Public Service Commission. The appointment of Mr F. O. Ihenacho is in this respect really epoch-making. Our hearty congratulations go to this noble son of Nigeria. Similarly we regard the appointment of the hon. Mr Justice L. N. Mbanefo as our Chief Justice, and I heartily congratulate him.

The coming of the University of Nigeria as the apex of our educational pyramid is also epoch-making. Those who remember the famous Elliot Commission will know how some of us felt at the recommendation of one solitary university for the whole of West Africa (including Gambia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroons etc.). I had dared then to tell the Commission that every Province in Nigeria was destined to have a university college. I wish the Commissioners of that mission were here today to see the beginning of the realisation of that dream.

I most heartily congratulate the Government, and especially my noble comrade Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe for making this great dream come true.

To make the whole of the Eastern Region enthusiastic partakers in the direction of life and entry with zest into living process itself in our new era of freedom, our Government has indicated in its policy how the various social services will function to give material content to the life of a free people, e.g., to give economic security to all, to remove obstacles from the path of progress, to build a vigorous and robust culture and to raise standard of living and thought of all our people. Thus the Ministry of Agriculture will devote all its power to the interest of the most vital basis of our economy, and the Ministry of Commerce will work with that of Agriculture to develop to the fullest our agricultural and industrial resources for the benefit of all. In this regard Calabar Division, now constituting Calabar Province, will provide excellent opportunities for development. The people are looking forward to a new era of numerous and thriving agricultural and industrial projects.

Since democracy is impossible without education, and since agricultural and industrial efforts without education mean slavery, the Ministry of Education should plan to leave no stone unturned to give the greatest opportunity to the greatest number. The cost

is truly heavy, but the people of the Region have already shown their willingness and ability to bear it. Education will give social cohesion by creating a common culture.

Together with the Ministry of Health the Ministry of Education must build the foundations of a really free society. They both recognise that sound health and sound character alone will give the reinforced concrete to those foundations. Without them we shall be like foolish builders building on sand.

I must end by sounding a very serious warning. We may perish at the gate of our promised land partly because many have not faith enough to enter it, and partly because many will try to carry the poison of tribalism into the building of a new democratic modern nation. With the bitterness and hate which tribalism breeds we shall fail to enter together the new era with joy; a progressive modern democracy and a barbarian tribalism cannot go together. One must nullify the other.

We have Nigerianised our public service. We have Nigerianised our railway and our roads; we are Nigerianising our farms and industries. Why can we not Nigerianise ourselves? Our feelings, our desires, our emotions? Why can we not burst out of the cocoon of tribalism into free Nigerian citizenship? Why does a man lose his status as a citizen as soon as he walks out of his tribal home? Time and orthodox education are never able alone to cure this disease of tribalism, otherwise there would be no social discriminations in South Africa and Southern States of America. The bitterness between Ireland and Britain would have disappeared by now. The tree of tribalism is watered by the dark vital forces of human nature:— self-interests of individual persons, pride of tribes, the inertial forces of traditional loyalties, greed and fears in the hearts of particular persons or groups—these have always foiled our national idealisms. No constitutional safeguards or parliamentary legislations can save us and our nation from the tragedy of tribalism.

We must quite humbly accept our helplessness in the face of the demonic fury of those dark forces of self-interests, pride and greed and fear of economic insecurity. We must accept the guidance of God who alone is powerful enough to lift us out of the tragedy of tribalism.



A new form of tragic force of disunity and bitterness has made its ride into our history on the back of innocent nationalism. It is partisanship. Party system is a necessary evil in every democracy. It is in fact an inevitable concomitant of democracy. Party system has come to stay in this country, and should be welcomed and rightly directed. But senseless party bitterness and fanaticism are destructive to social cohesion. If carried too far they may even create violent conflicts which may destroy the people. During the last Federal Election campaigns I heard party songs that made me recoil. One was "Azikiwe *ide* laugh, Awolowo *ide* cry! Fine, fine Nigeria!" It cannot be a fine Nigeria if in our march into freedom some are crying while others are laughing! We all should laugh together as we march into our promised land.

For the building of our new independent nation, we shall need a new type of men with a new spirit, the spirit of friendship and mutual tolerance. The world setting into which we are entering as a free nation is itself taking a new form and demanding a new spirit. The type of heroism adequate for a nation's fight for independence may not be adequate for the new creative endeavours necessary in the days of independence. We shall need the courage to take new bold steps forward, the humility to see our own mistakes, to pocket our pride, to accept our limitations and, we shall need the ability to understand other people and be fit to live in harmony with other free nations of the world. When we remember that certain new and powerful ideas and visions were necessary to enable us to fight to achieve our independence within these thirty years, we can see the need for still newer and nobler ideas and visions of what we shall be in another thirty years. We can see also the need for a new type of weapons and tools we must use in the new struggle to attain our new projected goal.

But first we must cease to be tribesmen. We must become Nigerians. This is a real revolutionary step demanded in a revolutionary era.

**Mr J. A. Agba (Ogoja Division):** I cannot help speaking on the Motion to render thanks to His Excellency the Governor for his Speech from the Throne. I cannot help saying that I find it difficult to associate myself with the previous speaker in rendering thanks for very

many reasons, not merely to the Governor as an individual if I understand Governor by that sense to mean the Head of the Region, who sat here a couple of days ago and read a piece of paper to both Houses of the Legislature; but if I understand the word "Governor" to mean that, I merely join with the hon. Members of the House in rendering my due thanks to him for reading that piece of paper. But if by the word "Governor" it means the Executive Council of the Region, the Government that administers the Region, then in all sincerity, I say as I did say last year, that I dissociate myself from rendering the thanks. In saying this, I am quite conscious of the fact that we are in a new governmental regime and that a new Premier has come into the Region and has taken up the management of the Government of the Region and I do not for any one moment identify him with the former Premier. But at the same time, I am also quite conscious of the fact that the Cabinet remains essentially the same. But there is a suggestion here that two new Ministries are going to be created, but have not been created and so no new Ministers have come in; but there is only one so far that is to be changed. At the same time, I am not by any means discrediting the former Premier. If I am to discredit anybody I think I will say that it was on account of his advisers, those people who surrounded him, those who aided him in the performance of his duty as the Premier of the Region, that merely misled him and made him feel that some special parts of the Region did not deserve the attention of the Government.

Well, I am going to say something about this Governor's Speech from the Throne. I am to say that that Cabinet which has not been changed and which continues in the same frame of mind to exercise its power in the Region with the aim of consolidating the position of those people who really form the Cabinet to the neglect of special parts of the Region which contribute a lot in health, in wealth and in the activities of the Region is to be carefully watched. So I really find it extremely difficult to associate myself with rendering thanks to the Government for its past services. I am only looking forward to the new era which began a couple of months ago and I hope that the new Premier, although with no change in the Cabinet, will use his big stick to see that there is a change in the award of amenities and in the policy of the Government as a whole.



[MR AGBA]

I hope I will not be misunderstood when I am making this remark. I do appreciate what the Government has done so far. There is quite a good deal of activities that the Government has carried out in special parts of the Region and, why should the other sections of the Region if not completely but almost completely neglected, join in thanking the Government for being so active, if I should say so? I find this often difficult to understand. I also find it awfully difficult to understand how the Government could have been so active and yet neglect certain areas. I would like the Government to understand—particularly the new Premier—that it is not being criticised unduly. Rather I am only pointing out the qualities that have hitherto coloured the policy of the Government, so that those discrepancies may be effectively eradicated in future, thus making the Region as a whole to emerge into a full celebration of Nigeria's Independence on the 1st of October, unanimously; not one section of the Region rejoicing because its life has been bettered by the suffering of a neglected few, and those not bettered remain to weep and gnash their teeth. All said I have to start with a few things.

I thank the Ministry of Education for all it has done. In this Ministry, I associate my opinion with what somebody stated before: that in every Ministry there is required a capable person to man it and if a capable person does man a Ministry, there is no doubt that the amenities of that Ministry will be fairly well distributed.

In the last award of scholarships it was made clear that no applications came from Ogoja. I began to wonder why applications did not come from Ogoja Province. When I am talking of Ogoja here I mean Ogoja Province combined with the new Abakaliki Province. It is unbelievable that these areas have nobody so far who have passed the secondary school stage as to warrant being given a scholarship to a University. But granted on the other hand that there was nobody from Ogoja capable of going to a University, what of the secondary school scholarships? Why not multiply them? Why not compensate them for what they have lost as a result of not being fit to go into a University and so increase the number to go through the secondary schools thus enabling them to go into a University the subsequent

year? We talk of giving scholarships on divisional basis. I wonder what has happened to the policy that is being carried out so far. In that policy it was stipulated by the Government that the more backward areas that have not got sufficient people to send to the University should be given first consideration as regards secondary school scholarships. What has happened to that policy? Does it mean we have no secondary schools in Ogoja and Abakaliki. Granted that we have got nobody to go into the University at Ibadan or elsewhere, why was our secondary school scholarships not increased? Why does the Government stick to the policy of divisional basis? There is a corollary arising from this as a whole.

If a division has no boys for University scholarships then its secondary school scholarships should be increased.

The Minister of Education announced a few months ago that fees would be free up to the Junior Primary—that is Standard II. Now how does he consider it a very great achievement! If it is an achievement to the whole of the Region, it would have been a greater achievement if that concession had been given to what I might term, in the language of Joseph Chamberlain, "the under-developed areas". He should have considered the lot of the under-developed areas and enable primary schools to be built in those areas so that more children might attend these primary schools, particularly the junior schools. These junior schools will then subsequently pass on to the secondary schools and from there to the Universities. In this way it will help those areas to come to the stage of the other sections of the Region and enable the under-developed areas to march along to the threshold of independence. As I said a few weeks ago, we cannot have independence for illiterate people. It is absolutely necessary to understand this point. It is no use talking about independence for a handful of people. What will this independence mean to a majority of people in the rural areas? How would they understand the meaning of independence? I think it is only by education that we talk of self-determination and the rest of it. This is a point with which the Minister should concern himself.

Instead the Minister concerned joins forces with others who are not concerned in this matter and who merely lead him into believing that he is doing well. But I want to emphasise that there is a section of the Region



which is completely dissatisfied with awards of scholarships, the running of schools, the increase in schools and the idea of non-expansion, no schools to be built, no college to be opened, no teacher training and the rest of those things which go to hamper the expansion of education. If the Minister will consider those under-developed areas he will be doing a world of good to them and the Region as a whole. After all there is always an exception to a rule. If he is making a rule for the Region as a whole, he should take into consideration the lot of those special areas which really need greater attention than others. And I am suggesting to him very strongly that he should encourage secondary education for the under-developed areas. He will do that not only by giving secondary school scholarships but also by encouraging the expansion of primary schools by allowing those people who are really anxious to build new schools to do so. I would like the Minister to visit those places where the standard of education is poor in order to see for himself. I am appealing to him to encourage these areas in the building of primary schools because it is from these primary schools that students can be found for secondary schools.

May I draw the attention of hon. Members to a section dealing with the conversion of Teachers' salaries into what is called the National Salary Scales. If one goes through the National Salary Scales, one will find that there are some teachers who were already on £144 before the introduction of the so-called National Salary Scales. By the National Scales, those teachers who were already on £144 per annum have been brought back to about £132 per annum. At the time these National Scales were being announced in this House, the Minister received letters of congratulation from all parts of the Region and the congratulations were offered in anticipation of something good forthcoming. But just imagine the disappointment when it did come.

Any Minister who has the intention of doing good for the Region should take criticisms in good heart. But any Minister who thinks that he is the seat of knowledge and therefore requires no criticism is treading on dangerous ground. The eye does not see itself except by reflection or some other means. As I was saying the system of converting teachers

salaries into what is called the National Scales is not a good one.

You will agree with me that the teaching profession is one of the most important professions in the world. Without the teachers there will be no Premiers, no Ministers and no lawyers. It is the teaching profession that has brought us here in this House and it is for this reason that I feel very strongly that due regard must always be had for the teaching profession.

Last year, I mentioned quite a lot of things about the achievement of independence. I said that without education independence would not mean much. When we talk of education we must remember there are two kinds of education—spiritual and mental. It is to the spiritual part of our education that I want to draw the attention of hon. Members. We tend to forget one important thing and that is, that thing which animates the body and as well controls the physical activity. It is the soul. I think the Government will be making a mistake to forget the religious part of education, while according recognition to the non-religious part. The two parts must be brought up together and educated together. It is the proper education of the spirit that will make man to really act as a human being. Government should therefore pay more attention to the Missionaries who are going about the country teaching the way of God.

Let me turn to the Ministry of Health. I want to draw the attention of the Minister of Health to the fact that sickly people cannot be expected by Government to pay tax. Adequate attention should be given to people's health in Ogoja.

This tactics enables the Government to provide better amenities for those it considers worthy of enjoying them. For that sake, at least, the Government should give some thought to helping the people of the so-called backward areas.

We have heard quite a lot about the Minister of Health going about the Region opening hospitals here and there, being flashed by photographers, newspaper reporters and the rest of it; he himself making speeches. There is nothing wrong with these things. But that should not be concentrated only on certain sections of the Region. Throughout last year this Minister never visited Ogoja or Abakaliki.



[MR AGBA]

Now I want to make it clear to you that what I am saying is existent. At Obudu there is a Mission hospital and at Ogoja there is a Government hospital. Compare the Government hospital at Ogoja with the Mission hospital at Obudu and you will find that it is a disgrace to our own Government of which I am a member that the Government hospital should be so poorly equipped, so poorly provided for, and so, very few people attend it; the people who had gone there must have noticed that quite a lot of the patients who should attend the Government hospital go to this Mission hospital in preference. What is the reason for that? We say a lot of things here in the House. It is not very good I must say. If these Ministers really intend to improve the conditions of service in the Region I think our criticisms should not be so lightly taken. After all, we do not come here to waste our time and talk nonsense and then get £800 a year for nothing—the precious money of the Region. I think these things are serious enough. If it is a mere joke, why come here. It is not only for the pleasure of talking; after all, we do a lot of talking outside; so I do not think there is much pleasure in criticising somebody. We are bound to point out these things and I think those who are concerned should do well as good men and as good citizens of the Region to take these things whole-heartedly and examine them closely. It does not pay us coming here every year to talk on the same thing. Take Ikom hospital and compare it with Obudu hospital and you will find the same thing. Take Afikpo hospital and compare it with Abakaliki hospital. There is quite a good deal of disparity in all these hospitals and I think it is due to the way the Minister concerned handles these matters. We need good hospitals; we want him to look after the health of our people and if he will do so, I think it will go a long way to bring more revenue into the Government for sick people cannot pay tax.

Well I would have said something about the Ministry of Works as well. It means repeating myself on the question of roads. Why these Ministers are often afraid to go over to Ogoja and see what is happening there is because they are afraid of the bad roads. They do not want to go and spoil their cars and come back here to spend a heavy sum of money for repairs. The Government makes little roads which are almost of no use for the Ministers to

consolidate their positions as Members of the House so that when the time for election comes they would say: "You see, we made these roads for you; we did that for you; you have to vote for us and we will continue to work for you". Then they will come back here again to become Ministers.

**Mr Speaker:** Hon. Members, although our standard of debate is quite good, I would love to see it considerably raised and in that respect I would like every hon. Member when he goes home to ask himself what real contribution he has made to this House.

**Mr M. A. Idoko** (Nsukka Division): In supporting the Motion of Thanks for His Excellency's Speech from the Throne, I want to thank the Minister of Education for setting the whole of the junior primary classes in this Region fee-free from January 1960. I want also to thank him for other facilities his Ministry has given for the educational development in this Region. While thanking him, I want to draw his attention to the mass unemployment which faces a good many school leavers not only of this Region but also of the whole Federation. I feel the Minister can help to avert this by opening up technical schools in this Region. This will help us to meet the changing demands for industry and reduce the roll of unemployment in our Region. The people of my Division will gladly co-operate with the Government and contribute any quota to open a technical school in my Division (Nsukka).

I want also to draw the attention of the Minister to the service condition of teachers with special emphasis on Voluntary Agency teachers. These teachers should be treated in the same way as their counterparts in the Government or Local Government schools or their counterparts in the civil service. It will be a good thing if the Minister looks into this to make these people happy, for only a happy man can train children to be happy citizens.

May I express my appreciation to the Minister of Finance for the establishment of eleven Regional Government Motor Licensing centres as contained in paragraph 51 of the Speech from the Throne and to ask him to establish one in Nsukka Division.

There are over 200 vehicles (lorries, cars, motor-cycles, etc.) in Nsukka Division and there is no licensing office there. Every year the owners of these vehicles waste a good deal



of their time in search of licences from the licensing centres, the nearest of which are Enugu and Onitsha. In many cases these people spend days and even weeks in Enugu or Onitsha without getting the licences for which they left their homes and this is the result of the congestion in those centres. Then the people would be compelled to run to the Northern Region for their licences, and this is a loss to our revenue. For this reason, I feel that the establishment of a licensing office in Nsukka Division will save the people of the Division the time as well as save this Region a loss of revenue.

I have a few words to say about the Ministry of Works. I want to express once again my great appreciation to the Minister of Works for his capital projects in this Region. Every one who travels wide in this Region will see for himself that a steady road development project is being carried out in all parts of the Region. The Water Supply schemes prepared by the Ministry are praiseworthy. I want to draw the attention of the Minister to paragraph 96 of the Speech from the Throne and to ask him to remember Nsukka Division and Enugu Ezike in particular during the implementation of the Rural Water Supply project.

May I say a word of appreciation to the Minister of Justice for all his plans to see that peace and justice are maintained in this Region. I am quite happy about the way the Customary

Courts problems are handled. I am also asking the Minister of Justice to establish a Customary Court in Eteh, a town in the extreme north of Igboeze District in Nsukka Division. At present Eteh people who speak Akpoto language attend Enugu Ezike Customary Court while the people of Enugu Ezike are Ibo speaking people with different customs.

*And it being 2.15 p.m. Mr Speaker interrupted the business and the Debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed Tomorrow.*

**Mr Speaker:** The hon. Member has 20 minutes to complete his speech tomorrow.

If hon. Members will allow me, I wish to remind them that there is some difference between a debate on the Governor's Speech from the Throne and a debate on the Appropriation Bill. When you debate the Governor's Speech you deliberate more on the broad policy of Government—on the Government programme for the ensuing year—and you help the Government to formulate their policy and find out where that policy is defective and help the Government to improve it.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Resolved: That this House do now adjourn. (*The Minister of Finance, Dr S. E. Imoke*).

*Adjourned accordingly at sixteen minutes past two o'clock p.m.*



EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Friday, 18th March, 1960

The House met at Nine o'clock a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

MESSAGE FROM THE EASTERN  
HOUSE OF CHIEFS

A Message on the following Bills brought up from the Eastern House of Chiefs and read by the Clerk as follows:

That the Eastern House of Chiefs has agreed to the following Bills without amendment:—

(1) Bill entitled: The Purchase Tax on Produce (Amendment) Law, 1960.

(2) Bill entitled: The Funds and Accounts (Amendment) Law, 1960.

(3) Bill entitled: The Eastern Region Local Government (Extension of Office) (Amendment) Law, 1960.

(4) Bill entitled: The Incorporation (Ministry of Finance) Law, 1960.

(5) Bill entitled: The 1959-60 Eastern Region Supplementary Appropriation Law, 1960.

(6) Bill entitled: The 1958-59 Eastern Region Excess Votes Appropriation Law, 1960.

(7) Bill entitled: The Eastern Nigeria Broadcasting Law, 1960.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** I beg to move:

That the following be elected members of the Committee of Selection of the Eastern House of Assembly for the Session 1960-61 pursuant to Standing Order 63 (2):—

Mr G. C. Okeya,  
Chief I. I. Morphy,  
Mr S. O. Achara.

Standing Order 63 provides that a Committee of Selection shall be appointed at the commencement of every Session. The Committee shall consist of the Premier or his representative as Chairman, four Ministers to be nominated by Executive Council and three members instead of six as formerly who are not Ministers or Parliamentary Secretaries. The

Opposition has been allowed to nominate two of the three members. It is proposed to hold a meeting of the Committee immediately the House rises today.

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

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Ordered:* That the following be elected members of the Committee of Selection of the Eastern House of Assembly for the Session 1960-61 pursuant to Standing Order 63 (2):—

Mr G. C. Okeya,  
Chief I. I. Morphy,  
Mr S. O. Achara.

ORDER OF THE DAY

**Governor's Speech (Debate on the Address)**

(FOURTH ALLOTTED DAY)

*Order read for resuming adjourned debate on Question—(15th March):—*

That this House expresses its loyal and dutiful thanks to His Excellency the Governor for His Excellency's Most Gracious Speech addressed to both Houses of the Legislature from the Throne.

*Question again proposed.*

**Mr M. A. Idoko** (Nsukka Division): I wish to conclude my speech which I left uncompleted yesterday.

The Igbo Eze District Council under which Eteh is will be willing to finance the Customary Court and a resolution to this effect has been passed. So, the Minister may look into this matter.

The Department of Agriculture is doing a good work in this Region, but as is seen in paragraph 22 of the Speech from the Throne the Minister seems to have lost sight of Nsukka Division completely as far as his scheme for farm development is concerned. I want to draw the attention of the Minister to this and to inform him that in some areas in my Division (Okpuje and Ibagwani) cotton can be grown in commercial quantities. In the same way



cashew can be grown in certain areas of Ohodo, Ukehe, Aku and Ihakpu. There are also some places in my Division where cocoa can thrive very well.

Coming to the Ministry of Commerce, Sir, I would like to say that the effort of the Minister last year to hold important discussions with potential investors and industrialists in the United Kingdom, Israel and Germany is a welcome one. We in this Region are looking forward eagerly to the establishment of glass, wire and nail industries. These industries will no doubt reduce our mass unemployment and also help to increase the Region's revenue.

I should also suggest to the Minister to open up any industry which will utilise coal so that the coal miners will be retained. Mr Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity given to me.

**Mr E. O. Eyo** (Uyo Division): The Speech from the Throne covers twenty-three pages with ninety-nine paragraphs. The Motion before the House is innocuous in that it merely calls upon the House to express its loyal and dutiful thanks to His Excellency the Governor for His Gracious Speech. Personally I do not see anything wrong in thanking His Excellency for performing a State duty for which he is generously and handsomely paid.

Paragraph 98 of the Speech raises two very important issues, namely, Nigerian Independence and the ideals of parliamentary democracy. On the issue of Nigerian Independence, let us honestly admit two facts. Firstly, that the true nationalist leaders in the country who had been in the fore-front of the nationalist struggle for Nigerian freedom have been defeated by imperial strategy. I go further and say that they have been manoeuvred and jolted out of a position of control by British imperialists, and secondly, that Nigerian political stooges, careerists and opportunists who have contributed little or nothing at all to the cause of Nigerian freedom have ganged up to reap where they had never sown. Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition hinted on a plan to sell out the country after Independence by acquiescing or being privy to a most subtle plan put forward by the United Kingdom

Government for Nigeria to enter into a Defence Pact with Britain and allow Britain to acquire and maintain military bases in Nigeria after Independence. Our Friends opposite pretended to be ignorant of this statement of fact and gave me the impression that they were hearing of it for the first time. Yet it was the Zikist National Vanguard, which is supposed to be the militant wing of the N.C.N.C., that first raised the alarm in a public statement to the Nation. This statement was given very wide publicity in our national newspapers. I challenge our Premier (I observe he is not here) to deny that he has been officially invited to a Conference in London next May to sign a Defence Pact with Britain and agree to Britain maintaining military bases in Nigeria after Independence. I challenge our Premier to deny also that right now he has in his possession a Draft of the Defence Pact. May I refresh the minds of hon. Members to what transpired in London at the Resumed Constitutional Conference of 1958. I am referring to paragraphs eighty-two to eighty-five of the Conference Report. With your permission, may I read these paragraphs to the House:

#### “XX.—INDEPENDENCE FOR THE FEDERATION OF NIGERIA

“82. The Secretary of State reminded the Conference that at the 1957 Conference he had said that if, early in 1960, the new Nigerian Parliament passed a resolution asking Her Majesty's Government to agree to full self-government by a date in 1960, Her Majesty's Government would consider the resolution with sympathy and would then be prepared to fix a date when they would accede to this request.

“83. Throughout the talks the Conference had been conscious of all the dangers confronting the free world today and it recognised that an independent Nigeria would be subject to new and heavy pressures. In this connection he was glad to tell the Conference that the Federal Prime Minister and the Premiers were at one with Her Majesty's Government in believing that there would be mutual advantage to Britain and Nigeria in co-operating in the field of defence and that they had exchanged views and reached unanimous agreement on the



[Mr E. O. Eyo]

facilities and help which each country will render to the other after independence.”

“84. The Secretary of State said that in the light of all these developments, and in response to the wishes of all the delegations, he was glad to be able to be more forthcoming than at the 1957 Conference on the question of independence. He understood that no special significance attached to the date they had suggested of the 2nd April, 1960, and he felt that the essential thing was to make sure that there was proper time to complete the preparations for the great event . . . The Secretary of State said that with all this in mind he was authorised by Her Majesty's Government to say that if a resolution was passed by the new Federal Parliament early in 1960 asking for independence, Her Majesty's Government would agree to that request and would introduce a Bill in Parliament to enable Nigeria to become a fully independent country on the 1st October, 1960.”

Finally, paragraph 85—

“The Conference warmly welcomed the Secretary of State's statement. The Prime Minister and the Premiers made statements accepting the Secretary of State's statement and expressing their desire that on Independence, Nigeria should become a full member of the Commonwealth and that there should continue to be close co-operation between Britain and Nigeria”.

That was all.

I have read out in full the relevant paragraphs of the report of the 1958 Conference so as to leave Members of the House in no doubt as to the true position with regard to the issue of Nigerian Independence on 1st October, 1960. I submit, Sir, that the grant of Independence to Nigeria was conditional only upon the new Federal Parliament asking for it early in 1960; that the questions of Defence Pact with Britain and the acquisition of military bases in Nigeria were not conditions precedent to the grant of Independence; and that what the Federal Prime Minister and the Premiers agreed to was the expression of their desire that on the attainment of Independence Nigeria should become a full member of the Commonwealth and that there should continue to be close co-operation between Britain and Nigeria.

How then do we come about this question of signing a defence pact and offering Britain military bases in Nigeria? I beg to ask, is Nigeria the first country in British West Africa to attain Independence? Did Ghana not attain independence in 1957? Did Britain invite Dr Nkrumah to sign any defence pact and offer Britain military bases in Ghana before the grant of Independence? If Britain did not demand that from Ghana in 1957, why should she demand that from Nigeria in 1960? The answer, Sir, is obvious. In Ghana, Britain was negotiating with one and only one man who knew what he wanted and how to get about it and achieve his objective. I even go far to say that Britain was negotiating with a true nationalist who believed in Ghana first, Ghana last, and Ghana all the time.

What is the picture today in Nigeria? We have a Coalition Government of two political parties at the centre. The leader of one party in the Coalition is the Federal Prime Minister but the leader of the other party is not in the Federal Cabinet. He is not even on the floor of the House of Representatives to protect national interests. (*An hon Member: You caused it!*) He has been appointed by his senior partner in the Coalition, the Federal Prime Minister, to be the President of the Senate and he hopes eventually to become the Governor-General of Nigeria. (*Interruption: What is wrong with it?*)

In other words, he has been forced to retire from active politics at this trying period, and what Sir, does he get for that—for agreeing to retire from active politics?

The Sardauna of Sokoto who is the President-General of the N.P.C. has awarded him a medal, I repeat, Sir, for agreeing to retire prematurely from active politics at the time the country needed Dr Azikiwe most.

The forces of reaction and treachery have forced this man to retire, and he has agreed to accept this medal. The Federal Minister of Finance, Chief Festus Okotie-Eboh, has succeeded Dr. Azikiwe as Parliamentary leader of the N.C.N.C. in the House of Representatives. For this, he has been awarded a C.M.G. by the British, while the Federal Prime Minister has received a Knighthood from Britain and an honorary LL.D. degree from a British University to be conferred on him in May



(laughter). Immediately he finishes signing this Defence Pact and allowing Britain to acquire military bases, then he has done his assignment and will be conferred with LL.D. degree. Meanwhile, what has happened? The Governor-General has nominated a Nigerian civil servant into the Senate and has appointed him Minister of Defence. I want people to be following the sequence of events. This Nigerian, of course, has a European wife and of all the Ministers at the Centre this new comer, somebody projected from the Nigerian Civil Service, still retaining his colonial mentality, is he the fit and proper person to be Minister of Defence?

Just two months ago this man was a Doctor, a civil servant who has never done politics in his life. He was nominated into the Senate and within 24 hours he was made Minister. And for the first time that the Governor-General relinquished his responsibility for defence, that portfolio has been assigned to this new comer. (Laughter) Those who like to laugh may laugh, but my duty is to spotlight these events to those who may not be in the 'know'.

May I say, Sir, with all seriousness, that the stage is well set, and the British agents in Nigeria are very happy about the situation as at present. May I say, Sir, that this is an open challenge to the youths of the country to come together on a common non-political platform and save the country before it is too late. (Hear! Hear!). There are some people who think that they were created by God to come to this country and arrogate to themselves title or ownership of Nigeria. Some people are beginning to think that they own Nigeria and it will be a shameful thing, Sir, to the youths of this country if we sit back and laugh and allow these impostors to get away with their plans and designs. I do not take our Government seriously on their declaration to follow the ideals of parliamentary democracy—I still have my doubts as to whether the N.C.N.C., as a political party, believes in "Parliamentary Democracy." This is a very serious matter. Young men who have been appointed Ministers of State—the highest office in the State—and they are toying and playing, with fire.

Is it not an essence of parliamentary democracy that you govern the people with their

will and consent freely expressed at the polls at given fixed intervals? Is it in keeping with parliamentary democracy for a Government to provide by law that the maximum life of Local Government Councils is three years and that same Government without amending the law allows one particular Council in the Region to remain in office for eight years without seeking a fresh mandate from the electorate? I am compelled to refer to the Calabar Urban District Council. This Council was elected in 1952. I raised the matter last month and the Minister of Local Government assured me on the floor of this House that there would be fresh elections on the 24th of this month to this Council. As a matter of fact, that date was gazetted and the Administrative Officer in charge of Calabar called for nominations. My information is that the Minister now proposes to dissolve that Council on the 24th of this month and then re-appoint N.C.N.C. members to form a "Care-taker" Council. Elections to the Oron and Ugep Urban District Councils have also been put off without any reasons. We know one thing that this Government is very anxious to protect the interest of stranger elements in Calabar, Oron and Ugep. Is it not a fact that in four out of five Committees in the Calabar Urban District Council the stranger elements are the Chairmen and these Chairmen have been coming to Enugu repeatedly to beg the Minister of Local Government not to order any fresh elections because the N.C.N.C. as a political party cannot win any elections in that area, so that Government has sustained a Local Government Council in office for eight years.

In four rural areas in Calabar Division elections have been held but the N.C.N.C. has lost in all. In Calabar township you want to be there and see for yourself how these stranger elements have misused the Council. Scholarships do not go to the Efiks but to the stranger elements. There is loose talk about new register for the Calabar Urban District. May I ask the Minister whether there will be new registers for the Oron and Ugep Urban areas? May I ask whether it was in keeping with parliamentary democracy that just before the Federal Elections, Ikot Ekpene Urban District was dissolved by the Minister of Local Government by telegram and then he immediately re-appointed thirty N.C.N.C. members of the old Council to the Council and constituted them into a Caretaker Council?



[Mr E. O. Eyo]

The Chairman of that Council was nominated by the Action Group to contest the last Federal election and that was too much for the N.C.N.C. and the Council was immediately dissolved by telegram; the Chairman was removed from office—that was the worst that could be done but what happened—he won the election.

I have said it before on the floor of this House that the ability to deceive others may be cleverness but the ability to deceive oneself is a serious disease of the mind.

I now refer to paragraph 19 of the Speech from the Throne which deals with the establishment of the University of Nigeria at Nsukka. Our new Premier laid on the Table of this House a Progress Report of this University and anybody who had taken the trouble to read the report will agree that it was the report of our former Premier. Read paragraphs 20, 22 and 26 of the Report.

*Paragraph 20:*

“Dr Cook visited the Eastern Region from 6th April to the 14th April, 1958. Dr Hannah was there from 5th May to the 8th May, 1958, and Dr Taggart stayed there from 5th May to 18th May, 1958. Each of these experts exchanged views with the hon. Premier, officials of the Ministry of Education, and other persons capable of giving them information of a reliable and helpful nature. The last category included civil servants, business, engineering and civic leaders”.

*Paragraph 22:*

“The hon. Premier contacted a firm of architects in the United Kingdom to advise him on the preliminary aspects of the initial problems which usually feature the establishment of higher institutions of learning. The advice obtained did help to focus in its proper perspective the herculean nature of the task entailed in erecting buildings, playgrounds, roads, electrical and water installations, etc., for the University of Nigeria”.

*Paragraph 26:*

“Avenues are being explored in order to take advantage of the rich experience of Michigan State University at East Lansing as the first agricultural college which set

the pattern for the world-famous land grant college system in the United States of America. Contacts have been made also with the University of New Hampshire in Durham, N.H. in this respect when the hon. Premier and the hon. Minister of Education visited the United States in July, 1959. This system of University learning has broadened the base of higher education and spread the concept that university education is something in which all the communities concerned have a stake.”

Somebody has just made a point about he (Dr Azikiwe) being the Chairman of the University Council. I want to know who made him the Chairman.

**An hon. Member:** The Government appointed him.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** It cannot be the Government, because under the University of Nigeria Law, it is the Minister in charge of the University who appoints the Chairman and members of the Provisional Council.

*Paragraph 35 of the University of Nigeria Progress Report reads:*

“The Provisional Council of the University of Nigeria has been provided by law. It will act as a care-taker committee and handle affairs of the University with full authority during the initial stages until the University Council is appointed. Its Chairman and members have been appointed”.

That was written by Dr Azikiwe himself and at the time when this was published he was still in office. Now is it true that the former Premier appointed himself Chairman? If it is not true who appointed him? You remember that we are very keen on all matters connected with this University. Who are the members of this Council?—three expatriates and two Nigerians—the expatriates are two Americans, one British. And who are these Nigerians, Dr Azikiwe and Dr Ikejiani. Do not forget that on the floor of this House we had been attacking the Pharmaceutical Corporation headed by Dr Ikejiani. How many times have we come to this House to write off bad debts of the Pharmaceutical Corporation headed by Dr Ikejiani? Dr Ikejiani is now the man to whom Dr Azikiwe could



entrust the affairs of this University. One interesting thing about the new Council is that Dr Azikiwe made a statement which was published in the *Pilot* about non-interference of the management of the University. Now everything has reached a stage of harvest time. In the *Pilot* of March 5th he said:

"I must allay your fears that there will not be any burdensome interference by officialdom in the performance of our duties, and I know that it has never been the intention of the Government either to violate academic freedom or to make the smooth functioning of its statutory bodies impossible".

No interference from Government. We know that Dr Azikiwe has retired from active politics but we would have liked somebody else, not himself to be the Chairman of the Provisional Council. This is the sort of thing which raises doubts and suspicions. We must admit that it was Dr Azikiwe who projected this idea while he was in the Government. We would have liked somebody who is not interested to be made Chairman of the Council. We want the Government to draw a line between the Government activities and the N.C.N.C. practices. We expect our Ministers now in office to play ball. The other day women at Ugep demonstrated and the poor women were arrested by the Police and detained. That is the only thing which the Minister can do. He would not even go to Ugep and see the women. All he did was to telephone the Commissioner of Police to go there. I now implore you, Sir, to beg our Ministers to allow the poor tax and rate-payers to elect their councillors every three years. If they win they win and if they lose they lose, but for Ibo traders to be coming all the way from Calabar and to say "*Di anyi*, how now, why not allow us to continue running the Calabar Council?"

**The Minister of Local Government (Mr P. O. Nwoga):** Point of order. Standing Order 2:

The proceedings and debates of the House shall be in the English language, but a Member may present a petition in any other language if the petition be accompanied

by an English translation certified to be correct by the Member presenting the petition.

**Mr Speaker:** In view of Standing Order 2 I want to remind hon. Members of the language they use as I may not understand some of the words if they speak in any language other than English.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I think I am at liberty to quote what the Ibo traders in Calabar say. The other day the Minister of Local Government went on tour and he had a Police man behind him with a double-barrel gun and that was in the rural area. I want to remind the Minister that one double-barrel gun will not save him.

I hope the youths in the Government, a few of them in the Government who really feel as I do—will think very seriously and join hands with us and save our Country before it is too late.

**Dr W. N. Onubogu (Onitsha Division):** I rise to support the Motion to thank the Governor for the Speech from the Throne. I consider this Speech comprehensive, very impressive and encouraging.

It is very encouraging to see that Government is going to create a new Ministry of Economic Planning. I think Government will take into serious consideration the advice given by the Leader of the Opposition. I agree with him when he said that Government should think very seriously before appointing the new Minister. It should not be a question of one Minister just going out and somebody coming to relieve him. It is an all-important Ministry and the staff of that Ministry should be very carefully chosen. I hope also that the Government after creating that Ministry will immediately create a Department which will be known as "Loans Department" of that Ministry. That Department will be charged with the duty of granting loans to the farmers and the Ministry should be charged with the responsibility of increasing production.

I am happy also that the House of Chiefs has become a reality. I was one of those who thought that it would be impossible but now



[DR ONUBOGU]

it has been inaugurated. I would however like Government to arrange lectures for Members of the House of Chiefs on Parliamentary Procedure so that these Chiefs would understand what they are expected to do and not merely coming to give assent. 75 per cent of them do not know the procedure and I hope Government will arrange for the Speaker, the Government Chief Whip and all the Whips to give them a course in Parliamentary Practice, even at the expense of Government. One week in a month for about six months will put them in a very good position to understand.

I am very pleased to see that Government is taking over completely the question of recruitment. I hope the people responsible for this work will be given free hand to cast their net very wide to get qualified people. They should not be confined to the United Kingdom. Let them recruit from the United Kingdom, America, Russia or Egypt, and any other part of the world.

About capital, I do not mind—and I am quite sure hon. Members here do not mind—where the capital comes from, provided the Government is prepared to protect the Nigerian interest when negotiating for the capital.

Paragraph 21 of the Governor's Speech reads: "Farmers are being taught to use modern farming methods . . ." Where are the farmers? I come from Onitsha Division. I do not see where the farmers in Onitsha Division are being taught the modern farming methods. Where are the machines? Every year I stand up here to tell the Government that all these experimental stations should be closed. Every year we hear of high yielding cocoa, high yielding seedlings, etc. Many of these stations should be closed and the money sent to the farmers. Some people say that it is not possible to use the agricultural implement in the bush because of stumps. If that argument is true, what about Umudike Agricultural Farm? What about the farm at Abakaliki, were there no stumps there before? They talk to the farmers to start co-operative farming. It is impossible. A lot of money is spent on experimental farms every year. One at Abak and one at Abakaliki. This is a waste of money. I am sorry that the hon. Premier is not here. I would have drawn his

special attention to this. Knowing that this is an agricultural country, the best way to effect improvement is to make different policies on agriculture. I said it last year and I do repeat it again that some of them do not work every Saturday. Money should be used when some of these are closed to give the farmers.

I will like to know whether there is any Minister here or anybody here who will tell me how many Africans have succeeded in poultry in Nigeria. At present, eggs are being flown out from England and we buy them at about 6d each. When you go to the market you see that eggs laid by local hens are not bigger than my thumb, and yet we have experimental stations here. Can't we give these people money to produce something better and show them how to proceed? Our country is satisfied that the Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries can go to the shops to buy eggs at 6d! It is a very sorrowful situation.

Before I leave this question of Agriculture, I would like to ask this question. How long does this Government expect to allow our farmers to continue to scratch the soil with hoes? It is only in the Calabar Province and a part of the Bende Division that we have very good soil. Here you have to dig right down before you can get to the fertile area.

**An hon. Member:** What of Abakaliki?

**Dr Onubogu:** That is why land here is lacking in fertility every year. How long shall we continue to scratch the soil with hoes?

I would like to congratulate the Government for what they did about the Mbanefo Report. I do not want to say that the Mbanefo Report is very good because what I see in the Report is that those who had much, much was added. Those who had little, very little was added. All of them have to go to the same market to buy. Why I congratulate the Government is because they have said that those who are on super-scale posts should not be affected. If I were to say something the award should have been greater for the officers in the lower grades. Extension of the award to super-scale posts would mean addition of about £300 to the salaries of the officers concerned, which is indeed a large sum. I know that some people will say: let me go to the other Regions because



of the increase. If they do that we shall know those who are for us and those who are not for us, and by their fruits we shall know them.

I do not want to keep this House long. The people of Nnewi would like Government to tell them when their Rural Hospital will be opened. It has been built over three years, and all that they have to do is to continue to weed the compound everyday. What is the Government doing? The nearest Hospital to Nnewi is at Onitsha—about sixteen miles. What is the Government doing?—nothing. If they are not going to do something, why build it at all?

I am glad to see that the Government will guarantee some Local Government Bodies who want to borrow money from Banks. I am glad to see that the Onitsha Urban District Council is negotiating for a loan of £150,000 from a Bank and I hope that the Government will expedite this matter to enable drainage work to proceed in the Nupe Settlement in Onitsha, some parts of which are below the level of the River Niger. By August and September the whole place is flooded with water. That has happened several times.

I have suggested this on several occasions that if Government will expedite these loans it will enable the farmers to make life worthwhile. We see from the Speech from the Throne that Government is creating a Ministry of Economic Planning. I wish Government a very happy year but it must not be forgotten that this is an important new Ministry which should not be filled in a hurry, otherwise there will be a mistake and we will all come back here to lament.

**Mr J. M. Ito** (Ikot Ekpene Division): In supporting this motion of thanks for His Excellency's Most Gracious and memorable Speech from the Throne, I feel I should raise certain salient points.

*Provincial Administration.*—I wish to express my sincere gratitude for the Provincial set-up despite inquisitive and unnecessary interference from people who are not concerned and to say that the Annangs are not prepared to join the Calabar Minority Council. This can be interpreted as a duplication in view of

the fact that any aggrieved Province can express herself in the hall of the Provincial Assembly now about to be established. It will serve no useful purpose and will be a mere waste of revenue. We cannot compromise with the idea of creating a C.O.R. State which is now a dream.

*Ministry of Commerce.*—It is to my greatest regret that the Government has failed to come to our rescue, having as yet not established Raffia Industry in Ikot Ekpene Division, despite repeated applications for loans from the Raffia Guild. The policy of the Government to help and encourage the growth of Secondary Industries would be a farce if this industry was allowed to perish. The peasants' livelihood and source of earning would gravely be at stake. I want the Minister of Commerce to take note of this for immediate attention. The next question I wish to emphasise is that of Piassava. I think a scientific research could be conducted in order to produce or manufacture locally such commodity arising therefrom. The installation of a factory for this purpose will greatly eliminate the number of unemployed in this Region.

*Ministry of Education.*—I have to thank the Minister of Education for the Free Primary education up to Standard II; although it is not enough, yet it is encouraging.

Saying something about Secondary Scholarship awards to District Councils, these have not been equitably distributed. For example, a District Council composed of five or more Local Councils cannot enjoy this privilege as some Local Councils may be deprived of this amenity. I suggest that in order to allow a fair and equitable distribution, the District Councils should be consulted.

I think the machinery of automatic scholarship had not been properly operated. For instance, a student in Belfast University (from my Division) was twice refused scholarship even though he was recommended by the Commissioner for Eastern Nigeria in the United Kingdom. I hope the Minister of Education will consult the Scholarship Board over this vexed question. There is one other point I wish to make in connection with the establishment of Secondary School in Ikot Ekpene Division by the Methodist Mission



[Mr Iro]

whose application was said to be discounted despite the plea from the General Supervisor of Schools in this Division. I learn from a reliable source that correspondence on this issue has been shelved, while other denominations have been allowed to open schools. Owing to an inflow of children from Primary Schools the people are in dire need of Secondary Schools.

I must say that the establishment of a Technical Institute in Annang Province by the Government would be highly appreciated in view of its growing population.

*Ministry of Finance.*—I have already suggested to the Ministry of Finance that it is advantageous to make Ikot Ekpene a Banking station, in view of the role it is playing as Headquarters of the Annang Province. The journey to Aba or Uyo is tiresome and burdensome. It will certainly relieve some burden and banking facilities will be within the reach of all District Councils in the community. The question of Aba or Uyo should henceforth be scrapped from our dictionary of thought.

With due respect to the Minister of Finance may I ask that Ikot Ekpene be made a Motor Licensing station owing to the numerous cars owned by the people of this Division. It is a great disadvantage and dissipation of energy to run to other Divisions which cannot cure her own congestion.

*Ministry of Health.*—The establishment of a Rural Health Centre is a necessity in my Division. I have been told that the money earmarked for this project has been taken to other places. The Otoro Rural District Council has been informed of this. The unnecessary excuse as to site is uncalled for. Sites have been provided for inspection.

I want to say that the question of establishing Customary Courts is a burning one in view of the fact that it is already being operated in certain parts of the Region. Further delay is dangerous, taking into consideration that hundreds of cases are now in the waiting list pending review. The Administrative Officers are now saddled with various and voluminous duties. The establishment of these courts will be a relief.

Turning to the Ministry of Local Government, I want to point out to the Minister of Local Government that granting of loans to

District Councils had not been equitably and fairly distributed. The applications from District Councils in my area have not met with necessary response. It apparently appears there is a tendency of disparity. The Urban District Council at Ikot Ekpene is looking for loan in order to improve the Township market which is a source of revenue earning.

I should like to tell the Minister of Town Planning that the question of introducing a Town Planning Authority at Ikot Ekpene, which is in the interest of that community, is now overdue. The sooner this body is inaugurated the better.

On the matter of royalty on oil, I feel that it is a grave omission from the Speech from the Throne, that no mention is made as to the amount collected from royalty on oil from the Shell BP for the current year as it is essential for the members of this House to understand the situation.

While thanking the Minister of Works for the commencement of the Ikot Ekpene urban pipeborne water supply, I want to say that works on bridges have been conspicuously absent from my Division. Although my people have made several representations, the Government seem to pay no heed. For instance, there is a short road leading from Nto Edino to Aba, which, if built, will inevitably improve communications and trade. Apart from that there are incidents of drowning every now and then.

The rural water supply scheme is progressing but in the interest of the people and sanitation, they should be covered and pumps provided in order to avoid the drowning incidents which take place from time to time.

According to my observation, farmers are not adequately encouraged in the way of loans. Particular attention should be given to farmers and loan made available in order to provide food crops enough for our teeming population.

I have already suggested in this hon. House that Members of this House should be supplied weekly with copies of the *Outlook*. This will inevitably help to combat the false and vicious propaganda from our political opponents. It is a surprise to see Members of this House trying to incite the people against the Government. This is a dangerous undertaking. With this serious warning I hope our political opponents will try to retrace their steps.



In conclusion, I have to thank the Government for the general development now being witnessed throughout the Region. Let us hope, that when we gain our Independence it will be a fruitful and prosperous one.

**Mr V. K. Onyeri** (Port Harcourt Division): I would like to associate myself with the good sentiments expressed by the Government Chief Whip in moving the Motion of Thanks to His Excellency for His Excellency's Most Gracious Speech from the Throne. First of all, may I say with pride that I am one of the happiest men living today in this hon. House because any political historian going through the archives of Nigerian political evolution will certainly go through the names of those who have contributed in no small measure to see that Nigeria is independent. Certainly many of us did contribute in our little ways, but before I go to that section of His Excellency's Speech from the Throne I must say one or two words about what His Excellency said in regard to the Public Service of the Eastern Region. The battle for self-government was divided into two fronts, viz, towards the public service of the country and towards the political aspect of our lives. We fought this battle in the public service to see that our young men with the necessary qualifications do man all the key posts in the public service in the Region. We did not intend to discriminate nor was it our desire to enthrone little Hitlers in these posts. I must pay my deepest thanks to the expatriate civil servants, many of whom have now left this country and many still here with us. If we must build up an intelligent public service our people must try to understudy the expatriates that are ahead of them. I must be true to my conscience in telling the nation that today we have many graduates in the public service. But how many of them are capable to be Permanent Secretaries? I should have loved to see the Chief Secretary to the Premier here to hear this gospel of truth.

With your kind permission, Mr Speaker, let me read paragraphs 10 and 11 of His Excellency's Speech from the Throne, which are as follows:—

"10. In the public service, the key-note has been expansion and efficiency: expansion in order to cope with the increased services

and facilities which my Government provides for the people; improved efficiency to ensure that the utmost use is made of available educated manpower.

"11. There has, therefore, been an appreciable increase in the number of established officers thus bringing the figure up from 7,000 last year to 7,700. Of this number 640 are in the administrative and professional grades as against 550 last year. As more qualified indigenous officers become available, the number of Nigerians employed in these grades has risen from 368 to 469, an increase of 101. More opportunities have also been given to Nigerians of proved and tried experience to serve in the Executive and Higher Executive grades. There are now 442 Nigerians in these grades as against 352 last year. Thus our declared policy of Nigerianisation is being vigorously pursued. A Nigerian is now Head of the Regional Public Service. Of the ten Permanent Secretary posts, six are at present filled by Nigerians. The eight posts of Senior Assistant Secretary, created as a result of a decision taken at the 1957 Resumed Constitutional Conference in London have all been filled . . .".

I have to say here that it is true that I am one of those who laboured in this House and shouted that all the Permanent Secretaries should be Nigerians but let me tell you, that of the few that we have appointed on trial, what happened? Go to their offices, you will see that before you see a Minister of State, you will see a Tin-god that will shout at you: "whom do you want in this office". A Nigerian Permanent Secretary he is; you can no longer see your Minister and then you will be bullied. That is not the independence which all of us fought for. That is not the type of efficiency which we all want in the public service of the Region.

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):**  
Point of Order—Standing Order 30 (9).

**Mr Speaker:** When the Member speaks of that type of conduct envisaged by the Standing Order, I will call his attention.

**Mr Onyeri:** I am very happy that you have given me the House's protection but I



[MR ONYERI]

am very sorry that the Minister of Finance, the Leader of this House, should have called me to stop what I was saying because I intend to protect what all of us are suffering in the Region. He should have been interested and I hope he is interested.

What I am saying is this: We are making an experiment and I wish our experiment shall succeed. I am not saying that Nigerians should not be appointed as Permanent Secretaries; what I am saying is this: that they must be courteous and polite and know that in the department it is the Minister who is at the head and not the Permanent Secretary who owns the Ministry. I do not see the reason why any citizen in the Eastern Region should travel all the way from his home to see his Minister and he will be bullied by any Permanent Secretary. It is very insulting. Certainly, I know the type of people that they will bully and not the type—the old Zikist type—that they will bully.

I will now turn to page 23 where His Excellency recorded with satisfaction the grant of Independence to Nigeria by Her Majesty's Government. Anybody who has lived in this country for the past 23 years will certainly feel happy that at last our yearnings and struggles are coming to be true. In October next we hope that nothing will be placed on our way to achieve our real Independence but I must say that Napoleon Bonaparte went to war, from village to village in Europe; he conquered but at last Napoleon failed to win the peace. I will direct my speech to the hon. Premier and his Ministers that before we mobilize the political manpower of this Region for the final assault to which my hon. Friend from Uyo drew your attention here this morning, that we have to re-group ourselves in the Region first. What we have to do is this. It is true that a wife and her husband are never equal even though today they try to claim social equality but they are never equal. It is true that in any political encounter in the Eastern Region today, or in the country as such, none is equal to Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe. But what I say is this: that a tree can never make a forest. I do not think that there is any living soul in the whole of the country today, especially the youths of this country whose heads are not bowed in shame. It shows that we have failed to recognise those who fought the battle for

Nigerian Independence. We have relegated them to the background and imprisoned them politically. Let me tell you, the people who are shouting "No! No!" were the very people who went, day and night lying to the Political Leader that Mr "X" or Mr "B" wanted to overthrow him. But may I ask you, who wanted to overthrow Dr Azikiwe in the political arena of Nigerian politics? They are the people who wanted political appointments; and when they failed to get them they went to the man and lied to him: "Have you heard that Mr Onyeri wanted to overthrow you". Poor Onyeri, he never wanted to overthrow anybody.

What I am saying is this: that in the Eastern Region today we have the manpower but unfortunately during the last Federal election we lost our reasoning. What I am saying today is that in the new re-grouping which I am now advocating, the Premier, and anybody who is interested in the affairs of this Region, should first of all summon a caucus meeting of some of the people, the intelligentsia, not only the people who have gone overseas because there are some of them who are the common intelligentsia, the Ph.D. common sense, who are in the Region. If some of them sit together let them try and thrash out their differences and let us see the force that we cannot meet in the Federation of Nigeria. Certainly, I must tell you, I am not satisfied in the way Dr Azikiwe was set aside. Well I am one of those who told him plainly in Lagos that he must be a bit mobile because I saw the force even before the people started to cry. I saw the force coming in full swing and we advised him. We advised him to be up and doing so that he would be the Prime Minister of the Federation for which he was destined to be but unfortunately he did not see with us.

The job-seekers went round to tell him that Onyeri was trying to overthrow him; that Mbadiwe was trying to murder him. They wanted Ministerial appointments; that's all. But what happened? The very people who would not tell our master the truth only went round in the night conspiring against him with the evil-doers. Today the very force is trying again to overthrow Dr Okpara's administration. I want to expose this force. This now is not the case of Onyeri or Achara. We often talk of unity and independence of Nigeria. We cannot achieve



this unity unless we know our troubles and try to amend our ways; unless we inculcate in the minds of our people the way to love one another instead of living as hypocrites and coming here to cry. That is what I am trying now to cure.

Perhaps some people have noticed here in this House and outside the Region that the Region is quiet and calm today; that the Opposition is praising the Government every day. Yes, the Opposition want now to throw the back to the Government and show that we are brothers; that they do not oppose merely for the sake of opposing. They only oppose when they see that things are going wrong. If you ask me I will tell you that I am a better N.C.N.Cer than most of them there in the Government Bench. (*Members of the Government Bench: Come over*). Everyone here has a God-given heart to take in some of the lessons that we have learnt in the past few years. Many are happy because they are Ministers; others are happy because they are Parliamentary Secretaries or Commissioners. The question is whether the country is happy? The country is not happy. It is not happy in the sense that for the past twenty-three to twenty-five years the independence for which the youths of this country, many of whom have passed through the crucible of the Zikist Movement, have fought, is being wrestled from them from the corner. There are some in the House who go to Lagos and cheer "Zik, Zik", even though they are the people conspiring against him. We want Zik back, not only in the Federal Parliament but he must go there and head the ship of state. That is the plain thing. I must do justice to my conscience. Some people might begin to wonder what I would do. I will tell them now what I will do from this place. First of all I am now sending a message through this House to Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe and Dr Mbadiwe to heal their differences in the interest of the Region and the nation (*Interruptions—Government Bench: Not Dr Mbadiwe*) and I am giving you an assurance that the present Government will be given 100 per cent support not only from this side of the House but also from all other sections of the Region, and let us see whether this Region is actually a Region born of crises and not a Region of men with intelligence.

Before I finish, I must say that for the past one year my good people of Port Harcourt,

the citadel of learning and social life of this Region, who have elected me to this hon. House, not because of my education, not because of my wealthy background, have been approaching me saying "what are you doing?". They know the ill-treatment given to me, but they say that I did not consult them when backing out. I told them that I have a conscience which I must first give full satisfaction after which I will come to their service. Perhaps you have all read in the press about my people urging me to do one thing or the other. Of recent they have, when I was here attending the meeting of this House, elected me *in absentia* the Vice-Chairman of the Port Harcourt Football Association, and during the meeting of this House they have mandated me to go to Lagos to represent their own interest. In the fulfilment of the promise I gave to them, I am now telling them that I will respect their wish to go back to the N.C.N.C. (*Cheers from Government Supporters and shouts of Zik! Zik!*). I am not going back to the N.C.N.C. as a politically vanquished person. I am going there because of what I have told you here now. We want to mobilise all the manpower in the Region and give the final assault to imperialism.

I beg to support the Motion.

(*Mr Onyeri then crossed the Carpet*).

**Chief I. I. Morphy** (Ogoja Division): Point of Order. We do not know whether this is a proper time for anybody to cross the Carpet. This is not the proper time.

**Mr Speaker:** I am afraid the Speaker has no power in regard to anybody's intention.

**Mr U. Enyi** (Afikpo Division): I beg to support the Motion for a humble address of Thanks to His Excellency the Governor for His Most Gracious Speech from the Throne. In doing so, I have to congratulate the Government for the various development brought to the Region during the year and for accepting the Report of the Mbanefo Commission to give increased salaries to public servants. But I am saying that Government should reconsider its decision to pay only 12½ per cent to Local Government employees



[MR ENYI]

and Voluntary Agency teachers, nurses and midwives. They should be given 15 per cent as civil servants since the award is made to cover cost of living and since they all buy from the same markets. It is high time that Government should give Local Government employees the same conditions of service and the same scales of salaries as their counterparts in the Civil Service.

I have to congratulate the Minister of Commerce for his efforts in attracting foreign investors and industrialists to this Region, for that is the only means of minimising unemployment and bringing economic development to the Region. I am happy to give the Minister the information that Okposi and Uburu clans in Afikpo Division are noted for Salt Industry. They supplied many parts of the Region with salt during the last World War when there was scarcity of salt. I would like the Minister of Commerce to visit these clans and inspect their salt resources and investigate the possibility of improving the industry.

I also thank the Minister of Education for the progress so far made in his Ministry. Referring to page 12 of the Speech from the Throne, this Region at the end of last year had 6,620 primary schools with 1,338,485 children in them; 106 secondary schools with 19,344 students; 146 teacher training institutions with 12,850 students; and only four technical institutions with 560 students. You will agree with me that four technical institutions are not adequate for this Region and I am calling upon the Minister of Education to open more technical institutions and trade centres, possibly one in each of the twelve Provinces, to absorb many of the standard six school leavers who cannot gain admission to secondary schools and who may like to learn one type of trade or the other. I would like the Minister to make a statement on the cause of the delay in publishing the results of the 1959 standard six examination.

I turn now to the Ministry of Works. I have on several occasions talked about the Enugu-Agbani-Afikpo road in this hon. House and there has been a number of representations to the Minister of Works by hon. Members from Afikpo Division and by the Afikpo District Council to advocate for the immediate improve-

ment of this road. As far back as 1956 there has always been provision in the Eastern Region Estimates to tar this road. I think it is high time that Government should redeem its promise to tar the road. When late Mazi Mbonu Ojike was the Minister of Works there was a proposal to tar this road direct from Enugu to Enyong Division through Eda, Ohafia and Arochuku, and thence to Calabar Division, and he told us that the proposal was one of the projects listed as what he called "top priorities". I am wondering whether the road has been removed from the said list. Coming back to the road from Enugu through Agbani to Afikpo, it is only sixty-four miles from Enugu to Afikpo and reduces the distance to Enugu through Abakaliki by twenty-eight miles. Owing to the persistent demand that the road should be improved, Government gave out a contract of £6,500 to a certain company to improve a small portion of the road (about four miles) which renders the road impassable during the rains.

The Company was unable to cope with such type of work and had to surrender it. I am made to understand that P.W.D. has now undertaken to do the work by direct labour immediately after the forthcoming rains. I shall be grateful if the information becomes a reality. But if there happens to be any delay immediately after the rains, my people and I will regard it as a deliberate neglect of Afikpo Division. I would like the Minister of Works to make a statement in reply to the effect that the whole length of road from Ozalla to Afikpo, and not only a portion of it, would be tarred by P.W.D. immediately after the rains.

Referring to the Abakaliki-Afikpo-Okigwi road which was unskillfully tarred by Messrs Costain and Co., the road is only passable from Abakaliki to Abakaliki-Afikpo boundary—a distance of about 15 miles. And from thence to Okigwi the road is made worse than before it was tarred. Government made a huge sum of money available for tarring this road, but it is very unfortunate that the contractors only deceived the Government and made away with the money without doing the work for which the money was paid. I would like the Minister to make a tour of inspection on this road and see for himself what I am trying to say. (*Mr P. O. Ururuka: I know all about it*). It is high time this House viewed with great concern



the deceit of Messrs. Costain and Co. and I am calling upon the Government to regard this firm as completely incapable of taking any such major contract and to cease giving them any more contracts to tar roads. In fact, anybody who passes on this road from Afikpo through Abakaliki Boundary to Okigwi Division will agree with me that Messrs. Costain and Co. deserve to be sued for the refund of this money paid to them to tar this road. If anybody feels that I have been unfair to Messrs. Costain and Co. let him undertake a tour from Abakaliki to Okigwi and he will see for himself the awful work done by this Company. It is my earnest hope that the Budget to be presented to this hon. House later will contain provision for tarring the road all over again. Oso Edda-Bende road which was taken over from the Edda District Council by the Government was closed to all traffic since the last rainy season. The road is the direct route to Bende Division and Arochuku District and it is very important for the evacuation of produce. The Ministry of Works sign-board at Oso Edda is the only encouragement that the road may be reopened, but I am wondering how long the road will remain closed.

My last point is that I hope other hon. Members would also like to hear from the Government or from the Ministers concerned, the actual time that Government intends to implement completely the establishment of Provincial Assemblies and Customary Courts.

I beg to support.

**Mr O. Arikpo** (Obubra Division): When His Excellency announced the appointment of the hon. Mr Justice Mbanefo as Chief Justice of this Region, the announcement was most warmly applauded by the House. I think this Region is fortunate in having Mr Justice Mbanefo as the Chief Justice of the Region for the following reasons: Quite apart from his being a great lawyer and a first-class judge, Mr Justice Mbanefo is a man of strong personal character, a great Christian and an embodiment of other rare qualities. These are qualities which this Region requires most at the present stage of our political and social development; and it is also fortunate that all those who know the Chief Justice know that he takes a great personal interest in the

administration of justice and in the welfare of all those who are engaged in the administration of justice. I say this because these are the things which we require very much during the next 3 or 4 years. It is very certain that in the next 3 to 5 years during the great battle for Independence (and I must say the battle begins after the 1st of October) the judiciary in this Region, and, in fact, throughout the country, will have to take the strain of Independence. It is, therefore, necessary that those who are charged with the duty of administering justice should be men who can be relied upon to do their duty whatever the circumstances, and we in this Region are fortunate in having in the Chief Justice a man of the honourable Mbanefo's character. During the next 2 to 5 years, while the fierce battles for partisan politics rage (the battle which all of us are thoroughly engaged in), it is very important that we should have a body of men who, while sharing our aspirations, are ready to look at the problems over which we fight in an objective manner and that body of men can be no other than the men and women of the judiciary of this country.

It is therefore necessary that such a body of men and women should receive some special consideration by this Legislature. It is important that the calibre of our Judges and Magistrates should be such that all of us, no matter what our belief, no matter what our political affiliation, should be able to look upon them with complete confidence, believing that they are administering the law as they see it, without fear or favour.

I saw an example of that only yesterday when I was engaged in defending a group of persons who believed rightly or wrongly that they were exercising their political right under the Constitution who, unfortunately, the Police did not think they were doing that and it was the fairness and impartiality of the Magistrate which, in fact, brought the matter to its right perspective. Now, we want in our Judiciary men of that quality, men who whatever persons, whatever the argument, will be guided by their understanding of the law given them by this Legislature. Such men deserve to work under conditions which will be favourable not only to their health but to their minds. I am therefore happy that the Speech from the Throne has taken particular note of



[MR ARIKPO]

the need to improve the quality of our courts in the Region and in particular the courts in Onitsha which are very notorious for their inadequacy. I should like to point out that not only the courts in Onitsha but the courts in several parts of the Region require considerable improvement both in design and in ventilation. Many Magistrates and Judges work under very appalling conditions and work very long hours. I therefore hope that the Minister of Justice will not be tired of instructing the Police to detect crimes and also to work for the general improvement of courts both for the Magistrates and Judges in this Region as well as for the improvement of the Rest House accommodation available for them when they go on tour.

Along that, I should like to mention that I endorse wholly what my hon. and learned Friend, the Deputy Speaker, said about the emolument of Magistrates and Judges yesterday. It is important that men who are engaged in a job which is the basic foundation of what we in this House and outside fight for, men who are engaged in trying to preserve justice should be given some consideration both in their place of work and as to their emolument. I hope that the Minister of Justice will take up this question of emolument of the Judges and Magistrates with his Colleagues in the Cabinet. But I want to make it clear that it is not a question of old-school tie or professional interest; it is a very vital matter because if we can be sure that administration of justice in this Region is to be on a firm foundation, we can be sure that the work we sit down here to do will never perish. If we neglect that, on the other hand, we may find that even before our lives, all the things we devote our time to do here will come to nought. It is very important therefore that the Judiciary, as a body, should receive attention because it is the foundation which undertakes the independence for which we all are fighting.

I would like to refer to the unhappy note sounded by His Excellency in His Speech which concerns labour difficulties which have arisen in the coal mines. I am sure all hon. Members of the House were pleased to hear that the Premier's consultation with the Prime Minister bore fruits and we all know that a Commission has been set up to study the problem of the coal industry; but I want to

suggest that like all industries, the coal industry is bound to continue to have problems and the fact that these problems occurred is not in itself a matter of any great significance. What is significant, however, is the method employed in solving these problems as they arise from time to time. The problem, we are told, is that more coal is produced than is being used but I think it is a matter of simple economics that if the coal produced is not being used, the answer should be to find new uses for our coal. I can think of no simpler use for our coal than converting it into gas for domestic purposes. Firewood is a very expensive item in the domestic budget and the forests are rare in many parts of this Region and in the Northern Region. In fact, in Enugu and around, to my mind, there can be nothing simpler than considering and doing it at a very early stage, the conversion of our coal in Enugu into gas both for industrial and commercial purposes. We have just heard that the Electricity Corporation of Nigeria is planning to take over the gas field around Port Harcourt for the purpose of generating power. One should have thought that even if the Government had not thought about it before, that news item should immediately adjust itself somewhere as meeting labour problem around the mines. It is perfectly possible, and the leading Gas Company has demonstrated it, that the use of gas for domestic purposes can become a very flourishing industry in this country. Gas heater or cleaner, etc., will make things quicker and easier in our domestic affairs.

I would like to suggest that rightaway the Government might consider the establishment of a company in partnership with the Federal Government Coal Board—a Gas Producing Company which will easily absorb about 200,000 people. I will make the suggestion that the next time the Premier meets the Prime Minister to discuss the labour problem that he put forward this suggestion of setting up a Gas Company in Enugu which will produce gas both for domestic consumption and industrial use by various industrial undertakings.

I would like to refer to His Excellency's Speech from the Throne on Rural Development. I was a bit worried by what appeared to me as a serious omission from the Speech in respect of road and water development in rural areas. I notice for instance, that when



referring to the number of rural water supplies undertaking, the Speech was silent about the actual location of these supplies. A suggestion that some of the undertakings got mixed up in the last year's Estimates, I think, is false because I know of one which was dropped, the reason of which I do not know and which the Minister of Works will have to tell the House one day.

Similarly, referring to the road development programme, the Speech is cautious to tie this development to the availability of fund and talks about the danger of social services overtaking the other services of the Region. It is a very common fault, not only in this Region, but throughout the country, that whenever there appears to be financial difficulty, rural development is the first to suffer. I would like to stress that that is a very serious fault which this Government should not follow because we are not in a position to make that mistake for the simple reason that rural development is going to be the basis of economic expansion in this Region. If you build a good road from Abakaliki to other places where food is produced, the economic crops of the Region will not suffer. Port Harcourt, Aba, Enugu and Onitsha will not develop without the development of the rural areas around these towns. I would like to warn that any attempt to modify the development programme is not done at the expense of rural development. All the capital invested in Port Harcourt is very well invested and all the capital invested in Enugu and Onitsha should be regarded as being very well invested. Foreign investment is not a very good thing to a country because the foreign investors want to make the maximum profit from that country. I therefore hope that the Minister of Finance when introducing his Budget will show that Government is alive to this basic principle that if the economy of the Region will expand it must expand from the basis and that is agricultural rural areas.

Finally, I just want to say one word about the Public Service. It is very gratifying that the Public Service in this Region is rapidly becoming indigenous. It is most gratifying because I have always believed that the Ministerial system will not work efficiently until the Public Service upon which it is based is an indigenous one.

There is some difficulty about having trained staff in the policy-making Division of the Public Service. Every country faces this problem and it is not uncommon in this country. A country about to become independent is really in a state of emergency and can only be run on war technique. I want to make this suggestion to the Government: during the war in the United Kingdom, several people outside the Public Service, that is, people in business, in industry, in profession and in the Universities were requested to come in as temporary civil servants for the period of the war. I want to suggest to the Government that it is possible to invite Easterners with some administrative experience outside the Government to come in and work for the period during which the professional career administrators are in training for the job. Unless we can do that, there will always be this difficulty which everybody speaks about. Without goodwill, the Ministerial system cannot work very satisfactorily.

A Ministerial system cannot work satisfactorily if the people working in it are not looking at the problem from the same angle all the time; it will not work. I venture to suggest that on the question of policy there is always a tendency for a conflict to exist, merely a mental conflict and if that conflict exists, it does not make for full efficient functioning of the Ministerial system. The Ministerial system has its real effective power in the hands of the civil servant adviser and unless the civil servant adviser has the same aim as the Minister it is very difficult to have an efficient functioning of the Ministry. I am therefore suggesting to Government to give serious consideration to this problem of further Nigerianising the Public Service, particularly, the policy-making branch.

**Mr D. E. Akilo (Udi Division):** I rise to support the Motion of thanks to His Excellency for His Most Gracious Speech from the Throne. I am rather very happy to have lived to see the last Budget Session under the colonial regime. This noble achievement is due to the very one we all know, the number one nationalist leader in Africa, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe. I hope he will also achieve independence for the whole continent of Africa. I would like to mention some other nationalists we have today, for example, Dr Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, President Seko Toure of



[MR AKILO]

Guinea, Mr Tom Mboya of Kenya and Dr Chike Obi of Nigeria. If all these people give Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe their support I hope we shall live to see the independence of all Africa.

I have to thank the Minister of State charged with responsibility for Information and his predecessor now the Provincial Commissioner for Enugu for having helped my people in contributing their own quota in respect of our Community Development. It was through their benevolence that my people are able to launch a Bailey bridge over the River Nnam between Awka and Udi Divisions. This community development which is now taken on by my people and the people of Ebenebe is on the very road which has been earmarked for tarring in the Government Development Programme published last year, and I should seize this opportunity to ask the Minister of Transport and Works to co-operate with the Minister of Information to help the people to achieve their aim. This very road links up with the road which crosses the Ezi River in Ngbakwu in Njikoka District of Awka Division and when this road is completed, as I said earlier in this hon. House, it will shorten the distance from Enugu to Onitsha by at least seventeen miles. This road will be commercially useful to the Government as well because it passes through the heart of a town that has been forgotten for years through the lack of communication, and that is Ebenebe. This town is boycotted on the side of Onitsha by the Ezi River and on the side of Udi Division by this Nnam. But fortunately these two rivers have been bridged and this road is a commercial road indeed.

My congratulations go to the Minister of Health—I do not know whether he is here (*Several hon. Members: He is here*)—for having given Udi Division four rural health centres. (*An hon. Member: You have got four but we have not got one*). The Udi Division has been losing at the expense of Enugu township as I shall explain later on. My people asked me to ask the Minister in charge to convert some of these rural health centres to rural hospitals because there are so many remote areas where people die as a result of lack of medical care and these are tax-payers. I am asking the Minister of Health to think seriously to convert some of these rural health centres into rural hospitals for the convenience of the people concerned.

Now to the Minister of Transport... (*Several hon. Members: Again?*). Yes. I only associated his name with the Community Development just to remind him that the road on which we are working will be his concern afterwards. Coming to his own Ministry I am very happy to say that two towns, Iwolo Oghe and Amokwe, in my Division which had been suffering from lack of water supply have now got water supply. Above all, I am very grateful to him again for having included in the list of the roads to be tarred in 1958-62, the 9-mile road at Nkporogwu and the other branch going to Onitsha. The people will, however, be happier if something concrete is done on either of these roads as that will give the people the incentive to pay their taxes and rates. There is also a point I would like the Minister to clarify on the floor of this hon. House and that is about the pipe-borne water scheme which is being carried on at the 9th-mile corner. Work stated on this open pit for about two years now but nothing has been done and I should like the Minister to make a statement whether this water scheme has been abandoned or, if not, will the Minister kindly speed up the construction of this open pit and allow the people of 9th-mile corner to have water in that pit during this forthcoming rainy season?

Turning to the Ministry of Education, it is a Ministry that has received so many blows from the Members of this hon. House. I am not going to waste much time on it but I have to reveal what happened between me and a widow of a teacher about two weeks ago. It is the question of the Government to awarding teachers, and especially Certificated Teachers pension. The Certificated Teachers in the Region will only be about 30 per cent of the teaching population; even not up to that. What about the 70 per cent of the C.S. Teachers and the C. Teachers who form the population? These people are left uncared for. So last week a C.S. Teacher died having two of his children in the college. After a week of his death the widow came to me seeking the way and manner she would get the husband's money from the Government. For example, when a staff of the Colliery Department dies, the wife of the deceased will be compensated by the Colliery Department, from £400 to £500. The woman was thinking that the teacher would have something like that and she came to me to ask how she would get



such money from the Government. I told her that the teachers have not got such provision. She burst into tears. I emphasise strongly that a C.S. Teacher and C Teachers should be included in the award of gratuity or pension because if an ordinary office messenger has got pension, why should not the teacher who taught him. Teachers are just like a goat owned by two persons. One man will be thinking that this person will get food for it while the other will be thinking that the other person will be getting food for it, until the goat is dead. Government is looking at the Voluntary Agencies to do every thing for teachers, because they are the employers, while the Voluntary Agencies are looking at the Government to do something for the teachers. This is the reason why teachers run away from the teaching profession and join the Government service. There is no nation that will progress educationally speaking without good and contented teachers. I speak very often in this House that the interest of the teachers should be maintained, by giving them a sort of promotion, especially those Headmasters who hold administrative responsibilities in the Primary Schools.

Turning now to Standard VI examination, there are two faulty points I have to mention. The first point is the method of setting examination questions, and the second point is the question of marking the papers. Let me tackle the first point.

In the case of setting questions Standard VI teachers always complain year in and year out that the questions on General Knowledge are quite out of scheme, and this makes the teachers to be confused in their scheme of work. The people concerned, should get the papers approved by the Education Department. After all, it is only the question of testing the children on what they have learnt. That is one point.

The other point is the question of correcting the examination papers. This has made

children as well as the parents to be very much inconvenienced. Look, the schools will soon close, and a child has remained four months in the college, without knowing his position. Think how it will sound when a child, after four months of his stay in the college is recalled and told that he has failed his Standard VI examination. What about the parents who have wasted a lot of money on the part of their children quite above what they have paid already for the school fees? I suggest that the examination should be handed over to the West African Examinations Council. West African Examinations Council should conduct Standard VI examinations. If that is possible let increased examination fees be paid, so that the children will have the result of their examinations before the end of the year, so that by the following year, they will be able to tell whether they have passed or failed; or it can be done in another way. We have got twelve Provinces in the Eastern Region. Teachers of Standard VI can be selected to do the marking of these papers. These teachers will be collected in a place, well fed and well cared for, and when the papers have been collected from the centres, take Enugu for example, papers from Yenagoa will be corrected by the Teachers from Enugu and so on and so forth.

*And it being 11.45 a.m. Mr Speaker interrupted the business and the Debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed on Monday, 21st March, 1960.*

**Mr Speaker:** Order! Order! Hon. Akilo will have fifteen minutes more on Monday to conclude his speech.

### ADJOURNMENT

Resolved: That this House do now adjourn. (*The Minister of Finance, Dr. S. E. Imoke*).

*Adjourned accordingly at fourteen minutes to twelve o'clock noon.*



EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Monday, 21st March, 1960

The House met at Ten o'clock a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE OF  
SELECTION

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):**  
I beg to report that the Committee of Selection has met and has agreed to the following nominations to the various Committees of the House for the Session 1960-61:—

(i) **Standing Orders Committee**

Mr Speaker (*Chairman*)  
Mr Okoi Arikpo  
Mr O. O. Ita  
Mr C. A. Abangwu  
Mr G. C. Okeya.

(ii) **House Committee**

The Minister of Internal Affairs (*Chairman*)  
Chief I. I. Morphy  
Mr J. A. Agba  
Mr V. K. Onyeri  
Mr J. M. Ito  
Mr S. N. Alo  
Mr J. O. Okeh.

(iii) **Committee of Privileges**

The Minister of Town Planning (*Chairman*)  
Chief S. J. Amachree  
Mr A. G. Umoh  
Mr H. U. E. Edelduok  
Mr M. A. Idoko  
Mr E. Ita  
Rev. O. Efiang, C.B.E.  
Mr O. Oketa  
Mr M. C. Awgu.

(iv) **Public Petitions Committee**

The Minister of Health (*Chairman*)  
Mr A. J. Ekpe  
Mr M. N. Yowika  
Mr U. Enyi  
Mr D. E. Akilo  
Dr W. N. Onubogu  
Mr J. O. Okeh.

(v) **Statutory Corporations Committee**

The Minister of Commerce (*Chairman*)  
Mr J. A. Etuhube  
Mr M. U. Etuk  
Mr G. C. Okeya  
Mr N. O. Onwudiwe  
Rev. M. D. Opara  
Mr A. O. Chikwendu.

(vi) **Public Accounts Committee**

Chairman (to be nominated by Mr Speaker)  
Mr S. O. Achara  
Chief I. I. Morphy  
Mr J. W. E. Anaba  
Mr S. E. K. Iwueke  
Mr M. N. Onwuma.

**Mr Speaker:** Hon. Members, in accordance with Standing Order 80, I re-appoint Mr M. U. Etuk as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee.

ORDER OF THE DAY

Governor's Speech (Debate on the  
Address)

(FIFTH ALLOTTED DAY)

*Order read for resuming adjourned debate on Question—(15th March):—*

That this House expresses its loyal and dutiful thanks to His Excellency the Governor for His Excellency's Most Gracious Speech addressed to both Houses of the Legislature from the Throne.

*Question again proposed.*

**Mr D. E. Akilo** (Udi Division): I did end my speech on Friday with the suggestion on how to mark Standard Six examination papers. I said that apart from handing over the whole business to the West African Examinations Council, experienced Standard Six Teachers in the Region can be selected, and these teachers will be shown samples of markings from the Board that have set the papers. These teachers will be accommodated in a college where they will be carefully looked after and maintained. By this method, the marking of the papers will take the teachers only a fortnight, and by the next fortnight the results are sure to be out.



With regard to Primary Schools, there is a lack of regular inspection. The reason for this is due to shortage of Provincial Education Officers. I suggest very strongly that our schools should be inspected regularly in order to check and advise teachers on the method of teaching. Some schools have not received inspection for a period of a year or two. This will cause relaxation of work on the part of the teachers. If these schools are inspected at least twice in a year, the teachers will maintain their work at a high standard.

Coming over to the Ministry of Justice, I observe from the Speech from the Throne that the Customary Courts had discharged or disposed of some 15,000 cases. People have been watching with interest the difference between this new set-up and the old native court. I have observed myself that justice and equity are being maintained in the present set-up. But there is something I have to say and that is that these customary court judges who are mostly farmers have lost much remuneration on their present salaries. When these people were farmers they used to go to the courts, at least twice a week and do the rest of their work in the farms. Now that they are tied down by going to the courts, from Mondays to Fridays, they have not received adequate salaries as their compensation. I would suggest that the salaries of these people should be increased in order to get them to be interested in their work and be free from corruption. Their President should be on £240 per annum and their Judges on £180 per annum. In addition they should be given bicycle allowances as some of these people travel a distance of sixty miles a day to the courts.

I now come to the Provincial Administration set-up. I associate my views with those already expressed by hon. Members from Nsukka Division. I support the view that our own Provincial Headquarters should not be in Enugu. It should be outside the township of Enugu for reasons which I should like to give. The Provincial set-up has brought with it developments and amenities in the rural areas concerned. Enugu is a cosmopolitan town and being the Headquarters of the Region, it should stand apart and let the other amenities go to the rural areas around. That is the reason why we people from Udi Division are always criticised by our electorate that we

are not winning as much amenities for them as possible. It is very impossible to convince a person from Akpakwume Nze or from Ogboka—a distance of about sixty miles from Enugu—that this General Hospital in Enugu is his own share of amenity for the tax he pays. Therefore, I am asking the Government to re-consider making the cosmopolitan town of Enugu to stand apart and have its own amenities as the Headquarters of the Eastern Region, thus allowing individual towns to have their own quotas. The Government has gone half-way already. The township here has got its own District Officer, its own seat in the Federal capital and it is going to have two Members in this House next year. Here again, these amenities that go to the cosmopolitan town of Enugu are expected to be its own and not that of Udi Division. So I would like the Premier to take a serious view of this because we, the Udi people, who represent the Division are rained all sorts of abusive words that we are doing nothing for the Division. But the ordinary man in the street does not know what is happening and that Enugu usurps all the amenities intended for Udi.

The next point I have to emphasise is the Delimitation Commission. The Commission of 1958, by that I mean the Federal Delimitation Commission of 1958, caused a lot of hue and cry in Udi, especially in 306 Nkanu in Udi Division. From my own observation, it appears that the Commission did not co-operate with the people when it was taking reports. I am afraid that the Commission is going to cause another trouble in its present work. Therefore, I would say that before the Commission's report is out that the executives should be contacted who will report the activities of the areas concerned accurately; they will correct any mistakes that might arise in the report of the Commission before it is made available to the public.

I would like to say a word on the organisation of the Cabinet. We have seen that we have now got two new Ministries—the Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Economic Planning. Coming to the Ministry of Information, I would say that the time has come when the *Outlook*, the important mouthpiece of the Government, should be converted into a daily newspaper. By this it will be possible to disseminate news of the activities of the



[MR AKILO]

Government to the people inside and outside the Region. By this they will have the activities of the Government in hand. I call on the Minister of Information to look into this matter.

Again, it has come to my notice that the energetic editor of that section of the Information Service has been removed for no just reason. Perhaps the reason might have been only personal misunderstanding. I should like the Minister concerned to recall the editor who has been doing good services to the Region.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasise one thing, and I think I would not be repeating myself, and that is to bring to the notice of the Government, especially the Minister of Works and Transport, that Udi Division is made up of three distinct clans. The Government is just like a father who caters for the children, not hating one and loving the other. In the Division none of the roads in two clans or two District Councils is either being maintained by the Councils concerned or is being reimbursed by the Government. I have the Ezeagu District Council in mind. It has not got a single mile of road that is being maintained by the Government and it is not being reimbursed either. I take this opportunity to ask the Government to either take the only one important road which the District Council has been asking the Ministry to take over or endeavour to reimburse the District Council for the roads passing through the 9th-mile Corner to Owa Imezie-Umana, Obelagu-Owa Court to the greatest market in the area, Afo Ugwu. When this is done I hope the people will be satisfied and we shall thank the Minister of Transport.

**Mr Speaker:** I wish to appeal to hon. Members to do all they can to see that they contract their speeches into about fifteen or twenty minutes in view of the fact that quite a lot of hon. Members do want to speak, and I think a really useful, constructive speech, can be made in about fifteen or twenty minutes. Parliamentarians also should have it in mind to listen to other Members' speeches and try to find out what aspects of the Government Programme or policy have not been dilated upon by a former Member and then talk about them. I also wish to appeal to hon. Members to try to avoid repetition.

**Chief I. I. Morphy** (Ogoja Division): This is the last speech from the Throne from a Colonial Governor and this should be the beginning of a new thinking, change of that symbol of hate to hope, tribalistic partisan politics to real idealism and it is time for us to think as Nigerians and not as Ibos, Yorubas, Hausas, Ogojas, Efiks, Ibibios and other tribes not mentioned. Let us all put our heads together though in our different political parties even though our political parties have no fundamental differences but personalities to make a free Nigeria great so that she might play her real part in a big way in the negro world. If you go outside Nigeria many people will ask you: what do the N.C.N.C. stand for. The answer is: We stand for a Socialist Commonwealth and the same thing the Action Group stand for. Therefore one cannot really find any fundamental difference between the N.C.N.C. and the Action Group, which is my own party. I think all the parties in Nigeria today are really pursuing the same ideas and there is no reason for all of us to go about hating one another. It is now time for re-thinking.

Now coming to Nigerian Independence, much has been said about our forthcoming Independence in October this year and the hon. E. O. Eyo has quoted at length to prove that what was wanted of Nigeria was that a new Nigerian Parliament after the 1959 Federal elections would pass a motion requesting Her Majesty's Government to agree to full self-government on 1st October, 1960. The second condition was agreement by Nigerian Leaders and Britain to co-operate in the field of defence. Unanimous agreement was reached on the facilities and help which each country will render to the other after Independence. There was no agreement for a May London Conference in 1960 as announced by the British Prime Minister who visited Nigeria recently. It was not agreed that the Prime Minister and Premiers will hold another conference to finalise arrangements in London on defence. Unanimous agreements have already been reached by our leaders. The country will therefore want to know who are the people attending this May London Conference on Defence in London and not in Nigeria. The people of this country do not want another London Conference. Let the Conference be held in Lagos. The Cyprus London Conference which was recently held



in London is an eye opener to all lovers of their country. The British wanted 120 square miles for their military base while Cyprus first agreed to give thirty-four square miles and later changed to eighty square miles. This has not yet satisfied the British and their date of independence has been postponed. Hon. Members, this is a serious matter and we will all share in the blame if our Prime Minister and the three Premiers do not disclose to us right now what is the British intention with regard to square miles in Nigeria for their military base. How many square miles do our Premiers want to allow and where will they be based? I repeat we Members of this House and Nigeria as a whole have a right to know what the May Conference will discuss. All I want to say is that Ghana got her independence without having to sign away some square miles of land for military purposes and that Nigeria need not sign any pact for surrendering any portion of land to Britain for a military base.

It is a bounding duty that we know what is going to transpire in London in May. We hope the Premier will tell us because he is going to take part in the May London Conference. We want to know if they are going to agree to give square miles to Britain; how many square miles will they allow? Where will they be based and how many bases are going to be giving to them? We have a right to know these things. I hear the Premier say we will base them at Obudu. We don't at all want any military base in Ogoja. If he is assigning any square miles it should be at Bende.

Leaving the question of Independence, we talk about our Foreign Policy. What should be our Foreign Policy? For the Action Group, we said complete alignment with the Western Bloc. But what is the Federal Government's stand? They want to align us with the Arab Bloc and they are doing this because of religion and nothing else. You will find the N.P.C. leaders going very often to visit some of the leaders in that part of the world and they are going to assign us to the Arab Bloc. It is a pity that the N.C.N.C. is a party to that Federal Government. We are now warning them that they should not allow the N.P.C. to take them to where we will gain nothing at all. It will be better for us to go with the West rather than go with

the Arab Bloc. Colonel Nasser has indicated that it is in this part of Africa—Nigeria—that you find people groping in the dark and in absolute poverty looking for leadership and that it is only in him that that leadership could be found and the N.P.C. is following that way. So what we should do as parties or what the N.C.N.C. should do as a party to the Federal Government is, to do their best to see that we are not taken that way. It will not be proper for the Moslems to carry us that way. It will be better for us all to come together and agree on a good Foreign Policy; if it is complete alignment and if it is agreed by all, we stick to it. If it is non-alignment and if it is agreed by all, we stick to it rather than going to the Western Bloc.

Now, coming to the question of the United States of West Africa, we know the N.P.C. is not interested in the United States of West Africa and our leaders are doing nothing but only believing that Nigeria, because of our size, will lead Africa. We the Members of this House, and Nigeria as a whole, have an imperative right to know what any man who had bid for the Prime Ministership of this great country thinks about the office he bid for. Whether he is as loyal and willing to use the powerful resources of that office for the good of Nigeria first and Africa second. Is this man really thinking seriously about the office he holds or are his lieutenants really thinking seriously about the office they hold for the good of this country? They are not. We have to find such a Prime Minister yet but permit me to say that in Ghana such a man is found—Dr the Rt. hon. Kwame Nkrumah. This man is a great man today. He is the leader of Africa whether you like it or not; he has indicated that he is leading Africa today. Dr Kwame Nkrumah is moving in the right direction with the rising tides of African nationalism. The imperialistic forces have succeeded in not allowing Nigeria to have such a leader. It is in Dr Zik and Chief Awolowo that Nigeria can find such a leadership as that of Nkrumah. The hon. Eyo has spoken at length in this House that it is high time all of us came together—the youths of this country. (*Laughter*) Mr Speaker, these people are laughing when I am talking of a serious matter. I repeat that it is high time all of us came together... (*Hon. Members: We are here*) and find a good leader for this country. The youths of this country, it is high time,



[CHIEF MORPHY]

whether you belong to the N.C.N.C. or to the Action Group or to any of the Southern Political Parties, let us put our heads together and find a leader for this country. The country is at stake. The leaders we have in Lagos have not the interest of Nigeria at heart. The sooner we have a good Nigerian Leader, the better for all of us.

Much has been said about Parliamentary Democracy. When our Premier took over his new office last time, he told us that he was going to do his best.

**The Premier:** That is what I am doing.

**Chief Morphy:** We hope he will keep up that tradition. The Premier told us that none of our people are in jail. But you will find in Ogoja that some of our political leaders are in jail; in Calabar some of them are in jail and in Opobo area, some of them are also in jail. In Calabar and Opobo areas they have not allowed Councils to run their normal course.

Let us ask ourselves: What is this democracy? Democracy is a peaceful co-existence not only between those who are like each other but between those who are also unlike each other. Do we like each other? No. Is our Government by its acts proving that she likes the governed? No. Our Government does not like people from the poor areas and does its best to provide only for the comfort of the Ministers. If really it does think of democracy, it could have provided for all not minding who votes for it. There should be equal opportunity for all and not an individual inherently better or not better and therefore automatically given special privileges. We heard a Minister say here some time ago that he is credit worthy and that some others are not. Such a man has been given special privileges and as such could get up in this House and tell other Members that they are not credit worthy. Why should that come from a responsible Minister? What I am trying to let you know is that in a democracy you cannot give an individual such privileges that he can get up at any time and say "I am credit worthy; you are not". Let us all have true democracy in our thinking and not only paying lip service as our new Premier is doing.

Let us go back to the Provinces where you find Provincial Commissioners. Are they

allowing people free thinking and free expression of their opinion? No. What they do is that they take the Orderlies whom you have provided for them to the bush and use them to arrest any chief who is opposed to them. [Government Bench: *Who has done that?*] Hon. Onwe does that; hon. Ogon does that; hon. Akpabio does that. Three of them. If you allow these Provincial Commissioners who have no other job than to chairman the Provincial Assemblies to keep on molesting people, then that is no democracy. Equal opportunity should be given to all of us, and these Commissioners should not be given Orderlies again, because they use them in molesting people. The Provincial Commissioners are fast turning the Region into a Police State and I am asking the Premier to see to it that they do not change this Region into a real Police State. I hope the Premier is listening to me. We do not want these Provincial Commissioners to change this Region into a Police State. They have spoilt all the places in the Provinces by using their Orderlies to arrest people who have opposing views.

The next thing is about our Constitution which as the Leader of the Opposition has said needs a change. If we are to really have a Federal Constitution this country must be split into more States. We should divide the North into three States; divide the East into two States; and divide the West into two States. This will not allow any single State or Region to dominate perpetually, as the Northern Region is now doing the rest of the States. So when we are considering our Constitution we should bear it in mind that all of us want to be free and not only a group of people, feudalistic in their ways, to plant themselves in Lagos dictating to us here in the way they like.

**Mr Speaker:** The hon. Member has two minutes more.

**Chief Morphy:** Using my two minutes, I wish to comment on the parties that have come to stay in this country. We have three major political parties—Action Group, No. 1—[Government Bench: *You are naming them in an ascending order*] N.C.N.C. and N.P.C. The D.P.N.C. is yet a hanger-on. My advice is that we should stop so far. The only thing we should do is to try to find ideologies for our parties and not for us to



follow any political party because we believe that it belongs to us in such sense as: "I am an Ibo, the N.C.N.C. is my own; I am a Yoruba, the Action Group is my own; I am an Hausa, the N.P.C. is my own". I think the time has come for this country to stop running tribal parties.

This tribal hatred that is existing in this country is the creation of the British. When they found that we were going to be too strong for them they came by telling us: we must build an empire for the Hausa man; we must build another one for the Ibo man, and another for the Yoruba man. I think the time has come when we Nigerians should correct the evils of the British because they have really made us not to be Nigeria conscious but we are all tribal conscious. The time has come for us to think again. Nigeria has come to stay and Nigerians must be made to think as Nigerians.

**Mr Speaker:** Hon. Members, this may seem to be a little bit out of the way but you would grant me the indulgence to say that I do wish that Members will so prepare their speeches to be able to hold the House spell-bound during the time they speak, and unless you are able to do that, please realise that there is something defective in you as a politician or a statesman.

**Mr S. G. Ikoku** (Enyong Division): Are we at liberty to use chloroform for holding the House spell-bound?

**Mr Speaker:** If you can—the chloroform of speech.

**Mr I. U. Imeh** (Abak Division): I rise to speak in support of the Motion of Thanks for His Excellency's most Gracious Speech from the Throne. The Speech from the Throne is a masterpiece and I join others in praising His Excellency for it. It is interesting to note that arrangements are being made for the Provincial Assemblies. I wish here to register my strongest protest to the question of the Calabar Minority Council. It will be a mistake for anybody to suggest that the Annangs should be included in that Council. My people (the Annangs) are very satisfied with the present set-up of the Provincial Assemblies. We wanted a Province and this we demanded very strongly before the Minorities Commission and before the last Constitutional Conference

in London. We are happy now that we have got what we want and to say that the Annangs will join the Calabar Minority Council would mean setting the hands of the clock back. At this juncture, I would like to say on behalf of my people, that I register my very strong protest against any attempt by any section of the people to include the Annangs in the Calabar Minority Council. All that we demand is nothing more than to speed up the arrangements with regard to the Provincial Assembly. While we are waiting . . .

**Chief Morphy:** Point of Order—Standing Order 30 (2):

"A Member must confine his observations to the subject under discussion and may not introduce matter irrelevant thereto."

**Mr Speaker:** I think the hon. Member is doing that.

**Mr Imeh:** What I am trying to say is that while we are waiting for the building of the Provincial Assembly Hall, I support the Government Chief Whip when he suggested that District Council Halls should be used for the meetings of the Provincial Assemblies. Our people are very anxious to have these Halls built.

It is gratifying to note the steady progress the planning of the University of Nigeria is making, more so when it is now known that the University will be officially opened in September this year. May I make one or two suggestions here. First, I would like to ask the Government to take the lead by making it possible for most of our Regional Scholarship holders to make use of this University instead of sending them Overseas. This will save a lot of money in transport and avoid waste of time in finding accommodation overseas.

Secondly, I suggest that when awarding Diplomas and Degrees to our students who have successfully completed their Courses there such Diplomas and Degrees should be designated B.A. (Nigeria) or M.A. (Nigeria) and not B.A. (London) or M.A. (London) while the degree is obtained in Nigeria. Neither do I suggest that we should have B.A. (Nsukka) nor M.A. (Nsukka).

I have a word or two in the form of a suggestion to the Minister of Agriculture. I have to commend the work of the Produce



[MR IMEH]

Inspection Division of that Ministry. It is noted that the Produce Inspection section has done a very good work during the past year and I will finish this up with particular reference to the Marketing Board. I feel very proud of the highly efficient work done by the staff of the Produce Section. They have maintained a high quality of our produce in the world market and the pace of Nigerianisation in this Division is commendable. But my quarrel is mainly with the East Regional Marketing Board. This Board consists of laymen, not experts, one or two businessmen or Contractors who control about £18,000,000 of the Licensed Buying Agents' money. The Licensed Buying Agents are local agents for the Board but they have no representation on the Marketing Board. I suggest very strongly that the time has come when the Government should look back and see that a representative of the Licensed Buying Agents is on the Marketing Board so that they can be a watch-dog of the U.A.C. The Government has the Education Board with educationists as experts who give the Government advice. Why then should the Marketing Board not have experts in the produce trade to give them advice? The Licensed Buying Agents are experts in the trade and I suggest very strongly that their Committee should be represented on the Board.

Another point I would like to make is on the question of shipment of produce on the main land to Calabar. A lot of Licensed Buying Agents ship their produce to Port Harcourt where there is always a very big congestion, and I would suggest to the Minister in charge that he should look into the question of building an acorn shed at Oron where Licensed Buying Agents will ship their palm kernels awaiting transportation to Calabar.

The second suggestion I would like to make is about the Veterinary Division of the Ministry of Agriculture. That Division of the Ministry is not doing very good work with regards to poultry works in the outstations. I am therefore suggesting that the time has come when at least one Veterinary Assistant should be posted to each Provincial farm to work directly under the Agricultural Officer. It is very very disheartening when somebody has started poultry work then some times he might be unlucky to have an epidemic of poultry disease and then when the farmer runs to the

Agricultural Officer, he is only told to wait until medicines were brought from Abakaliki. It takes a long time, Mr Speaker, to get these medicines. That is why I am suggesting that a Veterinary Assistant should be posted to each Provincial Agricultural station, well equipped with medicines ready for any epidemic of poultry disease, so that they will always work under the direction of the Agricultural Officer.

Now talking about the Fishery Division, in paragraph 58 of the Speech from the Throne, it is stated that a Master Fisherman has been recruited only to direct the operation of our motor fishing boats. I should have thought that this expert was coming to teach us how to cure our fish and how to build fish ponds. It is very very disheartening to hear that he comes to show us how to direct the boat into the sea. That should not be the main work of the master fisherman. He should go down to the real job of showing or directing the farmers who are interested in fish ponds on how to start fish ponds, and how to cure fish.

**Mr Ikoku:** Does he know that?

**Mr Imeh:** And at this juncture, Sir, I would like to bring to the notice of the Minister of Agriculture that there is a fish pond at Ikot Ibritam in Abak Division which has been existing for many years. The chap who owns this is a private man and he has been applying to Government for financial help but he has not got any. Such is the person to be advised by the Master Fisherman. He should make recommendation to the Government to assist such a fellow so that we can have fish on a larger scale.

Another suggestion I would like to make is that the Minister of Agriculture should have what is known as "Unit Farms" wherein Standard VI pupils, I mean those who have passed their Standard VI and have not been able to go to secondary schools or get any jobs, should be engaged to be trained as farmers for at least three years. Then these chaps could be posted to senior primary schools to teach agriculture to assist the Rural Science Masters who are there. This will reduce un-employment. Those who are interested in what is known as Group Farming should automatically apply to the Government for financial help. These are my candid suggestions to the Minister of Agriculture and I would wish him to take note of them.

I would also like to commend the excellent work done by the Minister of Education by



abolishing the payment of school fees in Standard II. This shows that the whole staff of the junior primary section of our Universal Primary Education Scheme are being maintained by the Government. In short, the teachers are now Government employees. I am therefore, asking the Government to pay these teachers the Mbanefo recommendation of 15 per cent. After all, they are employed by the Government; Government pays their full salary; why should they be paid 12½ per cent whereas their counterparts are paid 15 per cent? I will go further to say that not only the teachers in the senior primary schools should be paid 15 per cent but the teachers in all the schools, the Local Government schools and Voluntary Agency schools. They should be paid 15 per cent and not 12½ per cent because most of these teachers are paid by the Government, if not all; and what is left to balance up is from what is known as "Assumed Local Contribution". This is a very small amount and a larger part of the teachers' salary is being paid by the Government. That is why I am making this suggestion very strongly that the Government should look into this matter and pay all teachers, those in Government, Local Government and Voluntary Agencies 15 per cent.

May I at this juncture note with a very grave concern the delay of the 1959 Standard VI results. The position now is that no child who has failed knows where he is going. If a child has failed the Standard VI examination he has lost the chance of repeating the class this year. I would like to remark also the dishonest action of some of the teachers of the Examination Section of the Ministry of Education every year. Last year the examination papers leaked out. Some children were caught with the Question papers in the examination rooms and they were handed over to the Police in Uyo Division and in the Ikot Ekpene Division, but up till today we have not heard anything about it, or the action taken by the Minister, because these chaps were actually caught red-handed in the examination rooms. I will be the last person to support anybody who mingles himself with such dishonest action.

I have just one suggestion to make with regard to the Ministry of Finance. We are very happy to hear that congestions at Aba, Enugu, Onitsha and Port Harcourt motor licensing stations are now removed and that they have now created about eleven licensing

divisions or stations. I am appealing to the Government that the Minister should take steps to create one licensing station at Ikot Ekpene to serve Abak and Ikot Ekpene Divisions; because if we examine closely we will see that the number of cars and lorries in Abak and Ikot Ekpene is more than the number of lorries and cars in Uyo and Enyong, Eket and Opobo.

**The Minister of Internal Affairs (Mr I. U. Akpabio):** That is all right, we agree.

**Mr Imeh:** I have to thank the Minister of Health for the good work so far done in pursuing the Rural Health Centre Programme and the Yaws Eradication campaign. This is an excellent work. I must also commend the Medical Services of the Voluntary Agencies in this Region with particular reference to the Methodist Mission, the Roman Catholic Mission and the Qua Iboe Mission. May I make this suggestion to the Minister of Health that the Ituk Mbang Mission Hospital is planning to have what is known as "Maternity Village". This project, I am told, is non-existent in the whole of Africa except in Liberia. In this "Maternity Village", pregnant women who have no beds will live there and attend the Ante-natal Clinic and when their time is due they will go to the Hospital and take beds to deliver. I am suggesting that the Minister of Health should encourage such project financially.

Now that the Ministry of Health has completed its policy of one hospital per Division, I am suggesting that the policy of one hospital per District Council area with the rural health centre programme be pursued.

I will have something to say about the Ministry of Internal Affairs with particular reference to the *Eastern Outlook* when the Budget is presented. I am suggesting to the Minister of Internal Affairs that census should be taken before the 1961 Regional Elections.

I commend the work of the Awgu Community Development Training Centre in this Region. The success of this Centre is due to the excellent work done by one Major Riggs—the former Principal of this Centre, and Mrs Riggs—in publicising the Community Development in the Eastern Region to the outside world.

May I make a suggestion to the Minister of Justice. The time has come when a Magistrate court should be built at Abak. Abak people want a Magistrate court. It is always very



[MR IMEH]

inconveniencing to find when the Magistrate's Court is in session how the Court Judges move from place to place in order to make way for the Magistrate to sit. This is not good enough. My people strongly demand that a Magistrate's court be built at Abak.

Now, a word or two for the Minister of Local Government. May I suggest that the Minister of Local Government should lift the ban on 15s ceiling rate. I make this statement with all sense of responsibility. There are certain councils which are prepared to levy high rate in order to meet capital works. This would help several councils, no doubt, as this ceiling rate does not give them the scope to execute their capital works which are very essential.

It is gratifying to note the statement of His Excellency as contained in paragraph 79 of His Speech from the Throne. May I refer to line 2 of the said paragraph and with your permission quote as follows—

“... There is now a field strength of thirteen Executive Officers (Accounts) whose sole task is to check treasuries, reveal irregularities, help treasurers to keep their accounts up to date . . .”

I wish to say that the time has now come when these Executive Officers (Accounts) should scrutinise strictly the accounts of most of the District Councils and even the old County Councils that have not been able to balance their books. There are certain District Councils which have not been able to balance their books for upwards of two to three months and even more. The worst of it all is that Secretary/Treasurers visit places like the Aba or Onitsha market and they prepare fictitious vouchers and claim money. They take their cars out for a pleasure trip and come back to claim from the Council that they have done this or that. This is very very bad. I wish that the Executive Officers (Accounts) should strictly scrutinise the books of these people and bring those concerned to book. The Minister of Local Government should pursue this “son of the soil” question. I made this statement here last year but unfortunately some of the treasurers who are “sons of the soil” are still there and they are the cause of this trouble. I said in my speech that we in Abak will like to have an Ibo Treasurer, or Secretary, or anybody from Ogoja or from

the Ijaw area and transfer our “sons of the soil” to other places.

There is one thing I would like to say about the Ministry of Works. My Division feels very sad about the neglect of roads and I want to refer to the Abak-Uyo Road, the contract for which was advertised and given out but unfortunately, this is still not started. I would also like to refer to the delay in the tarring of the road between Abak-Ekparakwa-Opobo and also Aba-Utu Etim Ekpo-Abak Road. We pay tax and we want to enjoy the benefit of our tax.

I would also like to say a word about the rural water supply. The old wells constructed some time ago are now very bad. They went bad and we have no water. We want these wells to be repaired because if the wells are not repaired the people in the rural area who get water from them will be stranded. This is one of the immediate needs of the people and having water is one of the immediate benefits derived from the Government. I am making this as a very strong and last suggestion that such cases should be given serious consideration.

**Mr M. U. Etuk** (Uyo Division): I rise to support the Motion: That this House expresses its loyal and dutiful thanks to His Excellency the Governor for His Excellency's Most Gracious Speech addressed to both Houses of the Legislature from the Throne.

The Speech from the Throne is one of the best so far. It may be likened to a flower which the Government tree of the Eastern Region produced before it bore fruit. My simile is borne out by the appointment of Mr F. O. Ihenacho as the Chairman of the Public Service Commission. There can be no better choice, and the Government deserves congratulations. We knew this man and his work as the Commissioner for Eastern Nigeria in the United Kingdom and I can describe him as a square peg in a square hole.

Many hon. Members have spoken with regard to paragraph 5 of the Speech from the Throne. I would like to refer to the last sentence and with your permission, I quote:

“In particular, the Ministry will pay special attention to agricultural production and industrial projects, which will directly increase productivity and the earning capacity of the people”.



That policy, if carried through, will bring marked change in the lives of the people of this Region. I will take Industries first. Maybe the Government has overlooked it, but there is a great deposit of limestone at a place twenty-five miles from Calabar, on the Calabar-Mamfe Road. It is considered to be grade I by experts. It towers like a mountain many feet above the earth surface and is seventy feet deep under the earth whereas limestone deposit at Nkalagu is only seventeen feet deep. I would suggest that a new cement industry should be started there. Electricity is to be generated next door by the Qua Fall. N.E.M.C.O. for example, should cease importing cement from Germany and start producing cement from our local material. I strongly suggest that Government together with N.E.M.C.O. and any foreign investor who is interested in our industrial development should be guided to establish a cement factory at that place, where many people will get employment; and from there it would be cheaper to send cement to Lagos than it would be from Nkalagu to Port Harcourt.

I wish to suggest to the Minister of Economic Planning (*Hon. Members: Not yet appointed*) that a Geological touring van be sent round the Region with samples of various types of minerals and rocks etc., informing the people to take note and if they saw any of the type of minerals in their farms, forests, streams, etc., to report to the District Officer for investigation. I still believe there are lots of minerals in the Region not yet discovered.

With regard to the agricultural production, we have been trying in this House to stress that farmers should be paid more for their produce. I am so glad that the Government has put it down as one of its policies to do this and I hope it will bear fruit. This time I have in mind the farmers who produce palm oil and palm kernel. They work so hard but they get too little. In order to raise the standard of living of these farmers, the Marketing Board and the Government should consider raising the prices of palm oil and palm kernel this year.

Furthermore, the time has now come for Government to venture out to help the farmers to produce more. Not only showing the use of new implements, for we have had enough of laboratory experiments, but we should also try them out with the farmers in the field to get good results. The Government should

acquire large areas of land and set up farms so that the farmers could be given a new conception of being a farmer and help to produce more edible food. Being a farmer does not consist only of planting a few heads of yams and coco-yams. These farmers should be settled on the land with good sums of money to help them. This would help to check our manpower or labourers going out to Fernando Po. A new method of farming should be taught to our people. Year after year the farmers set about planting cocoa yams and cassava and after the short planting period stay throughout the rest of the year doing nothing. They should be given subsidy to run these farms. Economic development is a necessity but it should be planned to cover the whole Region.

Furthermore, I am strongly convinced that party politics without absolute moral standards is actually ruining this country in a way. I have in mind the Provincial Commissioners and the Provincial Assemblies. If, as we believe, the Provincial Assembly is set up to enhance the development of each province and if this Assembly is to be of any real value to the people it should be given or granted executive powers to deal with the peculiar problems of its area of authority. Otherwise, it is a waste of money, and as it is at present, my experience is that most of these Provincial Commissioners do a lot of indiscrete acts that tend to discredit the Government of the Eastern Region. By that I mean they go out obviously and purely on party organisations, instead of representing the interests of the people to the Government. They were sent out there as Government's representatives but in most cases they rightly earn the name of party organising secretaries by acting purely on party basis and neglecting the needs of the people. That is why I said that Party Politics without absolute moral standards is a ruin to the Region. What these Commissioners are doing is not what they were appointed for. I submit that the interest of the people or the interest of good government of the people should come first, for these Commissioners were meant to be Government representatives.

In the matter of development, since these headquarters are to be developed as headquarters of provinces, I think in many cases where it is possible, these centres should be supplied with electricity to help speed up development.



[MR ETUK]

I come now to Education. Thirteen paragraphs are devoted in the Governor's Speech to describe the praise-worthy activities of this Ministry during the year under review, but, with the repeated delays and cancellations of Standard VI examination results, it shows that the machinery for examinations in this Ministry needs to be overhauled. Although it has been known throughout the ages that man is the only creature that produces excuses, manufactures excuses—Adam and Eve started it in the Garden of Eden—I think there will be no excuse for the Minister of Education for the delay of these Standard VI results. When we consider that there are vast armies of Education Officers, Managers, Headmasters and Senior Teachers from Government and Voluntary Agencies, who can be given model answers and asked to correct these papers in a short time, there can be no excuse for the Minister of Education. As a matter of security and to prevent leakage in the future, I would venture to suggest to the Minister that setting, printing and distribution of question papers should not be handled by persons other than Education Officers assisted by their Executive Officers and dependable Managers . . . (*Interruptions: Not Managers who take bribe*). I repeat the word "dependable", not all Managers. If Managers and Executive Officers and Education Officers take bribe, where are we? (*Several hon. Members: We are nowhere*). In that connection, I would go further to say that the sealed envelopes containing question papers should not reach the supervisors until the eve of the examination day. If the papers get to their hands before that day as it rumoured in the last examination, some headmasters will give them to the pupils in their own schools and work out the answers so that they might have 100 per cent pass. So the question papers should not reach the supervisors until the eve of the examination day and the Minister should insist that the seal must be broken before the candidates in the examination room. These are my suggestions.

We do not know what consideration the Minister of Education is going to give those pupils who may not be able to obtain entry into schools due to this delay in releasing the results of this year's examination.

With your permission, I would read paragraph 36 of the Speech:

"The Ministry of Education has been under great pressure to approve the opening of new secondary schools. The need for more secondary schools, particularly in certain divisions that have none or an inadequate number, is undoubted. No less than 186 applications for new schools were received and twenty-seven of these were approved in principle by the Ministry".

With the opening of the University of Nigeria at Nsukka, I think the pressure will be trippled because we must have secondary schools to feed our University. Out of 186 only twenty-seven were approved in principle; I think we shall have to consider closing this gap. Demand for secondary schools will continue and I think it is a good demand. At the present moment Standard VI is almost valueless. It is only to assure parents that they have gone through the primary stage of education for their children. You cannot get a job with Standard VI qualification; only those who have secondary school education can obtain Government or commercial jobs after passing their school certificate examination. So the demand for secondary schools will continue and the sad thing is that in this paragraph to which I have referred, nothing is mentioned about commercial schools and we do not know what is the Government policy in that particular arm of education at the moment.

**The Minister of Education (Mr G. E. Okeke):** A commercial school is a secondary school; go and read your Education Law.

**Mr Etuk:** My next observation comes from the paragraph on Local Government. Paragraphs 75 of the Speech, and with your permission, I quote the relevant portion that I have in mind:

"The appointment of chiefs and natural rulers as *ex officio* members of Councils has proceeded rather slowly . . ."

but I would say very very slowly

"mainly on account of its connection with the classification and selection of chiefs and disputes arising therefrom".

What I have in mind is the declared policy of Government of following the ideals of true democracy but in practice Government has not adhered to this policy. I have in mind the uneven appointment of these natural rulers to councils and the case in point is Iman Rural



District Council where we have the chiefs and these natural rulers already selected, classified and recognised by the Government and they have not been appointed to the Council. We wish to know why. If this Government is to follow the policy, I think it is high time that we appointed these chiefs into the Council as is laid down in Government's policy.

A few days ago, a Member speaking in this House about the Ministry of Local Government was very very hot; in fact, he spoke so passionately and he was obliged to ask the Minister of Local Government: "Have you conscience? I thought you were a Christian". That in fact was an indirect support to M.R.A. and what I feel morally, although he was not accepting it openly. Why I bring this question is because if you refuse to go with moral there will come a time that you want it. The hon. Gentleman appealed for moral. Each time I say something about Moral Rearmament in this House many people say M.R.A., M.R.A., but you cannot do without moral. To me moral-mindedness or M.R.A., which ever way you like to put it, is practical christianity.

**Hon. Members:** No.

**Mr Etuk:** An appeal has gone out from this House during this sitting for the youths of this country, to come forth and save the country. Speaking on moral issue again, the youths cannot save this country now in the old way and as we used to do in the Zikist Movement. Then, the youths were animated with bitterness, jealousy, hatred and a desire to overthrow the Government of the day, i.e. the Imperialists. Today, we need the youths who will sing a different tune, youths with inspiration for what is right to go forward with vision and help clean up the Region from top to bottom and themselves too; then they will be able to save the country. If we go on as at present hating each other, speaking against each other, it would not pay us. That is why I say we cannot go without moral. All the youths have got to draw inspiration with vision for what is right; then as Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe said in his Address, we shall be able to form a Government of the people that will create a hate-free, greed-free country to be peopled by free men and women.

**Mr S. E. K. Iwueke** (Okigwi Division): I rise to support the Motion. It is a matter for gratification that this year's Speech from the

Throne has with it many historic and spectacular features as the last Speech from the Throne in a dependent Nigeria.

I must join forces with the previous speakers who have given showers of praises to our national leaders. These leaders deserve our greatest tribute for having successfully carried this country far through constitutional means. Within the span of a life-time of half a century, we have travelled a long way from the dark days of die-hard colonialism to this year of rejoicing when our flag of Independence will be hoisted on 1st October. The journey has been short, though the road has not been without thorns. Nevertheless, considering our complexities, it is indeed a proud reflection that we have made it in such a record time through the non-beatable efforts of no less a personality than Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe. It is a matter of regret that the people of Nigeria have not demonstrated their gratitude to this great international son of Africa, without whom our National consciousness and rapid political awakening could not have been possible today. I believe we are all one in this House in crediting him this achievement. The emergence of this country into nationhood in a matter of months now, is the realisation of his dream and a fulfilment of his life's mission. To keep him at the side at the time when the British Government will be handing over the long-looked-for power to manage our own affairs, will amount to a height of natural ingratitude.

*A challenge to our Independence.*—Freedom will certainly give us the long cherished opportunity to prove our mettle as a people; but opportunity involves corresponding responsibilities. Our first challenge therefore is to concentrate on the onerous task of nation-building, by liquidating poverty and increasing productivity. We must rapidly extirpate the colonial mentality of laziness and irresponsibility on our jobs, for there will be no longer the "white man's jobs". There should therefore be greater productivity in freedom than in political servitude. This period would require the greatest amount of sacrifice, devotion to duty and honest leadership and followership. We must begin to detest, abhor, and regard as *infra dig* such practices as bribery, corruption and nepotism.

*Taking pride in things Our Own.*—Every great nation is identified by its own culture



[MR IWUEKE]

and customs, and it will be ridiculous of us, if we exert every ounce of energy to win political self-determination while culturally and otherwise we look across the Atlantic in the erroneous belief that all that is good comes only from abroad. Nigeria must be distinguished by her own culture and good tradition, when in a matter of months now we shall take our place in the community of nation.

I have to congratulate the hon. Premier in his new appointment and his able Ministers severally and collectively for the past services they have rendered creditably and for the progressive scheme they have planned so wisely.

*Ministry of Agriculture.*—All over the country there is substantial evidence of progress in both political and educational status of the people. In the big towns are beautiful buildings, miniature skyscrapers and gigantic chain stores of imported goods. But in the shadow of these modern physical structures are gaunt figures of ragged men, women and children who cannot get enough to eat.

A comparable situation, though less spectacular, yet rather deplorable and disheartening exists in the countryside where mass starvation is the way of life. And why is this the case? It is because farming, the most important occupation in the world, has not been made to offer a good and decent life in Nigeria. Our farmers are unable to compete with the civil servants, industrial workers, businessmen and so forth, for bare necessities of life. The resultant effect is migration from the country into urban areas, and the consequent neglect and decadence of agriculture. This is a problem that needs an urgent attention. What we really need to ease this problem is a re-organisation of our agriculture co-operatively and objectively. We have made a colossal success in the improvement of our export crops such as cocoa, cotton, rubber, etc. We must now focus new trails in the scientific study and improvement of our domestic crops upon which the life of the entire population rests. The Ministry of Agriculture must for these reasons formulate and follow a dynamic policy of agriculture—a policy that will have as its central core the development and improvement of our agricultural resources; not just a section but all aspects of agriculture in the country.

The question of unemployment has got to the zenith. There is a lot of unemployment in this Region. The problem is a large one and it is very important that something should be done to alleviate the complexities (if only the government departments could expand public works in their areas by way of loan to Local Government Councils).

Coming to the Ministry of Justice, it is indeed gratifying that for the first time ever, a Nigerian is appointed the Chief Justice of the Eastern Region. As we clamber to our freedom with everyday that passes, there emerge certain situations which tend to check the wheels of progress. I have in mind the growing incidence of crime wave in the country today. The accelerating rate at which the crimes are rising in this Region is alarming. How many cases of armed burglary that end just on the pale of mere investigation! Recently, at Onitsha, a passenger lorry was attacked and the passengers beaten and their properties stolen. The driver was shot. This is just an instance. "Your life or your property" is the question often put to a victim in the teeth of a gun point. Like all other persons, policemen are human beings. But we must admit that the regularity with which some of these harrowing incidents occur tantamounts to an open challenge which our Government and men in khaki should accept at once. On that score, we would seriously suggest the enlargement and proper training of our C.I.D. men, the equipment of the policemen on guards with arms and the sentencing to life jail these terrorists when caught. If no provision of such a penalty has been enacted, a Bill should be introduced to that effect.

If ever our Customary Courts should be expected to live up to expectation, the salaries of these judges should be reviewed. No decent and honest man with family can afford to live on £60 per annum. Government should therefore endeavour to raise these people's salaries and in return demand from them a dispensation of justice and equity.

A lot of congratulations to the Minister of Education for past achievements and future concrete proposals. It is only a fettered mind and a sophisticated character that will not be appreciative of what this Ministry has done so far. The idea of limiting the fee-free scheme to junior primary alone at present is most



ideal. The needs of our educational system as we approach Independence are the subject of frequent and extensive surveys. Our present educational policy certainly leaves much to be desired. Our educational programme should be made to embrace in its syllabus the people's traditions and culture, the history of the nation and its people. We would like to see an educational system that will have as its basic concept the teaching of more things about Nigeria and the adaptation of scientific subjects to the needs of West Africa, a system which does not degrade physical work such as farming, Engineering, etc.

We would like the Minister of Education to make a statement on the causes of the delay of the release of Standard VI Examination Results up to this time. Whatever his reasons, he should realise that much harm has been done so far to both the scholars expecting the results and the schools.

Just a few remarks of the social manace now prevailing throughout the rural areas. Despite public protests, quack doctors and quack medicine sellers continue to administer injections and hawk their wares thereby spreading their agencies of death. Several people, particularly pregnant women have died from the hands of these quacks. More often than not, the attention of the Ministry of Health has been drawn to the great damage being done to the health of the people. Judging from the business being done by these quacks, it would appear that our appeals are not bearing fruits. Hundreds of pounds continue to change hands. A few charlatans continue to wax rich due to inadequate medical facilities. The Ministries of Health and of Social Welfare should come together and devise a means of fighting this social evil.

*Sitting suspended at 12 noon.*

*Sitting resumed at 12.30 p.m.*

**Mr Iwueke:** I just want to make a remark on the opening up of the Mbano Rural Hospital. The delay in the opening up of the Mbano Rural Hospital in my Division, after the buildings have been finished since two years now, has been a matter of great concern to us

all. This has no precedence anywhere in the country. There have been of course foolish and protracted disputes among the councillors in the Mbano District Council on who should run the hospital. However, the majority of the councillors took a decision against the wishes of the minority. Naturally, in circumstances such as this, one cannot expect a 100 per cent unanimous opinion of the people, ever before useful and sensible decisions are given. Bearing in mind the religious and political neutrality of medical institutions, and the problem of staff recruitment in hospitals, one would have expected the Minister of Health to take a bold decision and take advantage of the opportunity offered by Voluntary Agency to run the hospital for the people, majority decision notwithstanding. Instead of this, the matter was kept in suspense on the pretention that the people have not unanimously taken a decision to hand over the management to a Voluntary Agency; thus leaving the people to suffer from lack of medical facilities. I make no apology whatever for speaking on such a vital matter as there are many disturbed minds amongst the people of my constituency. I am not sure of many things, but I am sure that if the Minister of Health had taken the interest of the suffering masses at Mbano first, he would have decided a long time now to hand over the hospital (a non-profit making but charitable institution) to one Voluntary Agency and all would have been well with both parties in no time. We now hear, that Government has taken a decision to withdraw its £20,000 grant for this hospital and allow a Voluntary Agency to run the hospital. What relief has this brought to the people? Who suffers in this matter—the Voluntary Agency, the councillors or the mass of poor tax-payers who look on us for help? We cannot shut our eyes to circumstances which have arisen and to what we see in the present situation which entitles us to ask how far the Government is prepared to comprehend. I call on the Government to reconsider its decision in this matter and place a premium on the greatest need for the greatest number of the people.

Turning to the Ministry of Works, I want to draw the attention of the Minister to the observance and enforcement of certain provisions of Road Traffic Ordinance particularly as they concern commercial drivers. I am taking this opportunity to raise the matter



[MR IWUEKE]

because of the heavy losses of lives as the result of accidents now rampant on our roads. The standard of driving and the demeanour of average commercial and taxi drivers leave much to be desired. A lot of lives are destroyed everyday because of road accidents. The human sufferings caused by these accidents cannot of course, be measured but they are also economic, potential and social losses to the country. Why should our Government not take very drastic measure to curb the height of these accidental death rolls? It is true that the number of vehicles on roads has increased, but it does not necessarily follow that any given increase must be accompanied by an equal increase in deaths. Accidents just do not happen—they are mainly human in their causes. As such they are capable of reduction by human actions. I would like to mention in brief some of the principal causes of these accidents, and later on suggest some possible remedies. The causes are:—

1. Poor condition of our roads.
2. Recklessness of commercial and taxi drivers. At present the law is being flouted, lorry drivers purposely obstruct roads for private cars, refuse to be overtaken, speed recklessly with cars loaded, refuse to dim their headlights at nights on the approach of other cars, etc.
3. Defective vehicles moving on roads.
4. Day and night traffic. (Many lorry drivers drive too long a stretch and for too many hours per day and night). The result is that they may be half asleep when trouble does happen and it is too late.

I suggest the following corresponding suggestions in order to minimise the number of accidents occurring on our roads:—

1. More rigid and comprehensive drivers examinations.
2. Removal of death traps along our roads (e.g., Awgu—Okigwi road).
3. Establishment of Drivers Schools under proper control and supervision.
4. The withdrawal of licences from persistent traffic offenders.
5. Increased penalties for dangerous and careless driving.

6. Allowing responsible men and women, other than Public Officers to report effectively cases of reckless driving to the police whenever noticed without prejudice.

In most cases the drivers are cautious where they are aware of the existence of policemen but where they are not aware of the existence of policemen nearby, they can go to any length. If responsible men other than public officers are given the privilege of reporting cases effectively to the police, that will go a long way to check recklessness.

- (7) Reporting policemen who knowingly allow traffic offenders and defective vehicles to travel unreported.
- (8) Establishment of more Police patrols.
- (9) Formation of road safety committees in different Council areas.

As time is against me, I will devote my time to speak on the conditions of our roads when the Budget time comes.

Before concluding, I just want to make a small remark, and that is on the standard of our debate here. I always believe that everything one should do must be done as an hon. Member. I must take a little exception on the way the hon. Member for Enyong Division presented his case in this House the other day. Nobody has the monopoly of hard language or of using force. I am not going to degenerate to that level of attacking. However, I feel he would have presented his case in a more genuine and cautious manner and there was no need for attacking any Minister. All I am saying is that one can project his feelings without disturbing the character of any Minister. I definitely take objection to that. I do not need to remind the Members opposite of the things that constitute the qualities of a gentleman.

**Mr Speaker:** I do not think the hon. Member should be unduly worried because Mr Speaker is here to protect every hon. Member.

**Mr S. T. Akpan** (Eket Division): I rise in support of the Motion. In my observations, I shall confine myself to four of the major fields covered in His Excellency's Speech from the Throne and those are: Local Government, Education, Provincial Administration and Parliamentary Democracy.



Starting with Local Government, it is gratifying to note the continued interest that the Government is showing in the conduct of Local Government affairs. In the Speech emphasis is laid on the training of Local Government staff, in order to improve the efficiency of the Councils. This is sound. But experience has shown in some Councils that Secretaries often find it difficult—extremely difficult, to get the Councillors to co-operate particularly in matters of policy and finance for the effective running of the Council. But this unfortunate situation arises because the Secretary's advice is at times "Greek" to the Councillors. Therefore, I submit that the Government should organise seminars at different centres of the Region for the Councillors in order to help them to know the policy of Government on Local Government and to give them education on the practice of Local Government system. It is not enough to call the Chairmen of District Councils to Awgu for training, for in some Councils some of the Chairmen are at daggers-drawn with the Councillors and as such they cannot project their knowledge into the Council because most of the Councillors refuse to follow them. So it is better to try and get as many of these Councillors to seminars to offer them the opportunity of knowing what is required of them.

Another point is that it appears the present controlling activities of the Government seem to converge to what I may call "centralisation". I do not think that is proper. It is true this Government abrogated the 1949 Eastern Region Local Government Law in order to make sure that the Councils are run on proper lines but I think the Councils should have known their duty now and that the Government should try to restore to them particularly in the field of finance, complete autonomy in order to enable them to learn by their mistakes and to progress.

Turning to Education, much has been said. I should say the Government has made much ado about this U.P.E. rightly or wrongly on the floor of this House. I say "rightly" because they have managed to free junior primary from fees but "wrongly" in that up till the moment the Government is unable to chart its course to the terminus and I submit

that until the Government of this Eastern Region exempt all the classes of the primary school from paying school fees it should realise that it has not redeemed its election pledge to the electorate of this Region. But I am aware that the Government is unpredictable and we have come to a new year which holds out no much hope that the Government will attempt to free standard three against next year. So it is better to offer some significant advice to the Government. The Government should provide considerable relief by reducing substantially school fees in the fee-paying classes of the primary schools.

My second point is that the Minister of Education had put a ceiling on the number of streams that the schools should take at the beginning of the year in infant one. The result of this ceiling is that so many of the children who would have had the opportunity of benefiting by the U.P.E. Scheme are often denied that right, and again by the following year when the child should return to seek admission, in some areas, he is declared over-aged. So it is better that the Minister should remove this ceiling and allow the schools to expand to provide accommodation for as many children in an area as are willing to attend school. I know that some of my hon. Friends are not serious on this. But I must emphasise that the ceiling which the Minister has allowed on the number of streams in the primary schools is obnoxious and should be scrapped.

On Education still, this very Minister has not seen it fit to go into the criticisms that are often levelled on the floor of this House on his Ministry. I quite remember that last year, on the floor of this House we advised the Minister to go into the question of the enormous charges in secondary schools; but till now nothing has been done, and these secondary schools are charging any amount of fees as they like. I can tell you that in some secondary schools as much as £6 per term is charged for equipment, in addition to the enormous school fees which they take; and I may say that the Minister as a Proprietor of a secondary school is not interested because his own school might be affected. That is why his friends are trying to protect him . . .

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):**  
Point of Order. Standing Order 30 (7).



**Mr Speaker:** I think I quite agree with the Minister of Finance.

**Mr Akpan:** The Minister of Education has come out with a statement that the Government will not allow the opening of more secondary schools. What opportunities are we giving to thousands of school leavers to acquire higher education? In some of the secondary schools it is extremely difficult for children seeking admission to find admission. I think we have come to a stage when the Government should pay particular attention to the development of secondary education. After all, we are talking everyday, making much noise about the vaunted University at Nsukka. How many children will attend the University at Nsukka if they do not acquire secondary education? I do not think it is proper at this time for that regulation to be promulgated. The Minister should sympathise with the people and try to encourage the development of secondary education by allowing those who have the means to provide secondary education, according to Government standards to do so. There are some people who have the means and who are really sincere and ambitious to do so but are denied that help. I am asking the Minister to pay attention to the development of secondary education in the Region.

Another thing is that the Voluntary Agencies are ready to co-operate with the Minister of Education in providing technical education; but some of them have not the adequate encouragement from the Government. I think our educational system has developed beyond the point of children just acquiring the knowledge of reading, writing and doing arithmetic. It is one of the problems now facing the Government of the Eastern Region to find jobs for the school leavers in order that they will be able to maintain themselves. Not all will have the privilege of going to secondary schools. They can become technicians in their small fields. At the moment the Government has only one Technical Institute to serve the Region. I would have thought that the Government would also think of developing technical education by trying progressively to establish technical schools in each of the Divisional areas in the Eastern Region, or in what they now call the Provinces. If the Government cannot shoulder this responsibility, then I think it would be better for us if substantial grants were made to the Voluntary Agencies who would like to develop technical education.

And so I would suggest to the Minister of Education that he should think of calling upon Voluntary Agencies who would like to assist the Government in developing technical education to come forward and present their plans to the Ministry to see if they are worthy of Government support.

Now, I come to the question of Provincial Administration. At the moment I think Provincial Administration was introduced in the Eastern Region to provide work for a number of people who probably would not have had the chance of becoming Ministers in this Region. So on this Provincial Administration you will see that attempts are being made only to settle the Commissioners and the Provincial Secretaries and probably to drag out some of the Provincial Members to congregate at a certain place to deliberate, but no attempt has yet been made to establish Government Departments in these different Provincial Headquarters. Rather what you find is that in a Department like Agriculture the Minister is giving the Eastern Region a compass, circumscribing the Region into circles; no more Departments but circles! I should have thought that a Province (the so-called Province) should be self-contained, having all the Government Departments in that Province and having a Headquarters for all the Departments. But that is not the case. I will illustrate what I mean. In my own case, we are supposed to have a Provincial Headquarters at Uyo but we have no Headquarters for other Government Departments in Uyo. It is only for the Commissioner to live there and the Provincial Secretary who was already there, but other Government Departments will still continue where they are. Take for example, the Ministry of Agriculture. When we had the former Calabar Province, we had a Provincial Farm at Abak that served the whole of Calabar Province. But now that the former Calabar Province has been split into these pocket Provinces the Provincial Farm still remains at Abak. And then what the Government does is to form a circle (our Province becomes a circle) where an Agricultural Officer will be there with one or two clerks, and that's the end of it. I feel that is a wrong policy. If Provincial Administration has come to stay each Province should have Provincial Headquarters for each of the Government Departments to serve the Province.



That is very necessary because it means a development of the rural areas.

Now, I come to the question of Parliamentary democracy. Many of our people do not seem to be thinking seriously on this issue. We laugh here in this House, not knowing that our house is burning. After reading paragraph 98 of the Speech from the Throne which lucidly deals with the matter and recalling the recent public speeches of the new Premier of the Region I am constrained to think that the Premier, a one-time Saul, has become Paul. It is for him to prove me wrong. Yet my heart mellowed in sympathy, when I saw some of my hon. Friends opposite taking off their caps for the Member for Calabar when he propounded a philosophy on tribalism. It appears we as politicians are not trying to grapple with the realities that are going to confront us after Independence. It is good to talk of the ideals of democracy and I wonder whether we are really serious in carrying out the ideals of this democracy. What are some of the ideals that we should pay attention to? I feel that the ideals of democracy as contained in the Speech should include a high sense of justice and fair-play, right to self-determination, respect for public opinion and regard for conventions. At this juncture I feel obliged to pay tribute to our veteran politician, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe. He has taught us one lesson which I hold very dear and that is this: that blood-shed is not the only political weapon to use in fighting for a right or for a cause in a democracy. That stands to his eternal credit. The question is this: shall we be prepared after Independence to learn that lesson? Now, a number of questions emerge in my mind on this issue. When people begin to think that self-determination means tribalism I do not know whether they really understand what they mean. The position is that we have come to a stage in our political history when we must think realistically.

What is our trouble at the moment? Our main trouble is the federal structure that we have in this country today. And this federal structure was not of our own design; it was an imperialistic design which is standing in our way. What is facing us at the moment, Sir, is that after independence the nationalists should meet and carve out a federal structure that will answer our aspirations. That calls for a

new constitution. There is no use, Sir, talking about unity, when we do not know how to achieve that unity. The major political parties in this country had agreed on unity in diversity. But what do you find, Sir? Some of our politicians believe that they can be advocating for one thing in one breath and opposing the same thing in another breath. (*Interruptions: You are one. Give an example*). If I am to give an example, it is this: the country is to unite on the basis of diversity. If a section of the country is asserting its God-given right, self determination, it is not tribalism. At the moment, in the East, there is no tribalism (*An hon. Member: Are you sure?*) There is no tribalism because if you come to my own village you find the Ibo people living in my own compound. There is no trouble. We eat and drink together. It is only these politicians opposite who create the trouble. The point is this, Sir, when my people say that they want to have their own Government on their own soil, then the other people say "no, you must not have it". What right have they to delegate that authority to themselves? Shall we floor ourselves at the feet of the major tribe in order to show that there is no tribalism? From what my hon. Friend, Professor Eyo Ita, Member for Calabar Province said, it is clearly known that he has out-lived his usefulness in Calabar Province and so he can sing any tune to achieve one thing or the other. But Sir, in actual fact, there is no enmity between the tribal groups in the Eastern Region. The N.C.N.C. is supporting the Mid-West for a state and the Mid-West is 1.2 million and we in Calabar Province alone constitute 1.5 million. They are supporting the Mid-West.

They are talking of the Action Group. The Action Group in the West supports the Mid-West people to have their own state but here we find that these people delegate to themselves the power and right to rule us. And, Sir, all of them are now going about with a funny type of mentality. It is the mentality of the ruling class.

**The Minister of Finance:** On point of Order, Standing Order 30 (5).

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member has five minutes within which to marshal his most essential points.



**Mr Akpan:** My point, Sir, is that we should not support those who think that a people's genuine self-determination which is one of the ideals of parliamentary democracy, constitutes tribalism. My next point, Sir, is that in talking of parliamentary democracy, shall we in the East be prepared to bow to public opinion? How is public opinion ascertained in a democracy? By election! I am calling upon the Premier for whom we have high regard to think twice so that he may not allow the old mistake to repeat itself. The mistake is this: That there are some people in his group who always mislead the leader. And he should not allow himself to be misled. I would have challenged him to say if he does not believe that the next problem that faces this country is the carving out of a real federal structure that will suit our aspiration.

On public opinion, in my own area they know that in the last Federal election, against what the Member for Abak claimed to be speaking for the Annang people, the Annang people told the country by their votes that they belonged and they eternally belong to Calabar-Efik-Annang speaking area. And now to say that the Annang people say that they are unwilling to join the Minority Council is much farther from the truth. If what my hon. Friend said were true, it means the wheel of democracy has not been properly applied, because for the people here in Enugu or a handful of people here, elected four years ago, to come and talk of one thing here without constitutionally ascertaining the wishes of the people . . .

**The Minister of Internal Affairs (Mr I. U. Akpabio):** He knows he is talking nonsense.

**Mr Akpan:** Ah! He should come home and talk sense. We shall beat treachery out of his head.

In my division, the Minister promised that he was going to see to the question of roads but up till now nothing has been done. Eket roads have not been tarred but every promise has been made. I am not begging them to come and tar the roads. I am asking them to tar the roads because my people are paying tax and if they refuse to tar the roads we will refuse to pay tax and we don't care. They can even go to hell about it.

**Mr Speaker:** I am afraid the hon. Member is using unparliamentary language and it is even unfortunate that he has exceeded his time.

**Mr G. I. Oko, M.B.E. (Awgu Division):** I rise to support the Motion on the Governor's Gracious Speech from the Throne. In doing so, I have the following observations to make.

*Registration of appreciation:* I have to register my hearty appreciation to this Government for the Region-wide scheme of developments already undertaken since the last twelve months, the most important of which is the coming to reality of the establishment of the University of Nigeria at Nsukka. No achievement is greater than this. The extension of fee-free classes to Standard II by the Minister of Education, the tarring of various roads, construction of bridges and the application of the much-needed water scheme to certain areas in the rural communities of the Region by the Ministry of Works are also worthy of praise.

The building and equipping of new hospitals and health centres by the Ministry of Health; the wide Regional and National activities of the Ministries of Information and Commerce within the record time of twelve months; the establishment of new District Councils and the extensive tours of the Region by the Minister of Local Government are also encouraging. Creation and coming into being of the Regional House of Chiefs by the Minister of State responsible for Chieftaincy and other Ministers not excluded; these, in fact, have left a very good mark of impression on the Government. The wide Regional activities of this Government towards the social and economic development of this Region have reduced the critical phase of the Opposition in this House that there is hardly a point for the Opposition to criticise.

While praising the Government for its past efforts I must not forget to discharge my entrusted duty by my constituency by making the following remarks:—

*National Independence and its due celebrations:* The laxity of our young men and women in their day-to-day life in this Region is deplorable at present and a check to this demoralising



tendency is necessary and timely. Government should do something to wake them up. Independence does not give the people any licence to become lazy, complacent and lawless. Nigeria is attaining her Independence at a period when the world's ills are also reaching their culminating point. Such is the explosive nature of these international tensions and disorders that, if we do not stay by the merciful hand of God things may well lead to the ruin of mankind. Because of this accident of history Nigeria will have the opportunity to help fight and destroy these evils. In doing so, she can reach a position of pre-eminence not only in the African Continent, but also in the world at large. To reach her true destiny among the nations of the globe, Nigeria will need the right motivating force to encourage and sustain her in the difficult road ahead after Independence. She will have to call upon all her spiritual reserves to fight against the subversive ideologies that are now gearing with each other against the soul of Africa.

God is the only protective armour that safeguards both the individual and the nation, that can provide the most effective tools against the forces that have brought enslavement to people who once were free and happy.

The history of nations teaches us that it is spiritual losses rather than material reverses, that lead to moral bankruptcy and national ruin. As we look back across the centuries, strewn with the wreckage of once flourishing empires and realms the words of the Lord of nations echo a warning in our ears: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His justice". The corollary of this is inescapable: we should seek first the Kingdom of God along with our national independence. The truth of this corollary is written in solemn characters across the face of the earth today. In many countries now under the iron yoke of Communism, people are living in wretched slavery and denied the God-given rights that give men their freedom and dignity. In other countries which boast of unprecedented national prosperity and material comfort, the temper of the day is one of restless foreboding and of deep insecurity. The reason for this is simple to state; people have excluded God from private and public affairs. Man divorced from his Maker can accomplish nothing but ruin. "Without God we can do nothing" is a basic truth indicated by Christ many years ago.

It is the denial of this truth which has been responsible for all the woes that have marked the history of human endeavours down the ages.

Let us try to escape these evils. Let us not set at naught, the imperative need for building our country on the rock-bed of Christian principles. Since Christianity is what present day tyrannies are tempting to destroy, one can rightly conclude that it is the one thing that is most necessary for the preservation of free nations. In the measure states have excluded religion from the family, class-hall, and council chamber; they have shown a uniform tendency to become instruments of tyranny and of suppression. Freedom, equality, human dignity, the stable family, and constitutional democracy—all these social institutions have their origin in God and in God alone. In God's design, truth and freedom stand together. Let us rededicate our dear country, Nigeria, and its peoples to God by spiritual rearmament.

I strongly hold the view that the newly created Ministry of Economic Planning will not fail to stop the idle crowds going about in the big towns. They should be made to go back to the agricultural fields and use the tools, instead of idling away their time. The Ministry of Justice should do its work too to send these idle men and women to the I.H.L. institutions if they are not prepared to help build the nation with their services. The Ministry of Welfare should arrange labour recruitments on Divisional level and thereby avoid the influx of young boys and girls into our cosmopolitan and urban towns. It is the duty of the Government to encourage the young unemployed to be useful. Today, good farmers (producers of food) are very few and may not have good successors for tomorrow. What a dangerous and insecure future if this country will be denied of its agricultural producers after the death of the old and illiterate farmers now in the field! Cost of living will continue to rise unless more food is produced.

I have to seize this opportunity to extend my appeal to the Minister of Works. The students of the Awgu Council Secondary School at Lengwe and those in the girls teacher training College at Mgbowo have to travel 5 to 6 miles for a bucket of water every day and the inhabitants of these areas suffer untold hardships for scarcity of water. My appeal is that so far the application of the water



[MR OKO]

scheme is now going on in the affected areas, digging of wells should stop because in the areas concerned the deeper one digs the more difficult it becomes to get water. Several attempts have been made in the past but we failed to get water. The only alternative is to pipe water down to these areas from the high hills around Awgu or from certain perennial water sources at Mpu just a few miles from Ndeaboh.

My next observation is on paragraph 4 of the Speech from the Throne—Ministry of Information. This Ministry will do us a world of good if the criminal trials in our courts, right down to our customary courts are given publicity. The public of this Region would like to be educated on trials of such crimes like stealing, murder, falsehood and so on for prevention of crime.

The most economic problem facing us in this Region today is the problem of the unemployed, the yearly school leavers, boys and girls wandering about in the big towns of the Region. Government should establish more industries in various parts of the Region to absorb the unemployed so as to cope with the rising cost of living. We have everywhere unused fertile lands, e.g., along the hills of Ugwu-Eme, Ezere, Nkwe, Awgunta, Mgbidi, Maku, and Owelli areas of Awgu Division that Government could use for the establishment of poultry, gardening and plantation farming and animal husbandry. I strongly maintain that if industries of this kind are embarked upon by Government loan would help both in reducing the number of unemployed and thereby raise the economy of the Region. Nigeria is naturally agricultural. I therefore call on the Government to utilise its resources to encourage the use of these vast areas of land lying waste everywhere in the Region with particular reference to the fertile grass land in Awgu Division that I have already mentioned. I call on the Minister of Agriculture to make a tour of these vast areas of land with a team of his experts with a view to exploring all avenues of establishing such industries suitable to the land.

The announcement of labour retrenchments in the coal and Railway Corporations is nothing but economic suicide and a problem to the people of this Region. I call on the Government of Eastern Region to disallow this type

of inhuman attempts being made by these corporations, more especially at this time of our struggle to attain nationhood. Every effort should be made to retain those already in the service of the corporations. I suggest that complete regional survey of the unemployed should be made, the statistics of which I expect would mount very high. To allow this wicked retrenchments means to swell up the number of unemployed and in so doing cripple the progress and the economy of this Region, paralise and embarrass the Government of the day.

I want to sound a note of warning in the way contradictory circulars are being issued by some of the Departments of the Ministries. The Ministry of Education during the first process of U.P.E. operation in this Region issued a circular letter authorising the recognition of such primary schools built by voluntary agencies up to December, 1956. Another conflicting circular has been issued of recent denying Government recognition of these very schools built by the people under the management of voluntary agencies. I respectfully call on the Minister of Education to look into this matter with a view to setting this right and stop these official blunders being made by the Provincial Education Officers, Onitsha disallowing Government's recognition of over 7 old primary schools in Awgu Division. I put it to this wicked Officer that the schools referred to in his circular letter were all built and opened for use ever before December, 1956. I warn that he should withdraw his conflicting circular letters and stop committing this Government to disrepute.

I am appealing to the Minister of Works to make an inspection tour of the roads leading from Enugu to Ozala in Udi Division, and from Lengwe-Oduma-Mpu-Okpanku in Awgu Division to Akaze in Afikpo Division to see for himself the roughness of the so-called tarred portion of the road. The road from Awgu to Ndeaboh in Awgu Division to Uburu in Afikpo Division: these two sections of road are the possible routes being used by transport lorries from Umuahia, Aba, Okigwi, Port Harcourt and so on for the evacuation of the much foodstuff grown in the area. These two sections of the road should be taken over for tarring in order to boost up the economy of the Region.



Other points I want to raise are: That Government takes step to recognise and gazette the Second-class Chiefs of the Region and set out clearly their responsibilities in their respective communities so as to avoid a clash of interest between the Second-class Chiefs and other village heads, court members and councillors. I also wish to point out that time has come when Government is expected to codify the native laws and customs all over the Region in order to make it possible for the customary courts to follow up in their dispensation of justice.

Experience has shown that our Customary Courts have been invested with much powers and therefore that members or judges of these Courts should receive good training to qualify them in the use of these powers for the interest of peace and justice. In the past under the Native Court's Ordinance the Administrative Officers were always serving as guiding officers to the Native Courts and protectors of the oppressed but as it stands today Customary Courts have powers to sentence and execute without adhering to any authority. I feel that this law should be amended to allow the Customary Court Advisers the powers once invested with District Officers to guide, direct and protect the weak and oppressed human beings. These powers could be used arbitrarily if nobody is put on the top to supervise, direct, amend and advise these courts. I call on the Minister of Justice to see to the possibility of amending this law in view of what I have said.

One other point I want to make is that the time has in fact come for this Government to cause the writing and publishing of the complete history of the life and political activities of Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe. A Committee should be set up to do this important work.

An appeal to the Minister of Education: Awgu District Council Secondary School is facing a very difficult financial situation for the completion of its new building which if not finished within a space of few months would endanger the working of the school. My appeal is, the hon. Minister should consider giving enough grant to finish up the buildings which now cost the Council over £60,000.

Before I sit down, Sir, I must register my personal appreciation to the civil servants of this Region for their co-operation with the politicians in reaching the date and the goal of our National Independence and for having accepted the Government's offer in the salary revision.

I strongly appeal to all the classes and grades of our civil service to put in more efforts in the execution of the Government's policy. I hope also that Government will not overlook the interests of the civil servants.

I also wish to commend the activities of the staff of this House and that of the Printing Department, in their day-to-day service to this House.

Finally, I would like the hon. Premier to look into the service conditions of the Serjeant-at-Arms of this hon. House with a view to bringing him in line with his counterparts in the other Regions. This point was raised during the Budget Session of 1959 but nothing has yet been done.

**Mr Speaker:** I must say that I find it extremely difficult to follow the hon. Gentleman, and I respectfully ask him to hand over to the Reporters a copy of his speech for the benefit of the *Hansard*. I would like also to refer to Standing Order 30 Subsection 1:

"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 notes."

I merely wish to say that the indulgence granted by the Standing Order has been overlooked and therefore hon. Members should be very careful not to read their speeches all the time.

**Mr A. J. Ekpe (Opobo Division):** I will like to join my hon. Friends who have spoken before me to pay tribute to the former Premier, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe for his political activities. It is unfortunate to miss him at this time that the country mostly requires his services. The loss was because of the ambitious conspiracy of his followers. That hon. Gentleman deserves praise—the congratulation of this House for his contribution to awakening national consciousness in this country. He is, as I have already said, a victim of the inordinate ambition



[MR EKPE]

of his followers; but also at the same time, he is suffering the inevitable fate of an efficient politician. An American writer said:

“In politics merit is rewarded by its possessor being raised to a target height for all to aim at.”

May he find peace in his bemedalled breast.

**Mr Speaker:** I do not think it is parliamentary to refer to a man who is not a Member of this House.

**Mr Ekpe:** All I really wanted to say in finishing up with that aspect of my speech is that he had fought gallantly and had won a battle, but because he did not seek the interest of the minorities in the C.O.R. State area, he lost the war.

May I refer to His Excellency's Speech on the proposed new Ministry of Information. It is to be hoped that the new Ministry of Information will be the tongue of the Region. The tongue as we have been warned by the Gospel according to Saint James is a little member; yet it is an unruly evil full of poison. A man on many occasions will regret for words spoken but it is rare to regret words not spoken. I am saying this because a man or Government may often regret having said certain things and it is hoped that the new tongue, that is, the proposed Broadcasting System is to give a new force and a new impact to the age-old art of self-expression. What this Region demands of the proposed Broadcasting System is to make known more quickly the whole truth and nothing but the truth about any public matter. The new tongue can ruin the Region for as you all know, lies on the air are poisonous. That is why it is necessary to warn against the use of the new tongue that is going to be put in the Region.

Another thing is the danger of political control of the Broadcasting and Television System and I also want to warn against that. There is a way in which political control can be offset and that is by scrupulous fairness in the distribution of opportunities to divergent political views when any controversial issue is involved. It will also be the policy of the proposed Broadcasting and Television System to be objective and control should not remain in the hands of a single authority, however

efficient that authority may be. Experience in other countries has shown that Television and Broadcasting systems are better dealt with by series of advisory bodies of cultural organisations of the regions or the areas connected and taking into consideration the heterogeneous character of our society in the Region, I suggest that when this proposed Broadcasting system comes into operation, series of advisory boards should be set up to represent the various interests and the various cultural organisations.

I would say a few words about the proposed Ministry of Economic Planning. The main functions of economic planning, to put it in a nutshell, are to utilise the knowledge of economic principles in the production of a balanced economic programme for the essential welfare of the community. This consists in the production of abundance of goods of the most desirable kinds with a minimum material and human cost and with full employment widely diffused among the people of the Region. I want to lay emphasis on that point because it is very important, that is, the diffusion of employment all over the Region. This brings into view also the mighty problem of proper distribution of industries. I am requesting the Government to make a comprehensive survey of the Region for the purpose of producing an effective plan for the localisation of industries. This is going to bring a lot of trouble in this Region if industries are congested in certain areas to the detriment of the rest of the Region. Everybody knows that population trends follow industry and where industries are located people are bound to move to the place and the rest of the Region will have to suffer a dearth of population. As a result, the basic industries, farming and processing of palm produce will have to suffer. This is one of the reasons why we have high cost of living in the urban areas. Almost everybody who is employable is looking for a job in the urban areas. So I would like Government to make an effective survey and produce a plan so that industries are adequately distributed to cover the various areas of the Region.

Also, there are certain under-developed areas in the Region and I would like to refer whoever will be the Minister of Economic Planning to a programme known as: “Development Areas” which was started in the United Kingdom in 1951. I think we may



borrow a leaf from there. As a result of centralising industrial projects in certain areas north of the country, the Board of Trade decided that it was necessary for the Government to plan certain areas called "Development Areas" so that whatever new industries will have to be built or established, will have to be established in these "Development Areas", and I want to draw the Government's attention to the old Calabar Province for inclusion in my proposed "Development Areas" for the purpose of localisation of industries. I have already said that the north of the Region and certain areas are congested with industries. This does not help in diversification and balance of the economic programme of the Region.

Another point to which I want to draw the attention of the House—I do not know how much the House can help—is the withdrawal of the U.A.C. from the old Calabar Province. It is significant to notice that in this experiment of economy on the part of the U.A.C., the old Calabar Province has suffered most and if you go there now, you will find that unemployment in that area has resulted in all able-bodied young men finding their ways to Fernando Po. The U.A.C. Limited is packing out from the old Calabar Province. They have left Eket, they have left Opobo, they have left Calabar, they have gone out from everywhere. Whether this is a plan by the Government or whether it is a trick by the U.A.C., I hope that the Premier will like to have a word with U.A.C. people and tell them that they are helping to ruin our economic programme, if there is so much unemployment in these areas because of their exit.

Alongside with the economic and industrial planning is the question of town and country planning. These two things go together. It is sad indeed to note that Government has not done much to plan the townships of Uyo, Ikot Ekpene, Opobo, Aba, Eket and Itu. Government should make a comprehensive and radical survey which will provide a framework in this question.

There is also this important and solid question of the creation of the Calabar Minority Council. You will recall that the Minorities Commission recommended and the London Conference on the Nigerian Constitu-

tion approved the setting up of the Minority Council for the old Calabar Province. A few moments ago I overheard a very sophisticated remark by a Member from Abak, who said that he did not think that Ikot Ekpene and Abak are included in the Minority Area. I will refer him to the Minorities Report where he can see that the old Calabar Province includes Ikot Ekpene and Abak.

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

On a point of order. Standing Order 37 (2) reads:

"An Order of the Day, notice of motion or amendment of which notice has been given shall not be anticipated in a debate upon a motion for the adjournment of the House or in any other debate."

The hon. Member is anticipating Mr Eyo's motion.

**Mr Speaker:** The hon. Minister is right. I would ask the hon. Member to please take note of that. There is Mr Eyo's motion on the Order Paper.

**Mr Ekpe:** All I was saying, is that instead of Government helping to set up this Calabar Provincial Minorities Council, the Government is persistently and obstinately pursuing the policy of establishing these functionless Provincial Assemblies. I am speaking for the Old Calabar Province. Everybody is absolutely disgusted with this Provincial set-up. It is a sham. It is absolutely meaningless. If the Provincial Assembly is set up, what are these Commissioners going to do? I can agree that it is a step forward to inflate these Provincial Commissioners, but I am urging the Government to discontinue this Provincial set-up. It is an experiment but it is not working up to expectation. Everybody realises that it cannot be intended to serve the purpose or the genuine desire of the people of the C.O.R. area for self-determination.

May I say a few words about the Civil Service of the Region. I want to take this opportunity of congratulating the conscientious civil servants who have done their best to uphold the tradition of the high standard of efficiency and integrity which characterise the Nigerian Civil Service. But the sycophant of the type that we have in Opobo Division,



[MR EKPE]

whose duty it is to please the boot-lickers and those who are prepared to paint the Division black . . .

**The Provincial Commissioner, Calabar (Mr E. W. Udonkim):** On point of order. Standing Order 30 (9) reads:—

“The conduct of Her Majesty, Member of the Royal Family, the Governor-General, the Governor, Members of this House or the other House, Civil Servants and Judges or the performance of judicial functions by other persons shall not be raised except upon a Substantive Motion; and in any amendment, question to a Member or remarks in a debate on a motion dealing with any other subject, any reference to the conduct of the persons aforesaid shall be out of order. For the purposes of this paragraph ‘Substantive Motion’ does not include any motion for the Adjournment”.

**Mr Speaker:** I agree. I want the hon. Member to take the opportunity of contributing to the debate on the Speech from the Throne.

**Mr Ekpe:** There is a situation now in Opobo Division where the people have been alienated from the administration of the place because of the activities of certain civil servants who take an open-field stand in party politics. I am prepared to substantiate this even in confidence to the Premier or any one who might come forward.

**The Minister of Finance:** On a point of order. Standing Order 30 (9) is still contravened.

**Mr Speaker:** The hon Member should take note of Standing Order 30 (9) and endeavour not to make any attack on any particular civil servant.

**Mr Ekpe:** I was trying to draw attention to the provision . . .

**The Minister of Finance:**

Standing Order 3 sub-paragraphs (2) and (3) read:

“(2) A Member may speak only from the seat allocated to him”.

“(3) The provisions of this Standing Order shall not apply to Ministers, Provincial Commissioners and Parliamentary Secretaries”.

**Mr Speaker:** That Standing Order refers to other Members by allowing them to speak only from their seats, but I understand it is a convention here that Members of the Opposition Front Bench could speak from anywhere other than their seats.

**Mr Ekpe:** In fact rural planning for a cottage hospital is necessary at Ngo because of the expanse of water which divides Ngo and Obolo people from the Egwanga township. The so-called Commissioner from Uyo Province should know this. I do not think Ngo is alone in this need for a rural health centre. I also ask for one rural health centre for the Annang section of the Opobo Division. The hon. Minister of Internal Affairs has on many occasions tried to woo this section of the Annang people from Opobo to join them up with Abak. I am happy that these Annang people have demonstrated democratically against this action. I also ask for a rural health centre for the Four Groups District Council. The former Premier was there some time ago and he definitely promised that he would help them to get a health centre. I hope that this promise will be fulfilled by his able successor.

While I was speaking on Town Planning I had wanted to mention the building of model villages all over the Region. Hon. Members will appreciate that there is a terrible expansion in the population trend in the Region due to increasing standard of living and due also to medical facilities. Infantile mortality is greatly reduced and I am glad to pay a tribute to the Minister of Health. These things are helping the population to rise and many people who find themselves in better economic and financial circumstances are putting up buildings.

Unless there are planned model villages there is going to be a haphazard model of villages. I want to emphasise that I really feel very strongly about it.

I want to give my congratulations to Dr K. O. Dike, Principal-designate of the University College, Ibadan. I think it is only fair and reasonable that this House should at least cheer this illustrious son of this Region for his achievement. It is also a great honour to the advancement of the Easterners in the field of education and by encouraging him and



giving honour to him, other people will aspire to greater heights.

*And it being 2.15 p.m. Mr Speaker interrupted the business and the Debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed Tomorrow.*

#### ADJOURNMENT

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

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

#### ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

**Death of Chief the hon. J. T. Princewill Amachree VII, the Amanyanabo of Kalabari**

**The Premier (Dr M. I. Okpara):** It is with deep regret that I announce the sudden death of His Highness the Amanyanabo of Kalabari, Chief J. T. Princewill Amachree VII at his home town Buguma yesterday. He was a great Natural Ruler who believed in the

ideology of one Nigeria and practised it. He always frowned on any political ideology that was based on tribal sentiments. His death is a sad blow to the young Eastern House of Chiefs and consequently to the Eastern Parliament. It is ironical that at a time when this paramount Chief was firmly and officially established in Kalabari land that death should snatch him from us. It is proposed to send two hon. Members to go and represent the Government and this Parliament at his funeral. I am sure that all hon. Members will join me in sending our sincere condolences to the people of Kalabari and to the bereaved family.

**Chief I. I. Morphy (Ogoja Division):** Speaking for the Opposition, I wish that the late Chief J. T. Amachree may rest in peace and we also join in the telegram which the hon. Premier proposes to send to the bereaved family. We are all sorry for the death of this great man. We wish that he could have lived longer to contribute to the debates of the House of Chiefs.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Adjourned accordingly at eighteen minutes past two o'clock p.m.*



EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 22nd March, 1960

The House met at Ten o'clock a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

RESIGNATION FROM THE HOUSE  
COMMITTEE

**Mr Speaker:** The following letter has been received from Chief I. I. Morphy:—

“I beg to resign from House Committee and the Opposition has substituted Hon. S. T. Akpan. Hon. S. T. Akpan is to serve in the House Committee.”

I therefore refer the matter to the Committee of Selection to select another Member to replace Chief Morphy.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Business Statement

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** Hon. Members, during Budget Meeting it is the practice to make Business Statements from time to time in order to keep Members informed of the programme of Business. In accordance with that practice, I wish to make the following Business Statement in respect of the current Budget Meeting.

Today, Tuesday 22nd, is Private Members' Day and Motions on the Order Paper will be taken. Tomorrow, Wednesday 23rd, the Debate on the Speech from the Throne will be resumed. On Thursday 24th, it is proposed to bring the debate to a close—agreement has been reached between the Government and the Opposition to this effect. For that reason the Notice of Amendment on the Order Paper by the Opposition Chief Whip will be moved and debated on the 24th after which questions necessary to bring the debate to a close will be put.

On Friday, 25th March, the Eastern Region Local Government Bill, 1960, will be presented and will be read the First and Second time on the same day.

On Monday, 28th March, copies of the Draft Estimates for 1960/61 will be distributed, followed by the Presentation, First

and Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill. Two or three other Bills will be presented on the same day. In accordance with Standing Order 77 the debate on the Budget Speech will stand over for two days. In the normal course, the debate would be resumed on Wednesday, 30th March, but that day happens to be a Public Holiday as well as Tuesday, 29th March. The debate on the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill would therefore be resumed on Thursday, 31st March. Three days are allotted for the debate which ends on Monday, 4th April. Tuesday, 5th April is Private Members' Day.

On Wednesday, 6th April, more Bills will be presented, and probably read the Second and Third time.

On Thursday, 7th April, the Committee of Supply commences. It is hoped that the Committee will not last for the number of days allotted by Standing Orders, i.e., seven days. If this happens, the Committee of Supply will be brought to a close on Wednesday, 13th April. This means five days for the Committee.

On Thursday, 14th April, the debate on the Second Reading of the Eastern Regional Local Government Bill and such other Bills as were presented on 28th March will be resumed followed by the Committee stage and the Third Reading of the Bills. Thereafter the House will adjourn *sine die*.

It is not the wish of hon. Members, I am sure, that the House should reassemble after the Easter Holidays, hence the attempt in this programme to reduce the number of days allotted to the debate on the Speech from the Throne and the Committee of Supply. The sitting of the House of Chiefs has been fixed for Monday the 25th April, a few days after the Easter Holidays. Government hopes that hon. Members will co-operate in this programme in order to make it workable. This they can do by curtailing their speeches not only on the debate on the Speech from the Throne but also in the Committee of Supply and on the debate on the Second Reading of the Eastern Region Local Government Bill, 1960.

I am afraid the Government has decided that we should meet on Monday the 28th



March, although it has been announced that that day will be a Public Holiday. There has been so many holidays during this sitting and unless we meet on Monday the 28th it will be extremely difficult for us to get through the programme of business. As I have already explained, I think it is the wish of Members to adjourn *sine die* before Easter and not to reassemble after Easter.

### ATOM TEST IN THE SAHARA

**Mr S. G. Ikoku** (Enyong Division): I beg to move the Motion standing in my name:

“That in view of the declared resolve of the French Government to carry out more Atom Tests in the Sahara in the future this House calls upon the Government to issue directives forthwith to all Ministries, Public Corporations, Local Government Councils and Voluntary Agencies laying it down that no public funds must be spent in the purchase of French goods and services.”

When last year we met here the hon. Abengowe did move a Motion in this House drawing attention to the evil consequences of the then projected explosion of a French Atomic device in the Sahara. The Motion was supported by both sides of the House and I think that as a result of what transpired inside and outside the House the public of this Region has taken the matter very serious indeed. Protests were made; and even a half-hearted one by the Federal Government when four hon. Ministers of the Federal Government took a jolly trip to the United Kingdom. Since then other parts of the world have joined in the protest. But, to our amazement, in the middle of last month, the French did explode their atomic device in the Sahara.

I must point out that the explosion has been carried out against the protests of all Independent African States by which I mean Ghana, Guinea, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Egypt, Morocco—they have all protested against the explosion of this bomb. Still France carried on with the scheme. No doubt France is anxious to impress upon the world that she has recaptured her military glory of old. I repeat what I said when hon. Abengowe's Motion was debated in this House. The French people need not

impress Africans about their military prowess. They should have done that in 1940.

They have not only defied protests from Africa, they have defied the protest of the Afro-Asian bloc in the United Nations. And to add insult to injury, the United Nations did succeed in passing a resolution condemning the projected test but France defied the view of the United Nations and carried out her atomic test. That of course leaves us with a moral; is this United Nations really capable of maintaining world peace or is it prepared to take action only when small nations violate the so-called United Nations Charter? In any way, that is not the subject of today.

Since the explosion, many countries of the world have protested. But despite these protests from Egypt, Ghana, Guinea, the Soviet Union and even Latin American countries France has arrogantly announced that she intends to carry out more atomic tests in the Sahara in future. One of their spokesmen of late even hinted that France might explode a Hydrogen Bomb in the Sahara. All sorts of protest action have been taken since the explosion but I must mention specially the action taken by the Ghana Government, i.e., the freezing of French Assets in Ghana. We are authoritatively informed by authorities on Ghana affairs that if the freeze continues for a whole year, France will be losing something in the neighbourhood of 1½ million pounds in Ghana. I think all of us here will applaud this action by the Ghana Government.

We all expected our Federal Government to take action but won't it surprise you that not even a protest cablegram was sent to General de Gaulle? Not a single protest by our Federal Government! Instead of that, these wonderful Science Monitors told us that there was no appreciable increase in radio active fall-out over Nigeria but that they have taken samples and flown to Britain where further analysis will be carried out. Till today, over a month, we have not got the results of this analysis and my layman's view is that the analysis has confirmed our fear and the British Government, playing up to the French Government, is only delaying the release of this information to the general public.

The Motion before this House would have been unnecessary if our Federal Government



[MR IKOKU]

had done its duty. The great misfortune of the country today is that the Regional Governments, at least the Southern ones, are being called upon to project views and policies which the Federal Government should have carried out—a clear proof that we have been saddled with a wet blanket of a Federal Government.

The explosion of the atomic bomb has far reaching significance for all Africa. Firstly, there are the health considerations. I think the Members of this House and the public know enough about this because our Doctors and our Scientists have written a lot about the possible repercussions on health. As such, I will not waste the time of this House on that.

I will rather consider two other repercussions. The first one is that France has shown herself unwilling to heed world opinion. At the commencement, I did draw attention to a Motion passed in the United Nations which was ignored by France. Now I would like to add that France has gone a step further. Whereas world opinion is in favour of the easing of international tension and the banning of nuclear weapons, France is determined to go ahead with the manufacture of atomic devices. The people of the world want peace and disarmament and a conversion into peaceful production, for the benefit of man, the huge sums of money now being spent on the armament programmes. I will just give you two examples. The United States of America in 1960-61 Financial Year is spending two billion dollars on Armament. (Billion in the American sense). In the British sense, it is two thousand million dollars, to be spent by one country on armament in 1960-61 Financial Year. It is this same country where you have several millions unemployed—official figures of the Government! They cannot find work for several million people but they can spend two thousand million dollars on the armament race. The same thing in Britain. A good deal of noise is made about money sent to Nigeria for development; money sent to Colonial Dependencies for development. Twelve million pounds, we are told, will be given to Nigeria as soon as Nigeria is independent. But won't it surprise you to know that this same country which is trying to show that it hasn't got enough money to spend on the

millions of people in the dependent countries is spending over one thousand million pounds in the current financial year on armament?

Over £1,000 million is being spent in the current financial year by Britain on armament! But Nigeria with 35 million people is given barely £12 million to help her get on.

The second point I would like to raise is the political repercussion in Africa. Under this heading I would like to make two submissions. First, France, armed with atomic weapons, is a threat to the emergent independent States in Africa. France is a big Colonial power with vested interest in Africa. Look at the map of Africa and see how much area is coloured green; that is France. Red is shrinking; that is Britain. But the French have been very clever in making their own arrangement for the so-called independence of their former colonies. We have French military bases all over Africa. I will name you a few. Bizerta in Tunisia is a French base. Mark you, Tunisia is supposedly independent, but there is a French military base in Tunisia. The President of Tunisia, Bourguiba, has insisted that this military base be evacuated. Agadir and Rabat in Morocco are French military bases. It seems that Providence is conspiring against us in this matter. A short while ago there was an earthquake in Agadir. But significantly the town was wiped out but the French military base was not touched. Thirdly, Dakar in the Republic of Senegal is a French military base. And you know that in Algeria there are some 250,000 well armed French soldiers on duty. Why? French settlers in Algeria shout the slogan "Algeria is French". Of course they have their eyes on the fabulous mineral wealth of the Algerian Sahara, particularly mineral oil. Then nearer home we find the French being responsible for the armed forces of French Cameroons. On January 1st this year, French Cameroons became independent. But is it not significant that this independent Republic is today being policed by French troops? This is the type of independence hon. Members have been talking about in this House—the type of independence we do not want in this country. The same thing in Togoland. There the French are getting ready to arm the people of Togoland. In fact a report was carried by Reuters on March the 17th that Monsieur Silvanus Olympio challenges



Dr Nkrumah to the effect that 'why should not Togoland sign military pact with France whereas Ghana had signed a similar military pact with Britain?' We know that the second part of the statement is not correct. But the first part, coming from Monsieur Silvanus Olympio himself must be correct because he is the Prime Minister there and he wants to sign a treaty with France. You heard what is happening on the boarder. The Ewe people want Togoland to be part of Ghana. The Togolese are against it. They do not want any such thing, and in fact we heard that a group of people, now under preventive detention, have already been sent into Ghana from Togoland to foment trouble. The Prime Minister of the Ivory Coast announced that he was going to arm the citizens of Ivory Coast in order to keep an eye on Guinea because he says that Guinea has signed an agreement with Czechoslovakia for the supply of arms to Guinea. All I am trying to do is to bring out the fact that France is a threat to the emergent African countries and for her to develop her atomic weapon on our own soil and use it against us is something which we should not take lying down.

My second proposition is that atomic France is a strengthening of the imperialist powers whose desire is to continue the exploitation of Africa. There was a time we used to be told that the imperialist powers were fighting among themselves for the carving up of Africa. That was true. But today two factors have emerged. The first is the atomic age, with the United States of America holding the initiative. The second is the emergence of the Soviet Union as a mighty power in the world. As a result, these imperialist countries have decided to sink some of their differences and to club together in order to protect their interests. So that today, 1960, the imperialist powers are not fighting each other for the carving up of Africa. They are doing the reverse. They are coming together in order to further exploit and to maintain their foot-hold in Africa. Therefore we cannot say that because we are a British territory, we are not interested in what France is doing in the neighbouring territories. The British, the French, the Belgian, the Portuguese, have all formed themselves into a club for the further exploitation of Africa. France is a part of NATO—North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. France has taken part in the

Common Market in Europe—those six countries, including France and Belgium, (all imperialist powers) which have decided to spend seven billion dollars every year for the next ten years on the exploitation of Africa. France is part of the newly projected North Atlantic Trading Organisation—the economic counterpart of the NATO—which plans to spend four billion dollars a year for the next ten years on the exploitation of Africa. These imperialist countries, while making political concessions to African nationalism, are bent on strengthening their economic grip on Africa; and since political control is being gradually relaxed, military power must be relied upon for safeguarding imperialist interests in Africa. There was a time when the imperialist countries controlled political power in Africa. Then they could do anything. But the tide of African nationalism has made that impossible. And so today they are prepared to make political concessions, but they are no longer depending on political power for the guarantee of their interests; they have fallen back on military power.

We have no atomic bomb and the imperialists are anxious to decide how much weapons should be allowed in Africa in order to make it possible for them continually to dictate to emergent African States. This is the new threat and that is why we have taken up the cudgel against all these military bases, these military preparations on African soil. It is part of the struggle for real Independence that we should insist not only on no foreign military bases in Africa but also on no foreign garrisons in Africa and no joint military exercises either. Mr Speaker, you will have heard over the radio that three thousand British troops have been flown, all by air, to Lybia to conduct exercises, and even water is being supplied them by air. They want you, Sir, to be impressed by the fact that they can move a whole brigade from Britain to Lybia by air and therefore they can move from Britain to Nigeria. They want to impress on us that they are still in a position to keep us down. It is the same thing that used to happen here some years ago. When there is trouble in a Province the Regiment goes there on parade; the band boys are heard and then the troops fully dressed in battle kit march up and down the town and frighten the citizens of the town. This is the sole purport. And so even though we are not in a position now—at least this hon. House is not in a position to



[MR IKOKU]

take action on behalf of all Nigeria—we should at least show that there are some people, a section of this country, who are not going to take these things lying down. I wish this House were the Federal House of Representatives. If it were, the French would have known long ago that there are some people in Nigeria. We do not want foreign military bases, we do not want foreign garrisons, we do not want joint military exercises and we do not want any atom bomb test in Africa. We must concede to the French the right to manufacture atomic weapons. After all, there is something like “free enterprise”. They are free to manufacture the atom bomb in their areas, but, as a Nigerian politician said (I think it is the Deputy National Secretary of the N.C.N.C.), France should manufacture her atom bomb and test it in France. The Soviet Union manufactured hers and tested it in the Soviet Union and in the Pacific, an international waterway. America tested in America and in the Pacific. Britain saw that she was too overcrowded, so she appealed to her kith and kin in Australia and they agreed and said “come over here and test”. What is the relationship between us and France to enable them to come and test their bomb on our own soil?

So, Sir, this Motion is merely what I might call a widow's mite. It is the little we can do to show not only the people of this Region and Nigeria but our neighbours in Africa that even though we have a Federal Government which is not prepared to take action, a Federal Government which has neither the intention nor the ability to take action, there are still some people in Nigeria who would like to take action. So we are appealing that our public funds, money raised by our own tax-payers, should not be spent in purchasing French goods and services. I think that much we can do. We should call upon hon. Members who take car advances, we can call upon civil servants who take car advances, not to purchase French cars. Let the French carry their cars to France and sell them there; we do not want them here.

But there is an important point there. There are two French firms operating in this Region—the C.F.A.O. and the S.C.O.A. What happens when they are retailing non-French goods? What should be our attitude? The Motion calls for refusal to spend public money on French goods but these French Companies

could continue to make money in this Region by retailing non-French goods. So, Sir, I am suggesting that we should not only refuse to spend public money on French goods but also we should refuse to spend public money on any goods retailed by C.F.A.O. and S.C.O.A. If the manufacturers of such goods in Britain or America or anywhere else feel that their goods should be sold, well they can divert their goods either to U.A.C. or John Holt or any other firm. We can go there and buy. But we should not allow S.C.O.A. and C.F.A.O. to make profit in this country. One of the most annoying things we have noticed was that when hon. Abengowe's Motion was being debated a group of French men were in the gallery here. I think they were about four. And when Members started to express their opinions these men got out in disgust and walked out. I noticed them go out and I ran out and intercepted them. I asked them what they felt about it all and they said we were talking nonsense. French people! We were talking nonsense in Nigeria! Please Sir, for how long will we talk nonsense in Britain, in France, in Germany and again in Nigeria? Therefore we want our public money not to be spent on French goods and services. It is quite easy to do. It is only a circular instruction going out: All the Local Councils must not purchase French goods and services; all Voluntary Agencies who depend on public money should follow the same direction. If they insist on purchasing French goods they can do so with their own money, not with public money.

Secondly, we realised that Government cannot compel the general public to take this same step. Every citizen is at liberty to purchase wherever he likes. But I think we should still make an appeal to the general public. We can still appeal to their conscience and, in fact, in this matter it seems the public is ahead of this hon. House because a short while ago women here in Enugu demonstrated, calling for a boycott of French goods when they heard stories about the Sahara atom bomb test. It seems to me that we are even lagging behind the general public in this matter. But I just want to make the point that we cannot compel the public. Our business is to mobilise public opinion to support us in this campaign.

I have noticed that the hon. the Premier has put down an amendment to my Motion. I do



not think the amendment is really fundamental. The Premier merely wants us to defer the action demanded by my Motion, pending any future test by the French. I must agree that this is the good old African way of doing things. This man has done me something. I go and complain to his father and say "warn him, next time!" That is the line the Government is taking, but I think they should give some more thought to it. In international affairs this idea of "when you receive a slap on one cheek you turn the next cheek" does not work. The only thing that works now in the international scene is the Law of Moses—an eye for an eye. Anyway I note that the amendment is not really fundamental and that the Government is agreeable to the general sentiment contained in my Motion.

In conclusion, Sir, I like to warn Members that we cannot go on passing Motions in this House against the French action in the Sahara. Underlying that action, Sir, is the whole concept of colonialism. If we were not a colonial country they would not slight or disregard us. If we were not a colonial country they would not dare to come and test their atomic device on our soil. And that should be the moral for all Members that no country in Africa is safe until colonialism is eradicated from all parts of Africa.

It was a Soviet delegate to the League of Nations between the two world wars who said, when Italy decided to attack Abyssinia, that peace is indivisible. They laughed at him. The next step was that Germany took over Austria. Then Germany invaded Czechoslovakia. Then the next was Poland. Ah! it was at this stage British Prime Minister, the grant peace in our time Chamberlain, had to give way and the British went to war.

Freedom, real freedom on the continent of Africa is indivisible. No one country in the continent of Africa can be free while neighbouring countries are not free, while neighbouring countries can provide military bases from which our sovereignty could be violated at any time. Therefore, while we are expressing our sentiments here let us also know, at least if we cannot do anything about it, let us also know that the independence of Nigeria can only be a lasting thing when we are

prepared to use it as a lever to get independence for other countries, on the continent of Africa.

**Chief I. I. Morphy** (Ogoja Division): I beg to second.

**The Premier (Dr M. I. Okpara)**: I rise to amend the substantive Motion by deleting the word "forthwith" and by adding after services "should the French Government carry out further tests in the Sahara or any other part of Africa". I would like to say that there is a wide measure of agreement between the Government and the Opposition on this issue.

The Sahara Test and the French resolve to continue tests in the Sahara have raised several important issues. I propose to examine these under six heads:

- 1st: What is the role of Britain in these tests?
- 2nd: Is the Sahara French soil?
- 3rd: What is the role of the United Nations?
- 4th: What is the ultimate goal of the nuclear armament race?
- 5th: How efficient is Africa's voice in the world today?
- 6th: What is the role of Nigeria?

Britain merely passed along our protest to France without comment. We can appreciate the dilemma of Britain in rebuking an old friend for following Britain's lead in testing atom bombs. We can also see the value of monitoring stations to test radio-active fall-out. But these were not what we asked Britain to do.

But who can blame Britain? They could not really go to war on our behalf. The moral is that our salvation must come from us. Nigeria must be sufficiently strong to command respect and discourage any dictators from any further reckless acts of provocation such as the French Sahara Test.

*Is the Sahara French soil?* We have heard that sort of story before: First in Indo-China and then Algeria. In Indo-China, the result of calling another man's territory French soil was disastrous and humiliating to the French. In Algeria thousands of French youths are now laying down their lives in fighting a lost cause. These French theories



## [THE PREMIER]

and practice of imperialism will mean continuous conflict in Africa until all Africa is liberated including Algeria and the Sahara. Every school boy knows that neither Algeria nor the Sahara is part of France. Those who are claiming that any portion of Africa is European soil have a hell of a lot of fight ahead of them. And they will not win.

*What is the Role of the United Nations?* Well, in November last year, the General Assembly had specifically recommended that France should refrain from testing nuclear devices. And, of course, France had ignored this eloquent expression of world opinion. The resolution was loosely worded. No one expected, nor were the necessary two-thirds of the votes obtained, to take the matter to the Security Council which is dominated by atomic nations—America, Britain and U.S.S.R.—which have freely tested atomic and hydrogen bombs. The United Nations has neither the army nor the inclination to enforce its decisions so that on vital matters such as these it becomes nothing more than a glorified debating club.

Poor Africa, after centuries of callous subjugation by Europe, and now that she is emerging as an independent continent, a more subtle means of mass destruction has been invented to let loose on her.

*What will be the ultimate result of the Atomic race?* Scientists who have not lost their bearing because of governmental and political pressure are agreed that the result will be fatal to the human race.

Atomic radiation destroys the blood by giving rise to a condition called leukaemia. Various cancers are also common. The bones, liver, kidney and the reproductive organs suffer most and first. Death is slow and miserable. But what is worse is the destruction of the quality of future generations as the effect of excessive radiation on the testes and ovaries is to lead to a high incidence of monsters and subnormal human beings. These are scientific facts accepted by all knowledgeable men and women. Little wonder then that strenuous attempts are being made now in Geneva by the Western and Eastern powers to ban atom tests and all nuclear weapons. Indeed, French scientists were the first to condemn the Sahara Test and confirm our worst fears that the tests would be dangerous to man.

It is significant that the Western Nations first dropped the atom bomb on Japan, a non-European nation. Now that they have conspired to pollute the air, soil and water of Africa, the permanent conquest that eluded them by the use of diplomacy and guns is being achieved through the subtle and dangerous route of atomic radiations.

Even if for purposes of argument the Sahara were regarded as French soil, has De Gaulle any right to pollute the air over Nigeria? I humbly submit that no nation has that right.

*The whole of this Sahara test raises yet one other vital question: how effective is Africa's voice in the world today?* From the reckless way in which France has disregarded all protests from the apparent impotence of the United Nations to intervene it would appear that the road to real freedom is still strewn with thorns and bramble. In all this heart-breaking episode there has appeared one ray of hope. At least one nation is not prepared merely to talk glibly about it, but is doing something concrete. Immediately the bomb was exploded Ghana froze all French assets to be used to compensate any victims of French Atomic radiations. We cannot but be grateful to Ghana for this manly and prompt action.

*What of Nigeria?* Remember that hymn that says: "If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb". Unfortunately in Nigeria, because of our colonial status, we have looked on the whole episode inert and frustrated. While we cannot technically freeze French assets or go to war against her now, we can show in a practical way our utter abhorrence of the recklessness of France in testing atomic devices in the Sahara in utter disregard of world opinion.

My Government therefore supports the substantive motion in its essentials. We have however introduced a small amendment which I hope the Leader of the Opposition will accept. This does not imply any softness on our part. Indeed we feel as strongly about it as does the Opposition. There is no turning of the other cheek here. We are merely giving the liberal elements in France a chance for sanity to prevail so that de Gaulle's dictatorial tendencies could be curbed. This is the sort of issue on which there should be



complete unanimity between the Government and the Opposition.

The amendment motion implies that the boycott of French goods and services will start as soon as France tests the next bomb anywhere in the Sahara or any other part of Africa.

I would like to end by saying that France, before her Sahara test, was popular and had many friends in Nigeria. But now she has none at all for I cannot conceive of any Nigerian who does not regard the Atomic test in the Sahara as an outrage. France could still rebuild good relations before all is lost.

I commend the amendment motion to the House.

**The Minister of Commerce (Mr J. U. Nwodo):** I beg to second the Motion as amended. I am glad that the Leader of Opposition has accepted the amendment in good faith. The idea of making the decision of the House not retrospective is that there are certain contracts which the Government already before the Testing had entered into with French businessmen and Firms. To cancel these contracts as a result of the motion by the Leader of the Opposition would involve the Government in heavy penalty. The obduracy of the French Government to conduct the Atom test in the Sahara, in spite of repeated protests from well-meaning quarters is evidence of the lack of sympathy and interest which the French people have for the life and property of the people of Africa.

The French claim was that there was no local fall-out and consequently there was no danger to life and property. Our British friends consoled us by posting here Monitors charged with taking stock of the amount of radio active fall-outs. This measure is tantamount to what is known in the medical world as post-mortem examination. In our own way of thinking, it is analogous to administering medicine to a dead person, for what else could have been the work of the Monitors other than compile the statistics of radio active fall-outs.

Scientists all over the world are agreed that atom bombs are the dirty part in Hydrogen bombs, that most of the fall-outs from a

Hydrogen Bomb come from the Atom Bomb which sets it off. Already in Ghana and Northern Nigeria, there was speculation that the amount of radio active fall-out has increased considerably. It is understood also, that the French claim that the atomic cloud was carried by high altitude wind towards completely uninhabited desert. If this was the case, so much the better, but the problem of distant fall-out has yet to be examined. It must be remembered that when Russia conducted a similar test at Bikini in Japan, there were signs of illness among the Japanese population at Cape Sato—thousands of miles away from Bikini or from the site of the Russian test. I said earlier that there were protests from well-meaning quarters urging France to desist from conducting the test in the Sahara.

The Nigeria Federal Parliament sent a delegation to the Colonial Office in the United Kingdom praying it to transmit to France the resolution of our country's legislatures calling on France to stop testing the atom bomb at the Sahara. The Independent African States' Conference sitting in Monrovia unanimously resolved to ask France to ban the atom bomb test in the Sahara. The United Nations General Assembly was also used as a forum and vehicle for the ventilation and transmission of our feelings in respect of this test. Of recent, eight African countries have made a joint protest to France against "past and future" atomic tests in the Sahara and that protest Note was handed over by the Sudanese Ambassador to the French Foreign Minister on Saturday the 12th of March, 1960 in the name of Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Lybia, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia. The Afro-Asian nations have asked that a special session of the General Assembly be convened to look into the question of French atomic test. Heads of twenty-two nations signed the request which was addressed to the Secretary-General, Mr Dag Hammarskjöld. The signatories drew attention in their communication to the General Assembly's resolution last November recommending the French to refrain from the test, and to a letter signed by twenty-five Afro-Asian States expressing deep concern over the impending French test in the Sahara.

Our trade relations with France for the years 1956 and 1958 have not shown balanced results. In 1956, the imports from France amounted to £2,426,207 while export was



[MR NWODO]

£1,000,026. In 1958, it was, for import, £2,429,902 and for export £1,956,216. In each year, France secured nearly fifty per cent of the trade over us. This means that the hard earnings of our peasants population passed into the French purse with a view to swelling their national wealth. Our efforts and labour to build up French economy and prosperity have landed us into becoming a sacrificial lamb of this hostile and ungrateful nation so anxiously wanting to attain an iota of recognition in world atomic energy.

French total import trade with its overseas territories is recorded at £27,000,000 for 1958 and when it is considered that the bulk of French colonial territories are in Africa then it can be seen that all of this trade is carried on in Africa. I say ungrateful France because General de Gaulle, during the recent second World War had his temporary political asylum in the continent of West Africa. The young General stayed in Dakar as a member of the free French, which then resisted the capitulation of France by the Nazi regime. I am sure that if the people of Africa to whom he has now chosen to experiment with their lives and property were unfavourably disposed to him as he now is, there would have been no General de Gaulle let alone the conception of the atom bomb and its test in the Sahara. It is a common proof as Shakespeare has it in one of his writings that:

“Loneliness is young ambition’s ladder whereto the climber upwards turns his face, but once he attains the uppermost round, he then unto the ladder turns his back, looks in the clouds, scorns the base degrees by which he did ascend”.

This is true of our relations with France today. If there is any proof that Nigerian nationalists require for the N.C.N.C. policy of non-alliance with any particular bloc of the world, this irresponsible act of France is one. It is un-African to be hypocritical. It is un-African to lose faith with a friend in time of need. It is un-African to be pretentious. In matters of Foreign Affairs, the Opposition and Government are rarely indifferent and cannot afford the luxury and jeopardy of trifling with the affairs and safe custody of the State.

The Sahara test cost the French Government £15 million. £15 million is the sum the people

of Africa have contributed indirectly to swell the national income of France and justify its arrogance and obduracy to perpetuate this human atrocity on the continent of Africa. The total import figure of French trade with its colonial territories in 1958, is £27,000,000. As hon. Members are aware, the bulk of countries which are in French possession today are in Africa and they number nearly 30 million people. All these countries, including the entire African race, have been scorned and relegated to the background by General de Gaulle and the French Government. Our contention is not on the right of the General to test his atomic bomb, but on the morality, prudence and justification of his action i.e. the conducting of this test on our own land over and above our head no matter what the consequence might be. Yes, this helps to remind us that the people of Africa must realise to come together to co-operate, to help one another in order to have a formidable front which will be capable of promoting our economy and resisting all threats to our national sovereignty and identity. We know the fate of Abyssinia during the Italo/Abyssinian war. We still remember the dishonourable role played by the League of Nations in this war. N.A.T.O. and S.E.A.T.O. we are in none. A free and united Nigeria will encourage and lead the formation of a common Defence Treaty Organisation for the people of Africa, if in times of national panic such as this we are to rise as one people to repel any attempt to subjugate our race and nation, to ultimate condemnation and ghastly torture. The Sahara test adds nothing to the military strength of the West. It does, however, bring new hazards and make more desperately urgent the need for agreement to stop the spread of nuclear weapons. It is anticipated the Summit Conference now sitting in Geneva will make progress towards accelerating and acquiescing to the move for an all round control of nuclear disarmament. Mr General de Gaulle should at least be consoled and satisfied that his inferiority complex has been removed. One thing certain is that the greater the number of nations who possess nuclear devices, the greater is the danger that some fools would use them.

**Mr Speaker:** Debate therefore arises in this way: that the debate on the amendment covers the debate on the Motion. The debate is now open to Members.



**Mr G. C. Okeya** (Owerri Division): I rise to support the amendment to this Motion for two reasons. Firstly, it is relentless on the French Government to make Sahara a French laboratory for nuclear research despite the vehement protests of African leaders and States.

Secondly, because of the danger of the effects of the atom test on the people of West Africa in general and the people of Nigeria in particular. The present situation confronts the greater part of Africa North of the Equator. Almost everybody is conscious of this.

The contempt and disregard with which the French Government has treated the protests of African States is a sure evidence that France does not regard African Leaders as men whose opinions are to be respected. African Leaders are not against France possessing nuclear weapons but they are against using the Sahara as a laboratory for atomic tests which are fraught with immediate and remote dangers to life and health.

The men who know most of the perils of the atomic tests, men who understand the great issues involved are the most gloomy. Although the horrors of Hiroshima Atomic Bomb are fresh in our memories, the Bikini Atom Test on 1st of March, 1954 with its spread of destruction shocked the civilised world, it was in vain that the African States appealed to France as human beings to human beings, yet she remained resolute, unmoved and unshaken to carry out her first atom test on the 13th of February, 1960 at Reggane.

We have to ask ourselves what steps can be taken to prevent further Atomic Tests in the Sahara? If the answer is not found in resolutions and protests, since we cannot match force with force, by accepting this motion, the Government is associating itself indirectly with international organisations and measures bent on abolishing Atomic Tests and Nuclear War throughout the world.

On the 4th May, 1959 when the French preparations to hold atomic tests in the Sahara were confirmed by M. Debre, the French Premier, the whole North of the Equator was in a state of nervous tension and apprehension. On 22nd June, 1959, the Minister of the

Armed Forces, M. Guillaumant announced that the tests would not take place before the beginning of 1960, but the Sahara Atom Test was denoted on the 13th of February, 1960. This change of date is a sufficient proof that you cannot trust the French Government in the guarantee given by Debre.

Reactions to the Sahara Atom Tests were significant. The French Government remained obstinate and obdurate. In July, 1959, the Governments of Ghana, Morocco, and Nigeria sent notes requesting France to abandon her plans for the Sahara Atom Tests. On 6th July, 1959 a delegation of over 3,000 people was led by the Ghana Minister of Transport and Communication, Krobo Edusei to protest against the tests. The French Embassy refused to accept the petition of protest addressed to President de Gaulle. Imagine the insult and insolence, the contempt and disregard. On 7th July, 1959 the French Community in Madagascar approved of the tests. On 31st July, 1959 France rejected all the protests on the ground that Sahara is French territory and confirmed Debre's guarantee that the health of the local population and their livestock would be guaranteed 100 per cent. On 4th-8th August, 1959, the Monrovia Conference of Independent African States in a resolution vigorously denounced the French plans and proposed action against them in the United Nations Organisation. On 12th August, 1959 the Republic of Sudan, the Moroccan Government after five official notes to France had failed to gain consideration, asked on the 14th of August, 1959, the 14th Session of the United Nations to place on its agenda, the Sahara Test. The Premier of Mali and French Sudan while reaffirming that their Government approved French possession of nuclear weapons, opposed the holding of atomic tests in the Sahara. On the 17th September, 1959 our Prime Minister, Sir Tafawa Balewa with some Federal Ministers went to London and had talks with the British Prime Minister and the Colonial Secretary in which they emphasised Nigeria's apprehension at the projected Sahara tests. Mr Macmillan supported French assurances of safety and agreed to set up six monitoring Stations to evaluate and study the effects of the Tests. The overwhelming protests from African States, French Sudan, Germany, Russia, and so on culminated in the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of a resolution on



[MR OKEYA]

the 20th of November, 1959, supported by twenty-six Afro-Asian Countries, requesting France to withhold the tests in the Sahara. The United Nations General Assembly called on France to halt her plans to explode the Atomic Tests. An international team headed by a British clergyman, the Rev. Michael Scott, attempted to enter the Reggan area to stage a peaceful demonstration against the test but he was refused entry.

General de Gaulle added insult to injury, in replying to a press conference to a question on the United Nations debate, said:

"It seemed to me that the emotion expressed by those United Nations Members who opposed the French tests was so artificial and excessive that it showed nothing but an arbitrary manouvre against France".

From this brief historical survey of all attempts made to desist the French Government from carrying out the atom tests in the Sahara, it is quite clear that all that we can do to make France hear the language of our protest is Economic non-co-operation and non-violence. Switching over to the dangerous effects of the tests, people scarcely realise in imagination that the danger is to themselves and their children and grand-children, and not only to the dimly apprehended humanity. According to the Atomic Energy Commission in U.S.A. the dangerous effects of the tests are:

Contamination of the atmosphere by radio-active particles or deadly dust of rain; radiation exposure or intensive heat; residual radio-activity which is a threat to genetic safety of all people affected from generation to generation.

Those pathological changes give rise to hereditary diseases and monstrosities.

With your permission, I beg to quote from a book written by Pope Pius XII:

"In a nuclear explosion an enormous amount of energy, equivalent to several thousand million kilowatts is developed in an exceedingly short time. This energy is composed of electro-magnetic radiations of very great density, distributed over a vast gamut of wavelengths even to the most penetrating, and of tiny bodies produced by nuclear disintegration which are hurled at velocities close to that of light.

"This energy is transferred to the atmosphere, and within thousandths of a second it increases the temperature of the surrounding air masses by hundreds of degrees. Their displacement is violent, propagated at the speed of sound. On the earth's surface, in an area of many square kilometres, reactions of unimaginable violence take place. Materials are volatilised and utterly destroyed by direct radiation, by heat and by mechanical action, while an enormous amount of radio-active materials of varying life-span complete the destruction throughout their activity."

This also confirms that all people are against the test. If the French Government remains unshaken by the measures sought by this motion, after the 1st of October, 1960, I think it will be wise even to ask people who have bought things from French firms even on credit, not to pay them back. We must continue to arouse the moral conscience of the world and exert moral pressure to bear on France, and our policy with them, for economy, should be "non-co-operation and non-violence".

I agree with *As Sabah*, the independent paper in Tunis which says:

"The sons of Africa would know how to change the calamity of the explosion of the bomb into a calamity for France herself which would poison her future and pursue her like an external curse."

**Mr O. O. Ita (Eket Division):** I never intended to say anything this morning until I listened to the speeches delivered by the hon. the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. the Premier of the Region. It is a pity that the Motion has got to come to the floor of this House and not to the floor of the House of Representatives where it ought to be. But we cannot help it. We have with our eyes open erected a super-structure at Lagos which we are now living to regret. It is nobody's fault. It is the fault of the whole country. We cannot help it. We are like babies at the moment. We can only cry. We have got Britain as our father. Other countries have got France as their own father and we are all children everywhere. That is why this country of Europe will never respect our wishes. The hon. Premier and the man who



seconded his amendment have demonstrated that although it pays de Gaulle to be rash, it will not pay us to be rash. We shall give them little time to think twice before we proceed with the series of plans, and I think we the Opposition will not quarrel with that consideration. We will only say this that in future we would ask the Government to be firm and introduce an amendment to our law and cancel all contracts if any other country will treat us in the same way as France is treating us now because the Government in this Region has that power. We will not because of unfinished contracts with enemy Powers delay our actions until we are destroyed before we say anything. Next time we will not think of any contracts at all. The pity of the whole situation is this: In 1940 I saw this de Gaulle in this country. He was seeking an asylum to exist, and we gave him that, and now he is showing us his ingratitude by projecting all tests of atom bomb to destroy us and our children. We cannot help it. We will continue to be very hospitable even to the people who would destroy us later on. One other thing which really disturbs my mind is this. If we say that we will not bow, in what way are we going to show our own reactions to all these ill-treatments to us? All the independent countries in Africa have demonstrated that we do not want this test, yet they are brushed aside by a little country like France which is perhaps the weakest at the moment among the so-called great countries of the world. If we say that we will not accept this and we will only react to a few firms in the country, France will not be affected much because there are other parts of Africa which will be willing to trade with her and call France their fatherland; so that we stand always to be ridiculed every time in international circles. There is no time that all of us in Africa will come together to say we will hang together or live together, and that is the reason why these European countries always take advantage of our own people. What we should do now will be to impress upon our men who go to the Centre to see if they can move the head of that place to say something which will really mean a statement on behalf of about 40,000,000 of us in this country. Perhaps that will in itself make Britain think twice because it is difficult for any one of us to blame Britain. Britain pretends to be on friendly terms with France, Britain also

pretends to be on friendly terms with Nigeria and France ill-treats Nigeria and Britain thinks that it will pay her more to remain neutral or to fool the Nigerians because we are not yet ripe, and say that when monitors come monitors will tell us the quantity of the fall-out; but then what is the remedy after discovering the fall-out. Britain has not told us anything. Does it mean that if we discover the quantity of the fall-out that will prevent us from being affected? We have not been told so; Britain has only told us that she is coming to check the fall-out, and that is, if the fall-out is excessive we would have been killed as one man has remarked. That is the type of friendship we have with our British Master!

With these atom bomb tests we have a part of a new imperialism. There is no doubt that the old imperialism is going away, that we are being made to feel that we are going to receive our independence. But these people are threatening us with military stations here and there to protect the new found oil in Eastern Nigeria and other parts of Africa, and they say, "oh yes, these people are going to be independent and that we have no say over this independence". The technical know-how we do not possess; the mere education to control this our oil in our soil we do not have. So they remain there and use us as rulers only to sign away our wealth and heritage. That is our freedom as I see it now. What we can really do in this country will be to think very seriously about this situation and try to impress upon our people in the Centre to make a move from that end and to think very hard. I think the real place the atom bomb test should go is the Centre. (*Laughter*). Yes, it should be started there and that will make us think twice before we send people to that place. As one hon. Friend was saying the other day we heard rumours of going to Britain to sign peace pact, perhaps in the hope that they will come to protect us. Are they really coming to protect us? If so why not protect us from this atom bomb test?

Britain is not coming to protect us; rather it is coming to protect its interest in oil. I have not heard that Britain protects where it has no interest except Britain itself. I think I agree with Benard Shaw who said that "Britain is thinking of Britain and not of any other



[MR O. O. ITA]

country in the world". So that we should not fool ourselves. They say that we should sign peace pact and that after signing it they will protect us. They are not coming to protect us. If there is no interest they are not coming out. It is with the most serious feeling that all in this House should approve of this motion together with the amendment and we of the Opposition have agreed *in toto* that this is the last time we give any foreign country any concession to complete contracts. If they will not respect our wishes we will not respect their own and we should go all out to cancel all contracts. At least it will involve them in losses of money but on this occasion we grant the Premier the indulgence to accept that measure.

**The Minister of State (Information and Welfare) (Mr B. C. Okwu):** I rise to speak in support of the amendment. In doing so I would draw the attention of the House to the one single factor which is responsible for the inglorious manner in which the French people treated the whole of us, and that is bound up with the doctrine of imperialism. In Africa today there are two emerging forces that have come to grips. One is the forces of Pan-African Socialism and the other is the forces of new imperialism. To some people it has been widely acknowledged that there are new forces abroad today in Africa; these are the forces of African Nationalism. But I think the African people will be making a serious mistake if they think that imperialism is dead and gone. It is not dead, it is very much alive. The only thing is that imperialism has taken a new form and that new form is more subtle and more dangerous. Let us examine the test. In the first place, if there is anything like international morality one fails to understand why France, in spite of the resolution of the United Nations, proceeded with the Atom bomb test. In spite of the fact that the people of Africa, except the stooges living in certain sections of the French community, condemned the test, one fails to understand why and on what principle Charles de Gaulle carried out the test on African soil. You will remember, that since the return to power of the President of France his one absorbing ambition is to make France great; but you and I know that throughout the history of France she was never great. France was great in cooking and dancing

but never in military or other aspects, and I fail to see how the President of France should embark on a project to make France great or to restore the greatness which she never had. However, since Africa is free-for-all the only thing to do was to carry out this test on our soil. But I would like to make this clear, that if Britain and the United States or the leader of the N.A.T.O. Powers had done their duty, France should not have carried out this test. I am convinced that after the last world war France was so humiliated and impoverished that she could not balance her household budget. It was the policy of the United States that restored her economy. It was the bargain of Britain and the United States that gave France the courage to defy the unanimous opinion of the African people. How could Britain have the moral courage to ask France not to do a thing like carrying out the test when her performances in Africa have nothing to commend her, or is it the United States which is confused and confounded by the Negro question that will have the courage to ask France not to proceed? They have all one common objective and one destiny, and that is that this world is created by God and therefore should be run and ordered by the Imperialist Powers. I would like to say this, that as far as we are concerned in Africa the issue is how the African people can be united. The dangers and problems that will confront us in years ahead will be more serious than the one we had before, because there is a rise in the tide of Afro-Assian nationalism and the white man that has run and ordered the world is so frightened that there is a tendency for the white powers to get together. I say so because the era of Afro-Asian ascendancy is at hand. Therefore, the only way to impress upon you that we need to go on slowly is to show their military might. And as the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, a number of things have happened very lately which will convince every one in this business of imperialism. Britain had military exercises in Lybia; the French people carried out naval exercises along the West Coast of Africa after the atomic bomb test, just to tell talkatives in Nigeria and Ghana that they have a mighty Navy and could land on any soil if they so desired.

We here in the Eastern Region have demonstrated in our humble way our attitude towards the Atom bomb test in the Sahara. You will



remember that during the Supplementary Budget we provided a modest sum to assist in the campaign against the atom bomb test in the Sahara desert. Earlier the Committee of Technical Co-operation South of the Sahara offered the Eastern Regional Government the services of ten experts in town planning, and the Government decided to reject this offer because we felt that we needed a France that would respect our candid opinion and not a France that would lend the services of a Town Planner only to be destroyed after the planning had been completed. I want also to point out that in future if France carries out this test, apart from what has been suggested in the motion backed up in the amendment, it is suggested that the youths of this country should remember that the only language which the Imperialist understands and respects is positive action. If it is true that young French men are prepared to allow themselves to be used in mass massacre against the Algerian people for daring to say that Algeria is not France and that Algerians are not French men why cannot our young people prepare for a sacrifice of this magnitude. We can only fight out our salvation. We cannot get our salvation through the British or the Americans because they have their own interests. They must lead and they must survive and for their survival the economic potentialities of Africa are indispensable. Therefore I believe that quite apart from moving motions, we should be able to show by the way we move, the way we behave, the way we talk and the way we quarrel within ourselves, that there are greater issues than these domestic squabbles. We must be able to show that we are really determined; that we are really serious that the whole Africa should be free from the shackles of imperialism in all its shapes and forms.

I beg to support.

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Mr R. O. Ukuta, M.B.E.):** I beg to support the Motion as amended. We all know the French people and we all know the history of France. In the gloomy war years of the Second World War both the British and the African people helped to save France from complete ruin and apart from them there could have been no France today. Let me sound this note of warning. Another war—third world war—is in the

making. If our so-called masters close their eyes and ears to our needs, God will help us. For instance in 1935 the League of Nations put a deaf ear to the appeal of Abyssinia for help but the King of Abyssinia only said that God and history would remember their judgment.

I think France has reasons to be grateful to Africans for saving her from the last war during the devastating blow of Hitler. France should not be unduly elated because she has been able to test an atom bomb when other First-class Powers are engaged in space research, such as the one the Russians have done recently by shooting at the moon. Events like the atom bomb tests in the Sahara should not make France unnecessarily proud. After all, Germany under the power of Hitler did not hesitate to crush France during the Second World War. But today France wants to show us that she is a First-class Power.

All I want to say is that France should not think that we can have no saviour. God will always come to our aid. If the British people cannot protect us let us send an S.O.S. to Soviet Russia or any other Power that will be willing to protect us from this cruel challenge by the French. The world must not think that the pigmentation of our bodies is a sin. It is not. My heart rebels when I remember that we are not free as Ghana. If we are free as Ghana I think this motion has come at a proper time.

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier (Mr J. O. Umolu):** I just want to say a few words about this motion as amended by the hon. the Premier. Much has already been said about this motion and there is only one aspect I want you to consider and that is that in spite of the amendment the Leader of the Opposition reminded the House this morning that there was a time when this question of protest was even carried out as far as the United Nations. Certain Free States associated themselves with this but I would like us to remember what had been the role of both Great Britain and the United States of America. Nigeria is a Colonial Territory. We look forward to Great Britain to handle our foreign affairs because we are not yet free and that is why I want to remind the House about the danger of world bloc. Great Britain, France and the United States are in a bloc. More so, Great Britain can never give



[MR UMOLU]

us protection against the bloc they have formed with France. They belong to the N.A.T.O.

In the world today we hear of the danger of cold war. What is this cold war? The cold war is a conflict of two world idealogies. The world is split into two—the Eastern sector and the Western sector. Even though we are free and France determines to carry out the test in the Sahara what will be our feelings. It is quite good for this House to debate the motion. We can boycott French goods, we can even boycott every article imported into this country from France. Some of you who are economists will understand me. The question of boycotting goods will not be effective. For example, goods are manufactured in South Africa. You have many Negroes who take part in those Industries. If the whole world boycotts South African goods one should think of what will be the reaction of the Negroes in South Africa whom we are out to champion their cause. That is the way I view the question of boycotting goods.

The point I am trying to make is that when this country is free in October we will require a firm Foreign Policy. Without a firm Foreign Policy, if France determines to carry out its atom test, we cannot bring home our feelings to them and beat sense into de Gaulle's head. That may require the flexibility of our Foreign Policy. It had happened in Egypt. If Nasser had not flexible foreign policy but aligned Egypt with the Western Bloc and then France and Great Britain because of their economic mainstay as far as the Suez Canal is concerned, Nasser should have been in the loss but Nasser won admirably and when the two powers wanted to suppress him he had the chance of appealing to another Power to give them money and what happened? Of course, you know Britain never lose in wars! So in Britain the Suez Canal war is known as "the Suez Canal Exhibition". To them, it was never a war! The success of Nasser was because he was supported by a big rock that forced Britain and France to evacuate their forces.

I am therefore appealing in support of this Motion that we should think seriously about what that be Nigerian Foreign Policy after our independence. That will enable us to make friends with every nation that will support us.

I beg to support the amendment.

*Where upon Mr G. C. Okeya rose in his place and claimed to move—"That the Question be now put".*

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

*Question on the Amendment put and agreed to.*

*Question on the Motion as amendment put and agreed to.*

Resolved: That in view of the declared resolve of the French Government to carry out more Atom Tests in the Sahara in the future this House calls upon the Government to issue directives to all Ministries, Public Corporations, Local Government Councils and Voluntary Agencies laying it down that no public funds must be spent in the purchase of French goods and services should the French Government carry out further tests in the Sahara or any other part of Africa.

*Sitting suspended at 12 noon.*

*Sitting resumed at 12.30 p.m.*

#### ESTABLISHMENT OF AFRICAN HOUSING SCHEME

**Mr M. N. Onwuma** (Aba Division): I beg to move:

That this House calls on the East Regional Government to re-establish African Housing Scheme for Civil Servants without prejudice to the Regional Government participation in the Nigeria Building Society Scheme.

Earlier this morning we have been treated to a most inspiring and brilliant dissertation on foreign policy which is being sadly neglected by the Federal Government. But besides nationalism which can compel us to fight for our country, which other forces can compel us to fight for ourselves? One such force which can compel us to fight for ourselves is self-preservation. In that intuition it is assumed that the forces included are that, whatever our position in this world may be, from the smallest man to the greatest man, we are actuated by the desire to provide food for ourselves, desire to provide shelter for ourselves and off-springs and those after us, and also to find clothing for ourselves. Besides these there are no other forces. You must



clothe yourself, provide shelter for yourself before looking for other additions, and the Regional Government has taken reasonably adequate care of providing food, if you care, in the form of wages and salaries for civil servants. Besides that also the force that can compel us to fight for ourselves is social securities which our Government provides for us. As far as this Region is concerned the number of social measures in the interest of the citizens that has been undertaken by the Government are many and for that we are extremely grateful.

Directly or indirectly this Regional Government has been able to provide medical facilities in practically every Division of the Region. Secondly, sustained effort has been made to push the progress of education beyond frontiers which were not possible in the past 10 or 15 years. Certainly phenomenal progress has been made not only in these spheres but in several other spheres.

There is one aspect of social security which has assumed great importance in different parts of the world, but which I think we are somehow overtly or covertly neglecting—that is providing adequate housing scheme for our civil servants. So far as that goes, if the Government shows the light I am quite satisfied that the Corporations, Commercial Firms, and other bodies may emulate steps taken by the Government and provide some sort of housing scheme for their workers. It is one thing to pay Gorsuch arrears or to pay Mbanefo arrears or grant 20 per cent increases, but believe me that as soon as this money is paid to workers, some landlords or practically all land lords will pounce upon workers and remove the money from them in the way of rents. I may be treading on dangerous grounds because I do not know how many Ministers, Provincial Commissioners, and Parliamentary Secretaries are landlords. But certainly it is quite true that throughout the length and breadth of this Region the fate of workers as far as housing is concerned is not what it should be. Several years ago there were erected such buildings, examples of which we find in Enugu, like the Secretariat Quarters. These houses were built long ago. In recent times we have not got buildings equivalent to such buildings, and these buildings were built when people were not as progressive as we suppose they are today. I know that the Government has made certain efforts but I

am emphasising that the efforts so far are not enough.

During the last Session of the House the Minister of Finance asked for a sum of money to be raised in the Supplementary Appropriation Bill (see Volume 3 No. 32 of the Parliamentary Debates of the Eastern House of Assembly—Wednesday 17th February, 1960; page 55, about the last paragraph). Mr Speaker, I beg to quote:

“It is true that previously there existed a Staff Housing Scheme in this Region.”  
That is a very important statement.

“It is true that previously there existed a Staff Housing Scheme in this Region”.  
And he goes on to say:

“Government voted £20,000 which you will all find in Capital Development Scheme for the African Housing Scheme. Later on in the year the Government was approached by the Nigerian Building Society which operates in Lagos and which also wants to operate here, asking us to join in forming a company in this Region, and Government accepted and took shares of £150,000 in this Company. Government later decided that instead of putting in more money to the £20,000 already provided for the Staff Housing Scheme, the Staff Housing Scheme should now be merged with the Nigerian Building Society that has been formed, first because Government has no capital to put into the Staff Housing Scheme after putting in about £150,000 into the Company.”

Then he goes on to state the amount of money that can be taken out from the Nigerian Building Society. The remarkable point is that it is not possible, judging from the conditions of the Nigerian Building Society, for all Government civil servants, especially those who are in most need of some kind of small houses, to benefit from this Building Society arrangement. For instance the interest is extremely very high and the Government has agreed that these workers, whenever they do obtain this loan, will pay 5 per cent and Government will pay 3½ per cent. To begin with, it is not in the best interest of the Region for the Government to pay the excess 3½ per cent. As a matter of fact, the Minister went on to explain—I am quoting from the same Speech:



[MR ONWUMA]

"The interest rate is 8½ per cent. For the African staff of this Region Government felt that this rate of interest was going to be a heavy burden especially when it is considered that it was previously at 3 per cent and so Government decided that African staff who want to take advantage of this Building Society could do so but they should only build for themselves to live in and if they build on Crown land with the hope of living in the house after it is completed, whether on Crown land or in rural areas, Government will meet up the balance in the interest payment— . . ."

That is, the workers should pay 5 per cent. Remember that originally it was 3 per cent; it is now going to be increased to 5 per cent, and Government will have also to pay 3½ per cent in order to make up the 8½ per cent. I humbly submit to the Government that this is not in the best interest of the Government and the civil servants of this Region. First of all, the interest is now going to be increased and in addition Government is going to be called upon to defray 3½ per cent interest on top of that. And so, that is the primary motive in bringing about this Motion. I thought that it would be better if a kind of Housing Scheme was being maintained by the Government in the interest of the civil servants. I know that the scale is not the same for everyone. There are some who can afford to borrow from the Nigerian Building Society and who can afford to borrow with some security, but there are others for whom it is impossible to borrow. What is more important, it will be highly appreciated if some sort of social security which appears not to have kept pace with the rest of the social securities which our Government is providing will now receive more attention from the Government. I think that will give the workers more satisfaction than any perennial increases in salaries which land-lords like Mr D. A. Nnaji will take away from them.

Now, Sir, as a matter of fact—remember the Motion says "without prejudice to the Nigerian Building Society"—if you survey those who are responsible, I mean the brains behind the Nigerian Building Society, you will find that the Chairman is an expatriate. (*An hon. Member: And so what?*) And so what!

The hon. Member does not know an element of Economics; he does not know that when he promotes foreign investment he is certainly exporting his capital knowingly or unknowingly. Surely he is exporting the capital which could have been used for some sort of development. The Director of the Nigerian Building Society is an expatriate, and so it continues with the whole thing punctuated with one or two Nigerians. But we have a number of Solicitors in this country who could be injected into this Company. Why import an expatriate Solicitor?

I say there are a number of workers who will have no security with which to obtain loans from the Nigerian Building Society and I do not know whether the Executive Council is prepared to guarantee these loans; the rate of repayment is staggering. What I am going to emphasise is that quite apart from this new Building Society which can operate, we can afford to keep back the £20,000 and put something on it and embark upon providing say about twenty small houses for the clerks every year over a number of years. You will see that, let's say, for ten years we will have 200 houses. I am quite sure that the civil servants of this Region will be ever grateful to the Government for doing that, however small or microscopic it may appear to be. Any Housing Scheme must be as far as possible comprehensive. The new Building Society builds for superscale servants. You will realise that superscale servants can afford to obtain loans and repay on the terms which these people have quoted. Therefore, I would like to call upon our Government which has been kind to us in the past and which we hope will continue to be kind to us in the future, to remove the serious difficulties and provide the workers, especially the junior civil servants of this Region, with a Housing Scheme that will be not only satisfactory but also satisfying.

**Mr E. U. Eronini** (Owerri Division): In seconding this Motion I beg to say a word or two.

I want to draw a line between this Housing Scheme for civil servants and providing these civil servants with houses to live in. They are two different things—giving money to civil servants to own houses in a place



like Enugu here is a different thing from getting houses built for civil servants. The civil servant who is given a loan to build a house in a place like Enugu may not live in it. If he lives there but later on goes on transfer, somebody who relieves him may not live in the house. So that by giving civil servants loans to build houses, Government has not, as a matter of fact, provided them with quarters.

As the mover of the Motion said, the old Government—the Colonial Government, built in every station Government houses for junior servants clerk quarters, artisan quarters or marine quarters, for the workers. (*Several Hon. Members: And E.R.D.C. quarters*) Yes, E.R.D.C. quarters.

Thus the Government will do well by even borrowing from the Building Society to put up houses from which they will get interest. That interest will pay the eight and half per cent they will give to the Building Society, and there will still be some money to repay the loan. After building the houses, if the Government fixes the rent at about £1 a room, enough money would be realised to offset the loan. The time has come when in places like Enugu, Port Harcourt, Aba, Owerri, in fact all over the Region, Government should have clerks quarters well built so that whoever goes there stays there and when he goes away another man coming to relieve him finds a house to stay. (*Interruption: What about when he retires?*) When he is given money to build a house, when he retires, he goes there. Another man goes to work in the same place and finds it difficult to get a house. Government will ever remain to find difficulty with its housing scheme, because this type of people you give money when they go away, there is another set coming in and you must provide for them. But when you build houses, these houses will ever remain. I am, therefore, asking the Government to think seriously. They have got money in the Building Society, and if they withdraw some money they are loan-worthy or credit-worthy... (*Interruptions*). Even Ministers who are more credit-worthy, still live in Government quarters! So the clerks, when you give them money to build houses, they will still live in Government quarters. Government should build more quarters for the clerks and for the artisans,

and its burden would be lessened a bit. Interest would also be derived from the scheme.

It will be a good investment on the part of the Government and I therefore second the Motion.

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

May I begin by thanking the Mover of this Motion for the compliments paid to this Government in the various amenities he mentioned were provided so far. I want to reassure him also that this Government is quite alive to the problem of housing for its staff.

At the last session of the House I took pains to explain to the hon. Members this question of the Government Staff Housing Scheme. I had thought then that I made the relation between the Government Staff Housing Scheme and the Nigeria Building Society clear; but it appears there is still some misconception of the whole idea. I shall endeavour once more to explain and it is hoped that the Mover of this Motion will see his way clear to withdraw after that.

May I begin by emphasizing right away that the Government Staff Housing Scheme established for the benefit of civil servants *is still in existence*, working in co-operation with the Nigeria Building Society. I must say I regret having given the impression here last month that the Government Staff Housing Scheme no longer exists. It has not been abolished. What happened was that the Regulations under which the Scheme operated was amended to enable the civil servants who wish to build houses in the main urban areas to obtain a guaranteed loan at a subsidised rate of interest, from the Nigerian Building Society, a private Society in which the Government invested a sum of £150,000. In this connection it is significant to note that the Building Society will only lend money to a civil servant to build on Crown Land and not in a rural area but the Government Staff Housing Scheme still does that (give loan to a civil servant to build any where in the Region a living house).

This arrangement with the Nigeria Building Society has obvious advantages. It enables



[DR IMOKE]

more civil servants to obtain loans to build their own houses. Unlike the Government, the Nigeria Building Society has at its disposal large funds devoted to financing private house construction. As the hon. Members will observe from the current Estimates the Government voted only £20,000 for Government Housing Scheme and for the period of the Current Development Programme only £48,500 was provided.

This could hardly be adequate to make loans but to a few civil servants. It was to remedy this situation that Government entered into special arrangement with the Nigerian Building Society. The effect of this is to enable civil servants to obtain loans from the Society on the same terms as they would have enjoyed precisely.

Although the Nigerian Building Society charges interest at the rate of 8½%, a civil servant who obtains loan from it pays only 5%. The Government pays the difference. This rate of interest is comparable to what a civil servant pays in the Western Region under the Western Region Staff Housing Scheme. A civil servant can obtain a loan up to four times his salary or £6,000—whichever is greater under this scheme.

Since the inception of the Government Staff Housing Scheme about 40 civil servants have applied and received approval.

I want to re-emphasise, in conclusion, that the Government Staff Housing Scheme is still in existence. Its Board of management appointed by the Government still functions and there is, therefore, no question of re-establishing the Scheme.

I therefore appeal to my hon. Friend, the Member from Aba and mover of this Motion to withdraw the Motion.

**Mr Onwuma:** In view of the explanation given, I beg to withdraw.

**Mr Speaker:** Has the hon. Member leave of the House to withdraw?

**Hon. Members:** Yes.

*Motion by leave withdrawn.*

## RETRENCHMENT OF COAL MINERS

**Mr Onwuma:** I rise once again to move:

That this House endorses the action taken by the Premier of the Eastern Region, in persuading the Federal Prime Minister to intervene and put a stop to the retrenchment of Coal Miners until the whole issue is reviewed.

On the 16th of last month when this House assembled you will remember very well that you did suspend sitting for about five or ten minutes waiting for the arrival of the Premier. Some of us who did not know what the delay was all about were, of course, in suspense. Shortly afterwards the Premier arrived and gave us to understand that he and the Leader of the Opposition and some other leading Members of the Executive Council had been out to see the Coal Miners who were waiting outside the House of Assembly. That indeed was a great gesture and it was the embodiment of the Premier who represents the socialist outlook which our great party portrays. I know that were it in some other circumstance, it could have been possible for the Premier and other Members of the Executive Council and perhaps Parliamentarians to bully the workers who were lying along the street up there and dismiss the issue by saying that it is a Federal issue and that it has nothing to do with us at all. It was a noble gesture indeed not only to pacify the workers by the most tender approach but also to fly to Lagos to persuade the feeble Federal Government to do something.

We are extremely grateful to the Premier for doing that for if we were to wait on the Federal Government the problem could not have been solved to the present extent. It is true we all know that the bulk of the miners are people from this Region. We have been campaigning for people to return from Fernando Po to be given jobs in this Region and to dismiss as many as some thousands of miners would be a great social injustice and so with that I can shower encomiums on the Premier for taking that step. We hope that the Federal Government will take step not only on this issue but on some other matters although some Members of the Federal Government take great interest in receiving foreign titles—even N.C.N.C. Ministers receiving foreign titles which is a



great shame. I imagine that that is one of the reasons why the Federal Government cannot put certain things right which are quite wrong and they know them to be so. If any Federal matter comes up in this Region we must put our feet down until the present question is reviewed and the matter put right.

It is true that the coal miners could have been dismissed without any general review of the whole issue. I must say that the step taken by the Premier and the Executive Council on behalf of the whole House was indeed in keeping with our desire and what I intend is for this House to endorse that action in a formal way. That is why I have moved this Motion.

**Mr W. Abengowe** (Aba Division): I rise to support the Motion. The Motion does not entail much debate. The action of the Premier in this matter is a noble gesture which recommends itself to both sides of the House.

Firstly, it is a right step in the right direction.

Secondly, it clearly demonstrates the policy on which the N.C.N.C. was founded; namely, the building of a Socialist and Welfare State in Nigeria.

Thirdly, it has inspired more confidence in the workers towards this Government.

Fourthly, it has demonstrated to the arch-enemies of the progress of this Region that with realistic approach our problems can find easier solutions.

Fifthly, it is a technical victory for the new Premier and it has belied those who say that the former Premier did not train any lieutenant.

When we attended the Supplementary Budget Session last month, the miners besieged us and little did we expect that the uprising could be so easily controlled. The Premier took the bull by the horn and today the Region is quiet.

The problem of labour is very intricate. It is common with human beings. The problem which now confronts the Federal Government in the case of the miners is not unusual or unexpected. In this age of scientific discoveries when machinery reduces the use of

manpower, it will be appreciated that more and more of these problems are bound to rise.

The appointment of the present Commission of Inquiry in my opinion is not the solution to the problem but only a check and a means of finding a solution. The Federal Government should not be satisfied by finding the solution only to the problem of miners, but to the problems that are bound to confront other workers in other sections of work where dieselisation and the use of machinery will be introduced.

As I said earlier, the N.C.N.C. aims at building a Welfare State. The promptness with which this matter was handled is an indication of our sincerity towards Nigerian workers. Worse situations have arisen in other parts of this country among workers, but were not so promptly controlled. No individual or Government has pleasure in retrenching its workers. By the action of the Eastern Premier, thousands of workers who would have been thrown out of their jobs to join the unemployed men have been able to maintain themselves and their families. They have also contributed to the Regional fund by the payment of their taxes. This intervention and timely control of the situation could be regarded as the greatest achievement of this Government in labour upheavals within recent years. I am satisfied that by this action the workers of this Region will be in a better position to assess the Government which protects their interest most. Now the question is: should machinery and dieselisation be introduced in Corporations wholesale to displace workers? My answer is no. While I am not against these faster and quicker ways of production, I feel that their introduction should be coupled with finding other means of livelihood for workers that are bound to be displaced. This suggestion is not only for the Federal Government but for this and the other Governments of the Federation.

This Motion is straightforward and tantamounts to a vote of confidence in the Premier. I am certain that it has all the qualities to recommend it to this House. This Motion also reaffirms our zeal and ambition towards building a Socialist and Welfare State. It has, above all, demonstrated our appreciation to the Premier for a job so well done.

I beg to second.



**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Justice (Mr D. A. Nnaji):** I rise to support the Motion. In doing so, I wish to express the satisfaction of Udi Division whose sons are mostly affected. I say so because four-fifths of the miners belong to Udi Division. This action of the Premier and the Executive Council has saved a lot of trouble and lives. I remember that in 1949 there was a very bad incident in the Coal mine. There was shooting because nobody paid heed to the cries of the workers and if such action which the Premier took when the miners demonstrated outside this House was taken then, what happened then should not have happened. During that time I happened to be the Secretary of the Udi Divisional Council. We tried to solve the problem in an amicable way but all that happened was that the workers were ordered to be shot. When we went closer we saw all the dead workers struggling in a pool of blood. Now, when the miners demonstrated that the coal industry was at the verge of collapse, the Premier, without minding his position, went down to the people and talked to them as his men and assured them that he would do something even though this Government has no power over the Coal Industry. I think that as a result of the visit of the Premier to the Federal Prime Minister, a Commission of Inquiry has been set up. We hope that the setting up of this Inquiry will be the end of the problem facing the coal industry. To attribute the present wave of burglary and robbery to the coal miners is wrong. Anybody who has gone to the village to see the number of people who were sent out of job because of the dieselisation of the Railway Corporation will be sorry for their wives and children. One of such Colliery worker who was retrenched thought of how to maintain his wife and children and committed suicide. People have now started to send gifts to the deceased miner's family. The people of my constituency are happy that a son of Udi Division is now the Chairman of the Coal Corporation. We of the Udi Division join to congratulate the Premier on the strong action which he has taken. We assure him that we of the Division will continue to support him as we had done before.

I support this Motion because it is non-contentious.

**Mr A. J. Ekpe (Opobo Division):** When the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition

joined to address the miners here, I think everybody realised that both the Government and the Opposition were one in sympathy for the position of the miners. I had thought that the whole of this Motion tended to suggest something more helpful rather than merely endorsing the action of the Premier. I think that what this House should do is to find a more positive way, that is, to ask the Government to do something more positive to help the miners. The question of the retrenchment of miners or the impending retrenchment of miners is an economic one and it is the duty of the Government, without waiting to be praised, to take the initiative to see that some arrangements are made for the establishment of more industries to absorb the people to be retrenched, not only in the mines and other industries in the Region, but also in the Oil Palm Industry which will very soon be in the same position with the coal mining industry. This is because we have been told that oil is being developed from various sources and within a short time the palm oil industry is going to be out of the world market and many people will be thrown out of job as a result. In the Investment Possibilities White Paper Government published a list of industries which will be established in this Region—for instance, at page 9 of that paper, we have industries like Aluminium sheets, Asbestos Cement, Bicycle Assembly, Plastic Manufacturing, Glass Factory, Shoes and Footwear, Tar from Enugu Coal. The possibilities of establishing these industries should be more effectively explored and the necessary capital made available through loans, both internal and external, if possible. In this way, we can be more positive in our appreciation of the present situation in which the coal miners find themselves. I think the Premier himself knows that this is not a stage when he would continue to be praised by his supporters, particularly by people who are lobbying for appointments. *(Laughter)*.

Government should appraise the whole situation because, as I have said earlier, this is purely an economic question and it requires Government to take positive action by way of investigating the possibilities of establishing industries. That is the point I want to make and I hope that in endorsing this Motion the Government will take a very serious view of



that. As I said earlier, it is not merely endorsing the action of the Premier but urging the Government to do something more positive.

**The Minister of State (Information and Welfare) (Mr B. C. Okwu):** On behalf of the Government Bench, I wish to thank the Mover of the Motion and those who have spoken in support of it. It will be necessary to draw attention to the fact that the action of the Premier did establish one thing, and, that is the importance which the Premier and the Government place on the welfare of the workers and masses of the Region. It is quite true that Coal is not a Regional responsibility, but we cannot forget the fact that those who are immediately affected by the present position of the Coal Industry are people from this Region and we do not want to stick to the fact that Coal is not our responsibility.

The Premier went to Lagos as he promised to the demonstrators and after conferring with the Federal Prime Minister two things happened. First was that the previous proposal to dismiss more workers from the industry was suspended and later a commission was appointed to go into the whole problem of the coal industry.

In the first place I do not agree that it is fair to describe the Federal Government as "evil". I say this because the Federal Government, we must bear in mind, was formed only a couple of weeks ago and it is a Coalition Government and being a Coalition Government, it is not possible for one particular Party's point of view to be adopted in the Federal Government policy. What is more, that Government, like every other Government, requires time to carry out its policies and it is premature for anyone to pass judgment on the Federal Government.

I want also to emphasise the fact that the reaction of the Federal Government, or the Federal Prime Minister, has clearly shown one thing and that is, more often than not, we succeed by co-operating with each other than by pulling from different ends of the rope and that is what we hope will mark the future relationship between this Government and the Federal Government.

I want Members also to bear in mind that the Coal Industry throughout the world is passing through dangerous crises due to a shift by users of coal to a new and cheaper form of fuel. We have had occasion to criticise the policy of dieselisation by the Railway Corporation and by the Electricity Corporation of Nigeria. We did that not in any way diminishing the comparative merits of diesel over coal-burning means of transport, but we felt that it is only common sense to remember that coal is our home industry and whatever the merits of diesel, we should support our home industry. Our coal put the country in a very good position in those early days when diesel was unknown. It was on coal more than any other form of fuel that the economy of this country was based and we felt that it was sheer injustice for coal to be left without a future. If you go to a country like Germany, you will find that most Germans ride in German cars and most British people ride in British cars, although American cars may be more attractive . . .

**Mr K. J. N. Okpokam (Ikom Division):** Point of Order. Standing Order 32 (5).

**Mr Speaker:** Standing Order 32 (5):

"Members shall not make unseemly interruptions while any Member is speaking."

Will Mr Ekpe please take note of that.

**Mr Okwu:** I do hope that this Commission which has been appointed now will go in fullest detail into the problems of the coal industry. You will see that one thing begets another. After the Railway Corporation has helped to keep the coal industry, this Corporation is suffering now; it may be it will be the turn of the Electricity Corporation in due course. I do hope that this Commission which has been appointed and the one which is looking into the future of the Railway Corporation will be able to evolve a new policy with emphasis on the needs of our own economy, our own people, rather than trying to push up the industry of the imperialistic powers and letting our own die off or continue without any future at all. I do hope too that members will appreciate that it is all very easy to get up on the floor of the House and talk of more positive approach and finding new industries and providing capital, etc. The point is that



[MR OKWU]

Government published its White Paper on this scheme, outlining the investment possibilities in the Region, but it must also be borne in mind that it will be for the would-be investors to examine these places for what they are worth and decide whether conditions are as favourable as claimed or whether they could obtain better conditions elsewhere, and whether coming to invest in the Region will be in their own interest. It is our wish, and we have amply demonstrated that by making conditions as favourable as we can afford. In doing so we take into account, the need of making sure that we do not enter into a new form of slavery. We have done that and I think any fair minded person will not attack the Government for not taking a more positive approach.

When hon. Ekpe spoke I was very attentive in the hope that he was going to come out with positive ideas. After talking loudly to the gallery he went out without making any point. As far as we are concerned if more positive suggestions can come from the Opposition, the Government will be only too happy to consider them.

*Question put and agreed to.*

Resolved: That this House endorses the action taken by the Premier of the Eastern Region, in persuading the Federal Prime Minister to intervene and put a stop to the retrenchment of Coal Miners until the whole issue is reviewed.

#### ORDER OF THE DAY

##### Governor's Speech (Debate on the Address)

(SIXTH ALLOTTED DAY)

*Order read for resuming adjourned debate on Question—(15th March):—*

That this House expresses its loyal and dutiful thanks to His Excellency the Governor for His Excellency's Most Gracious Speech addressed to both Houses of the Legislature from the Throne.

*Question again proposed.*

**Mr J. W. E. Anaba** (Obubra Division): I rise to join arms with my other colleagues who have spoken in favour of the motion of thanks to His Excellency for His Gracious Speech from the Throne.

Throughout His Excellency's Speech, nothing has been said about the tarring of the Ediba-Obubra road. This road was badly done in 1957 by N.E.M.C.O. and no person who might happen to visit the six mile pace then tarred would agree that the road had ever been tarred.

It is very shameful, it is very shocking that Government has refused to tar for the people of Obubra the one and only road. If this is not done, what more of the promise which Government has committed itself to construct a road from Obubra to Ikom. As far as means of transport is concerned, nothing is more essential to the people than the tarring of Ediba-Obubra and cutting a track from Obubra-Iyamoyong road junction to Ikom.

*Town Planning—Ugep:* The modern idea of town planning should be introduced to all newly created Urban areas in the Region. I would like Ugep to be planned in order to avoid congestion of houses and constant epidemic diseases.

Last year on the floor of this hon. House I thanked the Government for having granted Urban status to Ugep but warned that it should not be a mimic show. It should be placed on the same level of amenities as her counterpart in other provinces in the Region.

*Water Supply—Ugep:* In page 22 and at paragraph 95 of His Excellency's Speech, I notice that Ugep Urban with a teeming population of approximately well over 18,000 has not been included in the list for water supply.

Water supply is really a necessity at Ugep. I would like pipe-borne water supply system to be introduced. This should be done in no distant date. The people have been suffering from scarcity of water from time immemorial. The population would have increased and even doubled if the people had got good water to drink.



**Buildings:** In page 22 and at paragraph 97, here again Obubra has not been included although I mentioned on the floor of this hon. House that the building of a new District Office at Obubra was very essential and should receive Government prior attention. I explained the congestion and said that the only remedy would be to build a new one or extend the present one.

**Education:** The present system of Education is very attractive. I understand that teachers in Government schools with the necessary educational requirements could now be promoted to senior posts. I would like this amenity to be extended to teachers in private agency schools in view of the fact that the conditions of service of all teachers are now identical.

Furthermore, I would like Government to instal Radio sets in all schools in the Region whether assisted or unassisted in order to keep the children daily informed of current events in the country and the outside world in general. If Ghana as far behind as 1935 and with a population of approximately five million and whose revenue is self-poised could extend this amenity to her little ones in order to encourage education; I cannot see why we in the Eastern Region cannot be able to introduce this mass-education catching policy.

Although this hon. House does not control the functions of Police, I would like to take this opportunity to make a passing remark; after all Eastern Region is a part and parcel of the Federation.

I do not speak as if I am holding brief for the Police, rather I am urged by sympathy as to why this class of hard-working men should not be held in high esteem. If the information at my disposal as regards salary status is correct, then, the salary conditions of service favours only those in the upper segment of the Force. That is to say those who wear belt across their shoulders. There would not have been this class of men if there were to be no constables. There are unfortunate and redundant constables who at certain times remain constables for upwards of ten to fifteen years while others are accelerated and in no

time become N.C.O.s and eventually climb up to senior posts. Under this condition, I would like to call upon this Government to persuade the Federal Government to amend the salary status of the Police. In my opinion, recruits should be initially started with £120 per annum as against the present £90 per annum. I would like further to call upon this Government to persuade the Federal Government to introduce the wearing of "good conduct badges" which carry emoluments other than "good work done" certificates without award or emolument. Good C.B.s are exactly like stripes worn by N.C.O.s but they are much smaller in size and face downwards. These good conduct badges render the salary of a constable who wears a lot of them very near to that of an N.C.O. or in most cases higher. This system if followed should very much promote efficiency in the Police Force. The two major essences which promote good administration rest on the shoulders of the Police, namely, the dignity of the Government and the execution of law and order.

While I deplore the poor conditions of services of junior Police officers, I am not in favour that Standard VI should form the basis of enlistment into the Police Force. After all, a man who has got to climb up to the senior post and whose duties would have to be one to embrace the public should be a well read scholar.

Furthermore, I would like to report that on or about the 5th of last month there was fire accident at Obubra in which about ten Ibo chaps and five Ibibio chaps lost their merchandise when all the Obubra Station market stalls got burnt. The cause of the fire has not been known and the origin cannot be traced. These Ibo chaps are from Awka Division of Onitsha Province—some of them have been in Obubra as far back as 1939. These men have been made to suffer impecunious situation because of the heavy losses sustained. I would like the Government to enquire into the circumstances of the accident and to obtain statistics of the individual cost of losses sustained from each and every one of the victim, so that they might be considered for reimbursement.

**Mr O. B. Nalelo (Ogoni Division):** I rise to associate myself with the other speakers. I



[MR NALELO]

congratulate the Government for the achievement made so far in the Eastern Region as contained in the Speech from the Throne. I wish to start my comments with the Legislature.

At page 2 paragraph 6 of the Speech it is stated that history was made in the Eastern Region when on the 8th January, the first meeting of the Eastern House of Chiefs was held. It is gratifying to note that after a long struggle by the Opposition, the House of Chiefs in the Eastern Region has been a reality. It was interesting to watch the Chiefs walking up to the Chamber of the Eastern House with adornments according to their different traditional dresses. It seems to me that some of the Chiefs merely came for exhibition of traditional adornment. Some of them were covered with large umbrellas by people and others carrying the edge of their robes and this state of affairs disturbed traffic.

**Mr Speaker:** Order, order. Does not the hon. Member think that the best place to criticise Chiefs is the House of Chiefs?

**Mr Nalelo:** I merely wanted to say something about the Chiefs because as we have come together, some of the things that are not good should be criticised, so that they might do something better. That is just merely what I wanted to explain. What I mean to say is that the scene was just like a juju shrine and we thought that the Government would actually tell them in what form they should come to the House of Chiefs in order to dignify the House.

I now come to the Provincial Administration. Here I have to give my view about the Provincial Commissioners. In most cases people give them a nickname: that is, the N.C.N.C. propaganda Secretaries. I do not think that people intend to give them that name. But they have made themselves to be called so. Now what I mean is that . . .

**Mr Nnaji:** Standing Order 30 (5):

"It shall be out of order to use offensive and insulting language about Members of the House".

**Mr Speaker:** I do not think the hon. Member used any offensive and insulting language.

**Mr Nalelo:** The name Provincial Commissioner is indeed dignifying but the performances of some of these officers betray the prestige of that office. For instance, how was it necessary that the Provincial Commissioners ran from house to house during the last Federal elections to campaign. If a Provincial Commissioner . . .

**The Minister of Finance :** On Point of Order. Standing Order 30 (9):

"The conduct of Her Majesty, Members of the Royal Family, the Governor-General, the Governor, Members of this House or the other House, Civil Servants and Judges or the performance of judicial functions by other persons shall not be raised except upon a Substantive Motion; and in any amendment, question to a Member or remarks in a debate on a motion dealing with any other subject, any reference to the conduct of the persons aforesaid shall be out of order. For the purposes of this paragraph "Substantive Motion" does not include any motion for the Adjournment".

**Mr Speaker:** I would like the hon. Member to take note of that when he makes reference to civil servants and those mentioned.

**Mr Nalelo:** I am just trying to protect the Provincial Commissioners so that they will not do anything that will bring shame to themselves and to all of us. I feel that by doing that type of thing . . .

**The Minister of Finance:** Mr Speaker, if the speaker wishes to criticise the Provincial Commissioners he should do so upon a substantive motion—Standing Order 30 (9).

**Mr Speaker:** I hope the hon. Member will take note of that.

**Mr Nalelo:** I accept the Speaker's ruling. My next point is on the public service, and in particular I refer to paragraphs 10 and 11 of His Excellency's Speech from the Throne which read as follows:—

"10. In the Public Service, the key-note has been expansion and efficiency: expansion in order to cope with the increased services and facilities which my Government provides for the people; improved efficiency to ensure that the utmost use is made of available educated manpower.



"11. There has, therefore, been an appreciable increase in the number of established officers thus bringing the figure up from 7,000 last year to 7,700. Of this number 640 are in the administrative and professional grades as against 550 last year. As more qualified indigenous officers become available, the number of Nigerians employed in these grades has risen from 368 to 469, an increase of 101. More opportunities have also been given to Nigerians of proved and tried experience to serve in the Executive and Higher Executive grades. There are now 442 Nigerians in these grades as against 352 last year. Thus our declared policy of Nigerianisation is being vigorously pursued. A Nigerian is now Head of the Regional Public Service . . ."

My point here is the statement in paragraph 10 that "in the Public Service the key-note has been expansion and efficiency". I regret to say that in most cases the result has always been the opposite. The fault may not be from the Government but from those discharging the duties. May I ask, which body is the immediate government of the majority of the tax-payers? Is it the Government here at Enugu or the distributed powers in our various divisions. We congratulate the Government here at Enugu but the people in our different divisions are not happy because of how they are badly governed. For instance, in Ogoni the District Council Scholarship award is usually sold for £40 to £50, and an extraordinary monthly tax is collected from the road labourers. Before one takes action in the Native Courts or Appeal Courts one has to pay £1 5s quite apart from the summons fee. Before a case is tried one has to pay at least £10 and a bottle of Schnapps. Bail fees range from 12s 6d to £1 5s. In tax assessment most of those regarded as income tax-payers are not those to be reckoned in that category. There is too much charge in hospitals and dispensaries and because of this people who are sick go away unattended to. Bicycle licence collectors simply collect money from people unnecessarily and are not doing the work they are asked to do. The members to form the new Council in Ogoni are not elected by the electorates but all the former members are arranged to be returned by foul means and almost all are returned quite against the wishes of the people. I am asking the Government to investigate the

conduct of the Khana District Council election and if possible to nullify the election. Before we thank the Government for its achievements we have to consider how the majority of the people of the Region are benefited. I have to inform the Government that many things happen in my Division. But what people in authority usually say is that it is the order from Enugu. I feel that the number of public servants and councillors form the immediate government of the people outside Enugu. Some are at the head of departments employing people, while others are in charge of reimbursements. Some are doctors, magistrates, etc., and except the Government checks these people to be efficient as stated in paragraph 10 of the Speech from the Throne the people of the Region would never be happy. Some people wonder why others say we are not ripe for independence. It is because of what I have just said. It is quite obvious that in an independent Nigeria some people will live at the expense of others. The majority will be crying while a few at the top will be rejoicing.

A Nigerian is now Head of the Regional Public Service. Let us watch and see what will happen. The people of today are not faithful to their services and true to themselves but continue to run up and down to Enugu to see the person at the head for rectification. I am asking the Government to be honest and to make the public servants honest, so that Independent Nigeria, as from October 1st will be a joy to all Nigerians.

**The Minister of Local Government (Mr P. O. Nwoga):** Point of Order, Standing Order 30 (7).

**Mr Speaker:** I would like the hon. Member please, to read his standing Orders at home so that he does not make the mistake again. I hope that the hon. Member did not say that the Government is not honest.

**Mr Nalelo:** I did not mean so. I wanted to conclude by saying that if we all are honest our Independent Nigeria will be a joy to all.

I beg to support.

**Rev. M. D. Opara (Owerri Division):** I rise to speak on the Motion that this House expresses its loyal and dutiful thanks to His Excellency the Governor for His Gracious



[REV. OPARA]

Speech from the Throne. I have to start by thanking the Government for fulfilling certain things which they planned here last year. The first of these is the establishment of the House of Chiefs. We ourselves never thought the House of Chiefs would be established. I was very much astonished how Government went over it very smoothly. I was very much overwhelmed with joy. I also want the Government to finish the rest of the job pertaining to chieftaincy as soon as possible so that all corners of the country might be very much glad for the finished work of the House of Chiefs.

I have to turn to the Ministry of Education. We thank that Ministry for the kind work it has done last year. I do not want to say much about the addition of Standard II in the list of fee-free paying classes but I want to say that the way that the Ministry handled payment of grants-in-aid to Managers this year has been very much improved. Formerly, there used to be very much complaint from several corners but this year the work was very excellently done so much that Teachers were paid even before the end of January. I have to thank the Ministry too for opening some more Secondary Schools but the announcement that the Ministry would not permit opening of new private primary schools does not sound well. Private people or some Voluntary Agencies were running private schools before we took over the U.P.E.; even up to Standard VI without Government grant and so many of them were well run before Government took them over. I would ask the Minister to allow the people to open more private schools. The agencies that have applied many years ago could be given the chance to open because I know myself that in many places some missions run some religious classes and some of these religious classes are big enough to be allowed to operate as full-fledged schools. I thank the Ministry too for giving almost all the Colleges grants-in-aid to improve. Formerly, many schools were not grant-aided, and they did not do very well but now that they are grant-aided, I thank the Ministry for that, but I would also add that the Ministry has placed some burden on Commercial Schools, i.e., that they should have graduates and proper qualified teachers as done in other colleges and when this becomes the order of the day, the Ministry

should see to it too, that these Commercial Schools are assisted so that they can meet up with other Secondary Schools.

I come to Technical Schools. I do not want to over-emphasise the need for technical education in this country. At present though Standard Six results have not been released, many Managers have been relieved of the burden of employing these Standard Six boys into schools this year and at the door of any Manager when this result is out, you will see boys and girls knocking to be employed. Something must be done. I am not sure that it is the duty of the Government to run enough technical schools for these boys. I would solicit that any mission that can have the staff to run a technical school, assistance should be given to that Mission to absorb a few of these boys who come out of primary schools every year.

I have to say something about the Ministry of Works. Whether the Minister is here or not, he will read the Hansard. He has in his programme mostly the water supply to rural areas, and I have one thing at which I am surprised. That is, that there are some places where the people have collected money and started their water project before the Government thought of helping. These people up to this time have never been treated as if they were helping themselves but rather the Government would start a new venture anywhere. In some places as I go about I find new water pumps being put up. Let me put Okpuala where there is water even. I am not jealous of this because I want it in my town but I am jealous of it because it is in my Division. But what about where people have bought their own pump and all instruments to be installed and there is Mechanical Engineer to come and help them but the Mechanical Engineer could go to a new place. What I have in mind here is my own town Mbieri. We are very awkwardly placed in regard to water supply and anybody who has passed through that big city could see that people there are suffering very much.

I do not see the reason why this Ministry seems to hate my people and will not give them water. I am sorry to have used the word "hate". Perhaps it neglects us.



Now about roads. We thank the Government for its road programme; but whatever is general, one must like to have one's own. The road from Okigwi to Owerri has not been tarred, and often and often we repeat something here about roads and Government has often times promised us that it will soon be tarred. Taking into consideration the heavy traffic that passes through that road, the Government should include it in its road programme for 1960-61.

I thank the Government for the road from Owerri to Umuahia and I would like the tarring of that road to be started as soon as possible.

There is the case of the bridge across the Imoh, at Udo via Owerri. Ministers, and even Governors, come to our place and often times when we talk about it they will tell us that the matter is under consideration. I wonder when Government will stop considering and take active steps. It is a very short cut from Owerri to Umuahia, and it will help our people to sell their produce over there if and when finished.

There is another road which passes through a place called Ohaji, via Awora, to Omoku. The road is short and our people have been using it many years ago to trade with the people

of the Rivers. I would like the Government to see to it and have it tarred for us.

Coming to the Ministry of Agriculture, I have this to say that many people have left the rural areas and flocked to the townships for employment, e.g., those at Enugu here—the coal miners and other people from the villages. I am suggesting to the Ministry of Agriculture if Government can take up a scheme for cash crops, say in some of the parts of the Region which have fertile land. If some of the cash crops are planted, e.g., rice, the work can absorb some of the school leavers, and the Region will benefit by it—the boys will produce enough for our own food and for their own pay.

*And it being 2.15 p.m. Mr Speaker interrupted the business and the Debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed Tomorrow.*

**Mr Speaker:** The hon. Member will have 15 minutes tomorrow to conclude his speech.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Resolved: That this House do now adjourn. (*The Minister of Finance, Dr S. E. Imoke*).

*Adjourned accordingly at sixteen minutes past two o'clock p.m.*



EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 23rd March, 1960

The House met at Ten o'clock a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ORDER OF THE DAY

Governor's Speech (Debate on the Address)

(SEVENTH ALLOTTED DAY)

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on Question—(15th March):

That this House expresses its loyal and dutiful thanks to His Excellency the Governor for His Excellency's Most Gracious Speech addressed to both Houses of the Legislature from the Throne.

Question again proposed.

**Mr Speaker:** Hon. Members, I think it is the desire of all of you that the House adjourns *sine die* before Easter. Accordingly, both the Government and the Opposition have agreed that the debate on the Speech from the Throne be wound up tomorrow. In this regard, I am suggesting that Members should take the opportunity today to make their speeches. Tomorrow will be devoted to the amendment on the Speech and to the reply of hon. Ministers.

**Rev. M. D. Opara** (Owerri Division): I ended my speech yesterday with the plea that the Ministry of Agriculture should try to establish farms which would produce such crops as rice, beans and yams. These farms would help to give employment to some of our school-leavers.

Turning to experimental farms, I do not know how long we shall go on with experiments. I think it is high time that Government settled down to real farming and produce crops for consumption.

Let me now deal with chieftaincy. I will suggest to the Government to stop the idea

of having Fourth-class Chiefs. As we now have First, Second and Third-class Chiefs, we should not go beyond this classification. Chiefs who do not fall in the category of First and Second-class Chiefs should be classified as Third-class Chiefs.

Now, the Government has appointed the Delimitation Commission to make recommendations as to how to divide each Federal Electoral Unit into two. While it is not perhaps in the Regional Government's power to increase the number of Federal Legislators this time, I have to point out that my own District in Owerri Division was very much cheated in that two Districts having a population of 135,000 people were joined together to have one person for the Federal House, and a place in the same Owerri having only about 59,000 people was given one man. Which means that this time the District that had had 59,000 people will have two people going to the Regional House while a District of 135,000 will be having two. I think it is a cheat and we would like Government to make a little note of it so that in time of revision we shall have to join others in feeling that democracy is still reigning.

Coming to the Ministry of Economic Planning which is a new Ministry to be established, I thank the Government for trying to create that Ministry. It is a very nice Ministry if it were created. The Government has also in mind the aim to raise the standard of living of the people and also will pay special attention to agricultural production and industrial projects which will directly increase productivity and the earning power of the people. I have a little advice to give here; that is, if we want to industrialise our Region and also improve agriculture, it must be by the aid of some foreign experts and it needs also some investments. What I am trying to advise is that while we are trying to improve the Region or to raise the standard of living of the people, we should not jump into economic strangulation. That is, the aliens who may be very much needed in this particular Ministry or Department will be also made to know that we ourselves shall have shares. And I would like the Government to see that anything that is done economically to improve the Region must be on the basis of shares; that is, we must have shares wherever there is any industry which will help our people.



Coming to the Ministry of Information, I have to thank the Minister in charge of Information for the way in which he had been disseminating news. I would also like the Government of this Region to take note that school children should also have proper information about their Region, the Federation and the outside world. I support the person who said that schools should be provided with some radio sets in order that they will be able to acquaint themselves with the day-to-day events of the country. Also, the Minister should try to see that some schools which have libraries are supplied with Government books of information.

Coming to the Ministry of Health, I have to thank the Government this time for trying to improve the standard of health everywhere, particularly in Owerri where formerly we used to be very much annoyed with the position of things. Now our hospital has some of the best Doctors in the Region. But I would like the Government to do all that lies in its power to see that the staff there, from the Doctor down to the Cleaner, have adequate staff buildings. They should not be put in little houses which are just like latrines.

Coming to the Ministry of Local Government, one thing I have to say is about these Provincial Commissioners. I would like the Government to give these Provincial Commissioners certain powers to take decisions on certain matters so that they will be able to relieve the Ministry from some of its duties, because at present it seems to me that all Local Councils and all local matters are directed from the Ministry at Enugu. If some powers are given to the Provincial Commissioners the work in the Ministry will be reduced. (*An hon. Member: What power?*) I mean power of taking decisions.

Coming to the question of Customary Courts, there has been a little trouble in a part of our Division called Egbema in Oguta District. This District was under Ahoada before and certain villages in Egbema decided to go to Owerri and are now under Oguta. Three of the villages in Egbema were made to join Ahoada. There used to be a court and this court is just near Ahoada. Those villages which joined Oguta have been pressing that

they should have their own court. I would like the Minister in charge of Customary Courts to see to it that these people are given their own separate court. I do not see how people in one District should have their own court in another District.

I have this to say that the Technical School at Owerri has not been properly built in that many of our boys for whom we were clamouring at that time do not know whether that school has started or not. If it were to be a technical school for our boys it should be a proper technical school for them.

I beg to support.

**Mr S. O. Achara** (Okigwi Division): I like to take the earliest opportunity to congratulate the new Premier on his appointment. I think that no better choice of a Premier could have been made at this particular period of our march to independence. I would like to appeal to the Premier to rule with the fear of God. (*An hon. Member: He is a Christian!*). All throughout history, Kings and Lords who recognise the existence of God and sought the guidance and leadership of God have never ruled in vain.

It is a very good thing that a person of his stature and quality has been called upon at this particular time of our march to independence to pilot this Region. I may say that the Premier is a gallant Christian gentleman, and I expect that his tenure of office will be marked by peace, tranquility and progress in this Region.

I would like to commend him for the statement credited to him about three weeks ago when a cocktail party was given in his honour by the old boys of the Methodist College, Uzuakoli. In the course of replying to a short address presented to him, he made a categorical statement that the gates of the Premier's Lodge will be thrown open to the rich and poor alike. It was a far-reaching statement. Now what material benefits will accrue from this statement? I think that by his desire to meet the people over whom he is Premier, he will be in a position to receive first-hand information about their plight. Much more than that, I think he would, if he keeps to that pledge, eventually liquidate a class of professional gossipers and tale-bearers who



[MR ACHARA]

during the last seven years had sought to tear human relations assunder in this Region. There was a class of people who having the rare privilege of going to the Premier's Lodge took advantage over all others who had not the same privilege, gossiped all over, told tales, imagined anything that came into their ugly heads and thus made human relations in this Region a farce. I have no doubt that by receiving the poor and the rich alike, he will in time be able to remove once and for all from this Region that ugly class because if "A" realises that if he goes and gossips about "B" that "B" will have the same opportunity of going to the Premier's Lodge as he "A" has, then an end to gossip and tale-bearing would have become a thing of the past in this Region. (*Several hon. Members: Name the gossipers.*)

I would also say, that his appointment was timely. It was made at the time there was a great longing in the hearts of many people in this Region for a change and an evidence of that can be seen from the series of spontaneous receptions accorded him since the announcement of his appointment. I use the word "spontaneous", advisedly not "inspired". And his is a very great opportunity of rebuilding, reconstructing and reforming this Region and I have every hope, I have every faith that if he sticks to the policy which is now so clear, within a short time of his appointment and with the grace of God, his name will be written on the pages of the history of this Region with gold ink. (*An hon. Member: Come over. Cross over here.*) I would like to say that on our part, we shall do everything that is humanly possible and compatible with honour and dignity as Her Majesty's Opposition, to make his regime a success. (*An hon. Member: Come over to Macedonia. Can't you come over here?*)

I want to say one or two words in connection with the Provisional Council of the University of Nigeria. I would not like to belabour this House by giving a history of the source from which the money with which the University of Nigeria is being built, but I would like to say that from the Marketing Board of the Eastern Region, the sum of £500,000 is made available to this University annually and that will continue for 10 years. This sum comes from the profits which accrue from our produce of mainly palm oil and palm kernels. I would

like to say that when we take statistics of this particular produce, by far over 75% of the total produce which yield this revenue from which the sum of £500,000 is made to the University, comes from the old Owerri and old Calabar Provinces.

This fact lends weight to what I am going to say. It was with deep regret that I read through this White Paper on the University of Nigeria that in the appointment of Members of the Provisional Council by the late Premier... (*Government Bench: Late!*)

**Mr Achara:** If they do not know the meaning of the word "late", I would refer them to page 702 of the *Advanced Learners' Dictionary*. It does not mean death.

**Mr Speaker:** I do not think it is right to use the word "late".

**Mr Achara:** I am prepared to abide by what you said, but if you look at page 702 of the *Advanced Learners' Dictionary*, you will find the word "late" is used in describing Prime Ministers or Premiers who had been in office but are no more there.

**Mr Speaker:** That may be so, but I will like the hon. Member to use the word that can be understood by the ordinary man.

**Mr Achara:** All right, your ruling is very nice, I will now use the word "former".

What I was really saying is that when the former Premier made the appointment of the Members of the Provisional Council, justice and equity could have dictated to him, in his absolute discretion to remember those two provinces from which comes the bulk of the money now used for the establishment of the University of Nigeria, and to include representatives of those two provinces, at least in the Provisional Council. But what do we find? The Premier appointed himself the Chairman. He also appointed Dr Ikejiani...

**The Minister of Education (Mr G. E. Okeke):** Point of Order. Standing Order 30 (9):

"The conduct of Her Majesty, Members of the Royal Family, the Governor-General, the Governor, Members of this House or the other House, Civil Servants and Judges or



the performance of judicial functions by other persons shall not be raised except upon a Substantive Motion; and in any amendment, question to a Member or remarks in a debate on a motion dealing with any other subject, any reference to the conduct of the persons aforesaid shall be out of order. For the purposes of this paragraph 'Substantive Motion' does not include any motion for the Adjournment."

**Mr Speaker:** I think the hon. Member speaking has had some experience in speeches in Parliament and I would advise him to take very great care that he does not offend parliamentary procedure.

**Mr Achara:** It is difficult to refer to the matter without such reference. In any case, I was saying that he ought to have taken into consideration that these two provinces at least were represented on the Council.

I am proceeding to suggest to the new Premier that six additional Members be appointed into the Provisional Council of the University of Nigeria as follows:—

The old Owerri Province	... 2 Members
The old Calabar Province	... 2 Members
The old Rivers Province	... 1 Member
The old Ogoja Province	... 1 Member.

In addition to this, I would like to see that the Premier takes active part in the work of the University of Nigeria—whether in the Provisional Council or other aspects of the building and development of this University of Nigeria at Nsukka; so that we will have somebody here who will be answerable to this hon. House when questions relating to the University are raised.

**An hon. Member:** The hon. Premier knows everything about the University and will give every details required.

**Mr Achara:** That is all right, but what I am saying is that there are other ways of compensating party-men—whether N.C.N.C., A.G., or N.P.C. In compensating them, the ability of the people must be taken into consideration. Their services must have some

relevance to their material experience. Dr Okechukwu Ikejiani was appointed the Chairman of the defunct Pharmaceutical Corporation.

**Mr G. C. Okeya** (Owerri Division): Standing Order 34 (2):

"The debate on any such motion shall be confined to the matter of the motion."

**Mr Speaker:** The debate on the Speech from the Throne covers nearly everything.

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** Standing Order 30 (7):

"No Member shall impute improper motives to any other Member". The appointment was made by this Government and the speaker is imputing motive to this Government.

**Mr Speaker:** Mr Achara, you can continue.

**Mr Achara:** All I was trying to say is that in appointing a Member serious consideration should be taken of the person's ability and reputation.

Mr Speaker, paragraph 40 of this Speech from the Throne deals with the policy of the award of scholarship in the Eastern Region and if you will kindly permit me I will read part of the paragraph:

"Apart from a few post—secondary awards for potential engineers and scientists, all these awards were made on a Divisional or District Council basis".

In 1954 when the first N.C.N.C. Government was formed a policy statement was made regarding Local Government Councils. An appeal was made then by the Minister of Local Government calling all the people of this Region to integrate and not to disintegrate and that the theory and practice of local government would fail in the Region if every village decided upon having its own District Council. As a result many District Councils were formed embracing several clans. For reasons best known to the Government in about 1957-58, a tendency to split the existing District Councils started with the result that we have District Councils varying in population



[MR ACHARA]

from 7,391 to 356,256 people. One would have thought that in deciding to award secondary school scholarships, the Ministry of Education should have borne in mind the fact that District Councils have not equal population, and that scholarships should be based purely and solely, on population basis. But what did we find? The Ministry of Education announced a policy that every District Council should be awarded five scholarships irrespective of the population. I will give you a few examples of the least, the medium and the highest out of every one hundred District Councils and Urban District Councils which we have in the Region.

We have the Opobo Urban District Council, total population 7,391. We have the Ikom Urban District Council, total population, 7,949. I am quoting from an up-to-date statistics of the Ministry of Local Government. Abakaliki 9,687 and one would continue like that. Okigwi Northern District Council, 205,278. Afikpo District Council, 208,215. Orlu District Council 356,256. Now how does this policy of five secondary scholarships to every District Council work out.

**Mr Speaker:** The hon. Member has five minutes longer.

**Mr Achara:** Okigwi Northern District Council, is twenty-nine times the population of Opobo. Afikpo District Council is thirty times the population of Opobo Urban District Council. Orlu District Council is fifty-one times the population of Opobo Urban District Council. If the Ministry of Education and the Scholarship Board allow the Opobo Urban District Council five scholarships, the Okigwi District Council which is 205,278 five scholarships, and the Orlu District Council 356,256 people five scholarships, where lies the justice in this policy. Going further, five scholarships given to the Opobo Urban District Council work out to one scholarship to every 1,478 people. With reference to Ikom, it is one scholarship to every 1,589 people. Coming to Aba it is 11,555 people and to Enugu Municipality which is the seat of the Eastern Regional Government, it is one scholarship to 12,553 people. Coming to Mbano District Council in Okigwi Division, it is one scholarship to 33,054 people and to Mbaize in Owerri Division, it is one scholarship to 37,255. To Okigwi Northern District Council it is one

scholarship to 41,056 people and to Orlu Division it is one scholarship to 75,251.

**Several hon. Members:** This is immaterial.

**The Minister of Commerce (Mr J. U. Nwodo:)** The Opposition will soon sack him.

**Mr Achara:** This is the policy which the House is supposed to support. I am now calling upon the Government to abolish this policy because it is unfair. No sane person can defend it. I hope that when the Minister of Education will reply it will suffice for him to get up before this House and acknowledge that his Ministry has erred and strayed like a lost sheep.

Now I would like to refer to paragraph 98 of the Speech from the Throne dealing with Parliamentary Democracy. I trust that a free Nigeria will continue to follow the ideals of parliamentary democracy and that there will be unfettered discussion of opinion honestly held and that questions on States will be decided after free debate.

I want to congratulate the Government for re-affirming their belief in unfettered democracy. But the faith and seriousness of the Government in incorporating this aspect of democracy in their policy will be put to test soon. I want to refer to the Government that it is a very good thing to make a statement of this kind but it is quite another thing to implement it. I would like in this connection to appeal to the hon. the Premier to reconsider righting a grave injustice and mighty wrong that was done to a citizen of this Region, who because he expressed his opinion on a matter which was before him—a matter which was brought before a meeting to which he was invited—and because along with others he expressed his views, his produce buying licence was withdrawn. I would like to appeal to the hon. Premier to use his good offices to restore the produce buying licence of this worthy citizen of this Region—Mr L. N. Obioha.

**Mr Speaker:** Your time is up.

**Mr Achara:** Finally, I would like to say that it does not appear that Government takes very seriously one of its economic crops in this Region. I am referring to the Cashew Industry.



**Mr Speaker:** You will help us by sitting down, your time is up.

**Mr Achara:** My time was taken up by interruptions.

**Mr Speaker:** I have here several other people who still want to speak; they have the reputation of being very brief in their speeches and I hope they will be brief. If you agree, we shall allow them fifteen minutes in order to be able to accommodate everybody, otherwise not everybody will have a chance of speaking. Is that agreeable? (*Some hon. Members: "Yes"; some hon. Members: "No".*)

**Mr Speaker:** I think those who said "yes" have it.

**Mr K. J. N. Okpokam (Ikom Division):** I beg to support the Motion ably moved by the hon. the Government Chief Whip and Member for Owerri Division in this House. I would like to begin by taking objection to an observation made by the hon. Member for Opobo when he was referring to Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe as a disappointed man and to his Ministers as people who have tried to force him to retire from politics. This is very very unfair.

**Mr A. J. Ekpe (Opobo Division):** I object to that because I did not refer to Dr Azikiwe as a disappointed man, but to his followers as people who conspired to force him out of active politics.

**Mr Okpokam:** The story of Dr Azikiwe is that he just wanted this country to rule itself. He fought against Imperialism and Nigeria is becoming free today and he is satisfied. He was not ambitious to become the Prime Minister of Nigeria.

I would now congratulate Dr M. I. Okpara, the new Premier of the Eastern Region. Dr Okpara is a man who is confident in himself, enthusiastic and very firm. We see in him a man who reassures the Eastern Region that there is going to be a continued firm and steady Government in this Region. We wish him many more years of rule and may God guide him in wisdom.

The Ministry of Agriculture has done much for the people of the Eastern Region but it

could still do more things. I am glad that it is the policy of the Government to increase production in the Eastern Region and I beg to make some suggestions which will help in this increase in production. One of the suggestions I would like to make is that farmers should be given more loans to open their farms. When loans are given to farmers, it should be remembered that they are given to farmers and not to other businessmen. It takes a long time for trees to mature; some eight years at least should be given to any farmer who has been given loan for agriculture to begin to repay it, because the farmer must be patient and he who helps him to be a good farmer must also be patient.

The Ministry of Agriculture will do well to provide some expensive equipment for agriculture, place them at the disposal of farmers in, say, divisional headquarters so that farmers could borrow them and use them in their farms. I have in mind such equipment as spraying machines. They cost a lot of money and not every farmer is able to buy them. Drugs should also be supplied which will help to kill pests and I am looking forward to the time when the Ministry of Agriculture will investigate the possibility of introducing liquid fertilisers for use by farmers. The Ministry should carry out an exhaustive soil survey in the Eastern Region with a view to discovering fertilisers that will be useful in the different types of soil which farmers cultivate. It is from experience known that farmers have used fertilisers recommended by the Agricultural Department with a view to increasing their production but they have found out that they have failed year after year. Maybe, some fertilisers are not good for all kinds of soils. It would be useful if the Ministry of Agriculture would do its best to carry out more investigations to discover suitable fertilisers for use in the different types of soils in the Eastern Region.

The Minister of Commerce has announced to us that it is possible for us to have investors from foreign countries coming into Nigeria to establish industries. We are really happy about this and we wish it may be possible for him to attract more and more investors into the Eastern Region. But if the investors come we hope that apart from looking for profits on their money they would be good enough to co-operate with the Government of the Region in order to raise the standards of living of the people; that they would make maximum use of



[MR OKPOKAM]

the indigenes of this country with a view to passing on to them the industrial skills and knowledge which they have acquired through the ages. They should not aim at providing jobs for jobless men in their own countries. They should never think of resettling the excess of their population in our own country. I have in mind the Groundnut Scheme of East Africa. Britain sent out £1 million to plant groundnut in East Africa and along with the money they sent many of their men to work in the farms, but the men never returned to England when the groundnut scheme failed. They increased the population of East Africa and today you see them driving away the natives of the lands into valleys which are unproductive, and this I know has given rise to the *Mau Mau Organisation*. After all the men must live. We must be sure that we do not allow things of that kind to happen in our own country.

The Ministry of Education I think should not continue to concern itself with the running of Primary Schools in the Region. Primary education should be in the hands of Voluntary Agencies and Local Government Councils, so that the Ministry of Education may have more time to look after secondary school education. After all, what is required to improve the standards in primary school is, apart from providing funds to pay the teachers, constant supervision by the Inspectorate Division of the Ministry of Education. I understand that there is only one Inspector of Secondary Schools in the Eastern Region, and there are 101 Secondary Schools. I wonder how one man could cope with the work of inspecting thoroughly all the 101 Secondary Schools in the Eastern Region. I would suggest that at least two more Inspectors of Secondary Schools be added to the staff of the Ministry in order to ensure efficient inspection of our Secondary Schools.

On the question of primary school, I would like the Ministry of Education to look upon Ogoja Province with more sympathy. When the Government of the country was bureaucratic the people of Ogoja and Abakaliki Provinces had no incentive to educational development, and so they have been left many miles behind the rest of the Region. It would be very unfair if the Minister insists on the new policy of no further expansion of primary schools in the Region because in Ogoja and Abakaliki

Provinces you find villages and groups of villages that have no schools yet. It was only two years ago that you heard of a teacher murdered in Abakaliki Division when he was going out to campaign for school children to be admitted into the school. This shows that the people are still backward and require every encouragement by the Ministry of Education. I very strongly appeal that Ogoja and Abakaliki Provinces be treated as special areas as far as primary education is concerned.

The same thing holds with regard to the question of scholarships. I would like to say that the new scholarship policy goes further to widen the gap between the people of Ogoja and Abakaliki Provinces on the one hand and the rest of the Eastern Region on the other hand. The policy is that there should be five Secondary School scholarships to every Constituency, but you will find that we of Ogoja Province are at a disadvantage as far as post secondary scholarships are concerned, for our boys do not qualify for post secondary scholarships. You would see in the Government White Paper on scholarship awards, Ogoja—no application, Abakaliki—no application and so on. We would expect that the Ministry would be good enough to give to the sons of Ogoja and Abakaliki Divisions what we might call "Consolation Secondary and Teacher Training Scholarship Awards" because owing to the high standard for admissions demanded by the West African Universities, our boys do not compete favourably with the boys from the rest of the Provinces of the Eastern Region.

You will notice that the people of the Eastern Region are discriminated against in the Northern Region, Western Region and in the Cameroons. I would like to suggest to the Government that they call a conference of the members of the Public Service Commission from all over the Federation and let them come to agreement as to whether or not the Governments of the Regions should only employ men from their own Regions. If they agree that if a man comes from the Eastern Region he can only find employment in the Eastern Region let that be the policy. The Government of the Eastern Region must also cater fully for their own people and forget all about the people from the other Regions. Why should we give employment to Hausas, Yorubas and Cameroonians while our people cannot get employment in those territories? We must take a decision on this.



**Mr Speaker:** Five minutes more.

**Mr Okpokam:** I am so sorry that time is against me and it has always been my fate to have 10 minutes or 15 minutes to speak in this hon. House. After all I am the only man from Ogoja Province who can talk on behalf of my people. The rest are officials, they are either Commissioners or something else; I should be given time to express the feelings of my own people.

I would like now to turn to the Ministry of Works. We in Ogoja and Abakaliki Provinces have been neglected in the past not by this Government but by the old powers that were at that time. We lack roads. If our own side of the country is to develop at all, we must have good roads. I have in mind the Ikom-Obubra road which I have been talking about every time I stand up to speak. This is an important road. Very soon the Cameroons will become a separate country, and we see that Ikom is on the boundary between the Cameroons and Nigeria. Just after the Cross River Bridge you get into Cameroons soil. It will be impossible to reach Calabar through Ikom unless you have to get a passport. It is therefore necessary that the road now running to Obudu should be continued to connect Ikom and Obubra and from there to connect Calabar-Mamfe road at any point in Calabar Division. So that it will be possible for the people of the Northern Region to export their produce through the port of Calabar by this Obudu-Ikom-Calabar road. It is not only important for the good of the people of Ikom Division but also for the people of the Federation of Nigeria as a whole. And it is for this reason that that road must be built immediately.

**Mr Speaker:** Perhaps I might request the hon. Member to conclude his speech during the debate on the Budget Speech.

**Mr J. A. Etuhube** (Ikot Ekpene Division): I rise to contribute to the debate on the motion of thanks for His Excellency's Speech from the Throne. On the eve of Independence my mind goes back to remember our great nationalists who had struggled for over 25 years now to win political freedom in this country. I have to remember or mention some of these our great leaders. I remember the late Herbert Macaulay, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe (now President of the Nigerian Senate),

Chief the hon. Obafemi Awolowo, our Chief Nyong Essien, the late A. C. Nwapa, the late Mbonu Ojike and many others who struggled to bring freedom to this country. I know that political freedom is only a means which will enable Nigeria to tackle the very important problem facing the country today.

This problem is that of economy and it is very gratifying to find that the Government of the Eastern Region has already taken a wise decision to set up or create a Ministry of Economic Planning. It is said that this Ministry will mobilise our resources and develop them for the benefit of the people of the Region and that particular attention will be paid to agricultural production and industrial projects. I want to tell the Ministry of Agriculture that when a plan is being made, what the people of this Region want is that the experimental farm should be enlarged in the 12 Provinces of the Region. This farm should be turned into what we call "farm settlement" so that thousands of our people who roam about the country might find their employment.

We also believe that with these big farms human energy will be employed and modern scientific agriculture will be practised. We should require machines to help till the soil because in certain areas of the Region we find that from year to year some people set fire on these bushes and the whole place get burnt. They think that the whole area when tilled cannot be productive but with such scientific agriculture being run with the help of the Ministry of Agriculture such farm settlements could produce something. We understand that when this Ministry is created Government intends to carry out industrial projects. May I say that these industrial projects should not be what we find today especially in Calabar area. Take for example, Government has just put up a small building in my Division and calls it an industrial project. From time to time school children are called upon to go there and practise raffia work. That is not the type of industrial project we want. We want something that is commercial and something that can find employment for our people. I hope that when Government is planning industrial projects it will be some thing which will provide employment for the people.

I want to touch upon the Public Service. In the Speech from the Throne, it is declared



[MR ETUHUBE]  
that the policy of Nigerianisation is being vigorously pursued by the Government. In the 1958 Annual Report of the Public Service Commission it is stated at page 4 paragraph 21 as follows:—

“No expatriate officer was recruited to any post on pensionable terms, all appointments of expatriate officers being on contract terms, following a certificate from the Director of Recruitment to the effect that no suitable and qualified Nigerian was available.”

In the Land Division of the Ministry of Town Planning a Nigerian was appointed an Acting Principal Land Officer for 20 months. This Nigerian was trained for over 5 years and his qualifications are as follows:—

B.Sc. Estate Management (London).  
A.R.I.C.S.  
A.A.I  
M.R.S.H  
Chartered Surveyor.  
Chartered Surveyor and Estate Agent.

He is thirty-nine years of age and has been in the service for over five years. Of late he has been supplanted by an expatriate who is fifty-five years of age and who is a pensioner and appointed on contract terms. This expatriate has only one qualification that the Nigerian has. He has A.R.I.C.S. as his qualification and I am asking the Minister of Town Planning to tell the House whether this expatriate is more qualified than this Nigerian. I do not know, therefore, how the Government has kept the declared policy of Nigerianisation and yet an expatriate with one qualification has supplanted a Nigerian who has been trained overseas and who is more qualified to serve the country for long.

My third point is under what the Government calls Provincial Administration. The other day an hon. Member from Annang area alleged that the Annang people were not to be included in the proposed Calabar Minority Council and that the Annang people were satisfied with the present set-up in the Region. I think this matter of the Calabar Minority Council was placed before the electorate in the last Federal elections and the people

voted according to their conscience, and the people having voted for this thing and the Government being a democratic Government, the wishes of the people must be obeyed. I am telling the hon. Member from Abak that he should join to advise the Government to seize this opportunity to win the love and confidence of the people by creating this Calabar Minority Council.

**Mr G. C. Okeya** (Owerri Division): Point of Order. Standing Order 37 (3). Hon. Eyo has an amendment motion coming up tomorrow on the Calabar Minority Council.

**Mr Speaker:** Will the hon. Member please take note of that.

**Mr Etuhube:** I will, Sir. Turning to the Ministry of Health, I wish to congratulate the Government for the medical and health services rendered to the people of my area. The new hospital in my division is something that one can say is a very great achievement, and my people are very grateful for this. However, we want this hospital to be developed on modern lines. We want some more doctors, modern clinics, X-rays plant and we want Government to contact the Federal Government to establish a direct telephone communication in the hospital. There are still in this Region quack doctors going about administering illegal injections. This sort of thing does a lot of harm and I am asking the Government to take a very bold step this time to see that this illegal injection is stamped out. It is regrettable that after a good deal of tax-payers money has been wasted in providing medical facilities these quack doctors will not allow the tax-payers to take advantage of these services.

**Mr E. U. Eronini** (Owerri Division): I support the Motion for a vote of thanks to His Excellency for His Excellency's Most Gracious Speech from the Throne. In doing so I have to say a few words in respect of the potential investments and the system of economic planning in this Region. I should like the Government to consider the siting of some industries in the Eastern Region so that many industries will not be crowded in one spot. The Shell BP is taking steps to see that an Oil Refinery is set up in Port Harcourt. Also in Port Harcourt there is to be established a



Metal Window and Aluminium Industry. The danger is that many people will leave their homes and settle in Port Harcourt in order to avail themselves of jobs and this will result in labour problems. But if these industries are evenly scattered all over the Region many people can stay in their home towns instead of flocking in one place. Take for example, the existence of the coal industry at Enugu has enabled about three quarters of the coal-miners who are natives of Udi to stay in their town to attend work. In the event of unemployment these people can easily revert to farming with little or no inconvenience to themselves. It is clear that it is wrong to keep "all the eggs in one basket" for we belong to an atomic age when it is dangerous to crowd many people together in one town.

Last time, here, I spoke about having a straight road from the south to the north of the Region, i.e., from Port Harcourt direct to Enugu. The Minister of Works then asked me: "How and where will the road pass?" I should like to suggest to him that it is an easy thing to have a straight and first-class road from Enugu to Awgu just as we have from Awgu to Okigwi—half the work is done. Now if you get a straight road from here to Awgu—there is already a straight road from Awgu to Okigwi—and you get another straight road just properly built as that between Awgu and Okigwi passing through Owerri, if you get it straight to Port Harcourt, then you have got a straight road linking the north of the Region to the south of the Region. On the other way, if you get another straight road as is already there from Oron to Onitsha up to Ihiala and ten miles to Onitsha, it will be very good. It is just like a winding path. There must be a straight road to avoid accidents.

The other thing is that we must also consider that with developments in a place like Port Harcourt, there should be good roads in which small cars would not like troubled by heavy lorries. In that respect, I have to congratulate the Minister of Works for the attempt he has made to build the bridge between Chokocho and Komoko. I will also ask him to do all that is possible to get the embankment through and get the road from Chokocho and Komoko to Okpuala and then to Okigwi well built. We have another bye-pass

to Enugu from Port Harcourt which should be considered. We hope he will consider that seriously so as to avoid a lot of accidents on the main road.

Another point I would like to say a few words on is about teachers. I see no reason why the Government should give teachers 12½ per cent when it is prepared to give its other employees 15 per cent. Teachers are civil servants in a way. They are serving the community in the same way as any other person is serving the community. Some years ago, according to General Orders leave was worked out according to salary so that before a young clerk got to a salary of £300 or £400, he was almost on the 15th or 16th year of service. But nowadays, a young man gets into the service and within three or four years he is on £300 and his leave is being recorded just like that.

Here in the East, we have so many holidays. Government should now consider very seriously of how to curtail these holidays. We may have something like summer holidays, say during the months of November and December. Senior staffs could take one month in each year and junior staffs fifteen days in the year so that during the months of November and December, there may be less work to do because almost everybody has gone on leave and in that respect Government will have less to do. When they come back everybody will be in the office from January to November. They should consider this in a way and set experts to think very seriously because almost one third of our civil servants are at one time or the other on leave and that is how our money is spent.

Another thing I would like to say is about some of the non-Ikwerre Ibos leaving in Port Harcourt; they are suffering two accusations. The Ikwerre-Ibos accuse them of being in agreement with Government to dispossess them of their land. On the other hand, some are being accused by Government that they are helping the Ikwerre people not to allow Government to take over their lands. It is really a pity that a large area of land is being contemplated to be taken away from the people of that area. After all, we know that land is very precious to any community and any attempt to dispossess them



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of a large area of land, aggrieves them, no matter whether you tell them that they can go on farming, you have caused them to be slaves for ever because none of their children will ever remain to say "I will build such and such a house on such and such a land" unless now you give him the permission which you may not even give. So that you have demoted them to slavery for ever. One of the conditions that is given by Government is that other natives or so could buy land from them and therefore Government is protecting them! I mean, it is just like the story of a dog and a cow. Somebody coming to say: I will divide it for you and then he took the whole lot and went away and all of you became hungry and no one had anything. That is what the Government is now doing—to represent the people of the land because they say "Oh! you sold your land to the other natives". It must be known that if a community has about twenty acres of land, if for any reason they sell five acres, they make a very huge money out of it. They may use the money to build houses which they can rent out but when Government takes say, twenty acres from them, which is the whole land they have got and pay them the yearly ten shillings an acre or twenty shillings an acre, what will that be to a community? What will that be to a man who has ten acres of land but could sell three acres and make thousands of pounds and be able to build houses and live in comfort but now you take possession of his land! There is no reason why Government should not consider seriously to change their method of dispossessing one area of all their land. They must also think of going elsewhere to possess land not to concentrate in one area acquiring land. Where will those people go to? You are not going to pay them enough compensation that will be enough for them to go elsewhere and even if they go elsewhere, they become strangers. They have no land to farm, they have no land to sell, they have been dispossessed. What has not been done by the Colonial Government is being done by the people's Government!

I would ask the Attorney-General to consider Owerri Province for the building of a High Court. It is most disgraceful and annoying for a litigant from say, Okigwi or near Umuahia to go to Onitsha, about 100 or

120 miles away, to take action. The Attorney-General knows what obtains in the Courts—Motions upon Motions, Statements upon Statements. There are cases from Owerri or Okigwi in Onitsha which have lasted two years and which cannot be heard either because the service has not been effected or one thing or the other has happened. The present Owerri Province comprising Orlu, Okigwi and Owerri can sufficiently maintain a High Court Judge. The number of cases has increased that the Judge who comes to Owerri from Aba cannot know what to do. And it would be too much for two Judges in Onitsha to take Onitsha, Awka, Awgu and then Orlu and Okigwi. So we are asking that a new High Court be built at Owerri for Owerri, Okigwi and Orlu, and possibly part of Ahoada. As soon as practicable, there should be a Magistrate at Ahoada to try cases there.

I have to say that in Owerri Division we still have troubles. Oguta had been one of the best areas one could go to easily and freely, but today Oguta is a land full of troubles. One does not know what to do. Government has set up a Commission of Inquiry and one would have thought that by now Government would have made some statement of some kind to allay the fears and feelings of the people as it did in the case of Okrika. It must be known that kingship is a sacred institution and the Government should, when dealing with matters concerning kingship and chieftaincy, take great care indeed.

**Mr M. N. Yowika** (Ogoni Division): I rise to make some comments on the Motion:

That this House expresses its loyal and dutiful thanks to His Excellency the Governor for His Excellency's most Gracious Speech addressed to both Houses of the Legislature from the Throne.

At page 9, paragraph 34 of His Excellency's Speech he stated that the public enjoyed wider educational concessions in 1959 because fees were abolished in Standard I and that three other classes of the Primary School have had their fees reduced, and that recently the Government announced that in Standard II fees will be abolished with effect from January, 1960. This is quite good. I associate myself with those hon. Members who have already expressed their appreciation for the good



work that Government had done. But I must say that all these represent nothing but a recorded story of old events. There is no hon. Member in this House who is not aware that the entire Junior Primary section is now fee-free or that fees in Standards III and IV have been reduced. I had thought that the Governor was going to tell us what educational concessions the public would enjoy this year.

I would like to point out that the lives of the pupils are of vital importance than the abolition or reduction of fees. I say so because the Universal Primary Education schools are a danger to the lives of the pupils who receive instructions in them. These open type school buildings with six or eight pillars are so exposed to wind and rain that the lives of the pupils are not safe at all. Moreover the floors are not cemented. They form suitable breeding places for jiggers which attack the pupils' feet, make them ill and deter their progress.

My next point is on accommodation in the Universal Primary Education schools. I observe that the accommodation is most inadequate. The Universal Primary Education school building, when Government undertook the scheme in 1957, was intended to accommodate one or at most two classes of forty pupils each.

Now that these schools have grown to full-fledged junior primary standard, the only one building which was built in 1957 is still standing; there has been no extension. Most of these schools now have six classes. Assuming that there are 40 pupils in each class, such a school should now have 240 pupils. The accommodation in these schools is not even adequate to accommodate half of this number of pupils. Therefore, may I say, that the Government is making rather unhealthy educational plans for the pupils of this Region. I wonder for whom the Education Department makes Ordinances and Regulations. If these schools were to be under the management of Voluntary Agencies the Education Department would have condemned them and termed them unsuitable. Now that it is the responsibility of the Government to provide buildings, anything is accepted as suitable. Worse still most of these U.P.E. schools are still unbuilt. I pointed out in my speech last year

that Government approved 53 U.P.E. school buildings to be erected in Ogoni Division and that 21 of these schools had not been built. Up to this moment that I am speaking those 21 schools are still unbuilt. Yet Government voted £300 for the erection of each of these school buildings. These 21 buildings should cost £6,300. Where has the money gone to? I am calling upon the Minister of Education to take note of the following:

To see that all the unbuilt U.P.E. schools are built;

To improve the existing U.P.E. schools by providing them with walls;

To see that the floors are cemented;

To provide adequate accommodation.

I hope the hon. the Minister of Education is aware that our educational system is child-centred. The child is the centre of everything. The child is the cause of all our struggles, all our strivings: everything points to the child. It is not enough for the Minister to sit here in Enugu and write for the Governor to read from the Throne that the public enjoyed wider educational concessions. Let him go down to the schools and see the appalling conditions which I have cited but a few. An hon. Member remarked last year that the U.P.E. schools looked like juju shrines. He made this remark because of the unhealthy conditions of these schools.

My next point is on the result of the Standard VI examination. Do you know why the result of the Standard VI examination has been so badly delayed? I observe that last year the hon. the Minister of Education was badly criticised by hon. Members on the floor of this House for publishing the result by instalments. So the Minister has deliberately refused to publish the result until the present Budget Session is over. This is a grave injustice to the children who were in Standard VI last year. It is a grave injustice because most of them, if they had their results, might have been fortunate to find employment. The unfortunate ones might have liked to return to school. But as it is, these pupils and their parents are left embarrassed. This means that the whole year is a waste to these pupils because they cannot return to school. If they do so later in



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the year, they will be unable to secure the 75 per cent attendance which is to entitle them to sit for the Ministry of Education First School Leaving Certificate examination at the end of the year. The Minister of Education may excuse himself by saying that over 65,000 children took the examination last year and that the staff responsible for the marking of the papers is too small to cope with that number. If this is so, why not employ more hands to do the work? The candidates paid entrance fees. If this is not to be used to employ more hands, for what purpose was the money collected?

*Sitting suspended at 12 noon.*

*Sitting resumed at 12.30 p.m.*

**Mr Speaker:** Hon. Members, I would like to call your attention to Standing Order 5 (2):

“The Deputy Speaker shall take the Chair when requested so to do by the Speaker, without any formal communication to the House.”

This is the practice in Westminster which I wish to adopt here. That is, as often as it is necessary, I shall vacate the Chair and request the Deputy Speaker to take the Chair. This was put into the Standing Orders because there may be times when Mr Speaker might want to go to the toilet, might want to take a cup of tea, or might want to answer an urgent call. Therefore, that provision was made necessary. It was put there, and I think it is very necessary.

**Mr J. O. Okeh** (Ahoada Division): I rise to support the Motion of Thanks to His Excellency the Governor for his Most Gracious Speech from the Throne.

Actually, the Government deserves all the praises showered on them for the able way in which they have demonstrated not only their ability but the willingness to cater for the interest of the people of this Region. And like all others I join wholeheartedly in congratulating them.

The people of Ahoada Division are indeed very grateful to the Minister of Welfare and Information for the generous manner in which he has made grants available to them to enable them implement their various schemes of

development. Also I feel that the hon. Premier and his illustrious predecessor in office deserve our gratitude for creating the Ministry of Economic Planning in this Region.

I have to say here that the rate at which the Government is acquiring land in the Eastern Section of Ahoada Division is indeed alarming. It is grossly misleading or erroneous to say that the people of Ikwerre have sold all their land. This is not true. After all, what is sold is only the strip of land along the main road, for Ikwerre man's farm and in fact farm land in Ahoada Division is what we depend on for our means of existence.

Practically the whole of Ogbia group in Ikwerre Clan has now been declared a Planning Area and from the boundary pillar at the extreme end of Igbo Section of the Echie Clan a line has been drawn right across Igrita to Isoba and Allua on the riverside on the West, and from there onward to about a distance of 15 miles to Port Harcourt, all earmarked for and with beacon fixed ready for acquisition under Port Harcourt Expansion Policy. Very many square miles have been acquired. So that we are now in doubt as to whether anything will be left of Ikwerre.

Well, another point is that the declaration of the whole of Obia as a planning area was not preceded by discussion and or consultation on the conditions of acquisition and up to this moment nothing practically has been said to the natives and as a result there is a widespread feeling of distress and fear all over the area concerned. All those who know Ahoada Division know that throughout Ahoada Division we have rich agricultural land and to say that a little portion will be allowed for farming by the natives, is not enough; for on this land we have abundant growth of vegetation like economic trees and all other sources from which we make our money for maintenance of our children at school and our domestic needs. So that the idea of getting to lose wholesale all this land in the absence of any proper arrangement is indeed what I may describe as economic decapitation of the people concerned. Actually, I have to tell those who talk of development that we of Ikwerre are great lovers of progress and development, and as a matter of fact, the emergence of Port Harcourt Municipality is the direct outcome of this



virtue. We actually do welcome the idea of developing Port Harcourt into a modern large manufacturing city. But all we want is that adequate provision should be made to secure the people concerned against acute want and destitution. To this end, I beg to suggest the following as conciliatory measures:—

- (i) What at present is known as the Port Harcourt Urban Planning Authority is grossly incapable of fulfilling the requirements for the expansion of this magnitude and I therefore suggest substitution of Port Harcourt Urban Planning Authority for an Executive Development Board to which representatives of the area affected will be appointed.
- (ii) Adequate compensation for the acquisition of this rich agricultural land and the economic trees and other uses for which we make of these should be paid.
- (iii) Good employment facilities in the oil refinery and other industrial establishments with a generous apprenticeship scheme for the young school leavers of the area.
- (iv) Regular award of contract and sub-contract by the Shell-B.P. and other industrial firms to the natives of the area.
- (v) Proper rehabilitation scheme for those so far dispossessed of their land.
- (vi) Amendment in the Instrument of the Port Harcourt Municipal Council to allow the injection of the natural rulers of Ikwerre within Port Harcourt Municipality and the Second-class Chief of Port Harcourt as the President of the Council.

These measures suggested here are moderate enough and already precedents exist in the Federation of Nigeria. Port Harcourt is in importance second only to Lagos and already a Development Scheme in the way of Slum Clearance as in Suru Lere and other places in Lagos have done some good; so what I am asking our benevolent Government is that it should do to us as it is done in Lagos. This is necessary in order to encourage not only the people at present concerned but all others whose land may be so required for purposes of development. I have to stress here that we have rich agricultural land of which good use could be made.

I have to thank the Minister of Agriculture, particularly the former one on behalf of the farmers of Ahoada Division for the regular supply of seedlings of all kinds and the frequent visits and encouragement given to them by that eminent school master who held the office previously. It is expected . . . (*Interruptions*). Look at that ex-court messenger who happens to be a Parliamentary Secretary disturbing by making so much noise on the floor of this House!

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Justice (Mr L. O. Uzoigwe):** Standing Order 30 (5):

It shall be out of order to use offensive and insulting language about Members of the House.

**Mr Speaker:** Order! Order! Without ruling on the Point of Order, the time of the hon. Member is up.

**Mr O. O. Ita** (Eket Division): After listening to the very able debate in this House from both Sides of the House, I am constrained to make a contribution which appears to me to be a novel contribution. Most of those who have spoken before me had used several words and I think the most important words they have used are "tribalism", "nationalism" and "democracy" and each speaker seemed to have got an entirely different idea of these three words.

I would like to say this, Sir, that it has never been easy in political philosophy to arrive at the same conclusion if we take different views about certain words and, in fact, the whole essence of politics is the confusion in the meaning of words. It is not that special thing which is heard outside being shouted by small school boys.

Following what my great master and friend Professor Eyo Ita has said on tribalism, he arrived at the conclusion with which one can imply—from what he said—that he is free from bias and tribalism. But I will quickly remind him that he himself has also introduced tribalism into this country by believing in the tribal unions. So that if you go from one person to another person, you will come to the conclusion that all of us are guilty of tribalism. But the difficulty which confronts



[MR O. O. ITA]

the people of the country at one time or another is that we may accept a theory which we do not understand and at another time if a person propounds another theory which we feel is better than the previous one, we turn round to call all other people who had accepted the previous theory names which actually are unthinkable. For instance, when that erudite scholar whose fame has been associated with the politics of this country wrote in his *Political Blue Print* a few years ago . . . (*Several hon. Members: Who is that?*) Well, they know him, so they need not bother. We scholars do not tell people's names when we are talking about them, so they ought to look for his name themselves. When he wrote in his *Blue Print*, he advocated that there should be eight States in this country. He came to the conclusion after his analysis that unitary government was the best form of government. All of us jumped up and we accepted that thesis without question. Some years ago, another scholar came up and he was also erudite in his own way. He propounded a theory in which he said that Nigeria was a country of countries and that the diversity of Nigeria can only be accommodated in a Federation. I was myself at sea with that thesis, but it will be remembered that in 1953 when our people went to London we were the only people who kept urging incessantly for unitary government. But after all when those who propounded the theory of unitary government accepted the theory later, and we found ourselves in a microscopic minority, we could not help but accept it. But then what did he mean by that thesis? What he actually meant is this: This country should be subdivided into smaller units so that the Federation should be regarded as the national unit and all nationalists could acclaim Nigeria as a nation. But today, most of us believe in tribalism and we preach that as a gospel in our Region. We keep on deceiving others that we are nationalists and others who are actually trying to follow the thesis of these writers are now being called tribalists.

If I vote for the Action Group, people say that is a Yoruba party and I am called a tribalist. I am an Efik and I think I am voting for the good of Nigeria. When I vote for the Action Group, I vote for Chief Obafemi Awolowo because he has a programme. And if they vote for Dr Azikiwe they are not

called tribalists. They said they voted for the Dr to be the Prime Minister. In the same way if they vote for the Sardauna of Sokoto, they are not tribalists because they are voting for the man they want to be their Premier. In point of fact, as I said yesterday, we have committed the same error of voting the wrong man to be at the Centre, but we cannot blame anybody. It is because we want that man to be our Prime Minister and we are all nationalists. I am saying this because the confusion in the meaning of the small word may cause any misgiving in the Region and may even cause trouble and uprising. But tribalism and nationalism have only a little difference.

When the Professor was talking here, he acclaimed himself a nationalist, but I say that he is not a better nationalist than I am. He is the worst nationalist because he founded a tribal union. I should say I am a nationalist because I am trying to follow the two theses written by these two Nigerians. In the same way it may be generous to support the C.O.R. State. In the same way the word "democracy" has been causing a lot of trouble in this country. Now when we were under the British rule, we regarded nomination as the worst form of slavery and we thought people who were nominated into Councils were slaves and we said that when we were free we would end all this form of business. We in Calabar Province have been very unfortunate. (*Several hon. Members: No! Uyo Province*). Mr Speaker I seek your protection. We have been told that we should prepare for an election. We have in the case of Uyo Province been called upon to send our representatives to conduct election campaigns. When the campaigns had been concluded we were told that nomination had been suspended but we did not know for how long. That is the second time this has happened. Since the inception of the Oron Urban District Council it has always been ruled by nominees. I do not know from where they take advice because they always go to Enugu to take instructions. It is even worst with the Calabar Council because their election has been suspended for four good times. If this had been done by the expatriates, we would have gone to London to protest. We do not know what is happening in the Ministry of Local Government. By the time you talk to the Minister everything has already gone wrong. What the Minister would say is: I am sorry, let me investigate. The Minister will keep on investigating and his



subordinates will keep on perverting instructions. That is exactly what is happening in that Ministry. That is precisely what is obtaining in that office.

**Mr Speaker:** One minute more.

**Mr O. O. Ita:** At that stage, let me pay our Government great compliment for one great thing that has been done, that is, for the first time, Government has acknowledged merit. The acknowledgement is in the appointment of no less a personality than Mr Louis Mbanefo as the Chief Justice of the Eastern Region. (*An hon. Member: They did not appoint him*). Well, whether they appointed him or not, they always claim good results but when there is any bad result they will run away. What is more, we would like to remind the House that we are exceptionally proud in the man that has been appointed the Chief Justice of the Eastern Region because he is one of the four founders of the Opposition in the Eastern Region.

I would like also to remind the Government of the great achievements of two Easterners in the University College, Ibadan. One is that of Dr Eni Njoku, who is also an eminent Member of the Opposition and who has been made the Professor of Botany in that University. What is more, he is also made a Senator in the House of Senate in Lagos. The other person is Dr Kenneth Dike, who has written a very prominent book on the Niger Delta. I should say that whoever is here who has never read that book has not read any history. I think it is a most interesting book to read. I am proud that that man who wrote the book is a Nigerian like myself.

**Mr Speaker:** Order! Order! Your time is up.

**Mr N. O. Onwudiwe** (Okigwi Division): I beg to support the Motion, and in doing so, I have some observations to make. Sometime last year, we heard that an Independence Celebrations Committee was formed at the Federal level. I do not know whether this was limited to Lagos or did it apply to the whole of the Federation? I hope that a similar Independence Celebrations Committee will be formed in the Eastern Region. (*Several hon. Members: That has been done*). If it has been formed, I learnt that most of the members

of the Committee are expatriates and that only a few Nigerians serve on this Committee. (*Several hon. Members: That is not true!*). If that is true, it is a great mistake. Up till now, we have not known what preparations Government is making here in the East in order to make that occasion a momentous one. I had thought that here in the East we should have liked to hear such things as construction of an Independence stadium or a fountain house erected in the Region, which will have to remind the future generation of the nationalist struggles in the Region. These things shall serve the future generation of this Region as monuments of national struggle for freedom in the real sense of the word.

Coming to the point of salary revision, I would like to point out that we are happy that the Eastern Regional Government rejected the salary award for the super-scale officers. That is an indication that this Regional Government is the only Government in the Federation that listens to public opinion and ultimately respects their wishes. It is not like the Action Group Government that holds power as its own property and does not respect the feelings of the people. It is a shame that it is only the Action Group Government that did not participate with the other Governments of the Federation in the Mbanefo Commission. While praising our Government, I would like to point out that teachers are not happy to receive 12½ per cent award. If you realise the importance of teachers in our society, I think they should be given the same salary award as civil servants. This is not the time when the teaching profession should be branded as a blind-alley job or a profession without prospect. The labourer is worthy of his pay. With all emphasis at my command, I am praying Government to grant teachers the 15 per cent salary award.

While thanking the Minister of Education for what he has been able to achieve in the Eastern Region, I would point out that we are not happy with the embargo placed on the further opening of training colleges and schools. You know very well that many district councils and communities in the Eastern Region are prepared to establish more training institutions and primary schools and it is quite unfair if this privilege is denied them. We have the University at Nsukka which will shortly open



[MR ONWUDIWE]

and if we place such embargo on the further opening of educational institutions, I do not think we shall progress in full scale. So I would like the Minister of Education to lift the embargo and let training colleges and primary schools continue to open as secondary schools.

Another point of importance is about customary courts. The judges of the customary courts are doing their best to raise the standard of performance in the dispensation of justice in these customary courts and it will be fair, if we uphold the dignity of justice, to pay for it. I think the salary paid to these judges are comparatively low. Well, Sir, I would like you to understand that some of these Court Judges have the academic qualifications. Some of them attended Secondary Schools and some of them served in the old N.A. and Local Government. I think by raising their salary we are trying to raise the standard of justice in the Court. The salary actually paid to them is very small. The salary of £72 per annum is very small for a Customary Court Judge. I would suggest that their salaries should be "shouldered", and that is, that Customary Court Judges should be paid at least £150 per annum and those of their Assessors about £120 per annum.

May I use this opportunity to thank the Government for the appointment of the Commissioner in the United Kingdom for Eastern Nigeria from Okigwi Division. Okigwi is yet not happy that it has no Special Member in the House of Chiefs, or a Senator in the Upper House on Provincial representation. In view of the foregoing irregularities the people of Okigwi still request or press for the creation of Okigwi-Orlu Province right now.

I am very grateful also to Government for the water supply in some places in Okigwi Division. But I ardently and fervently request that the Minister of Works should hasten to complete the project already begun so as to extend this project to other places in the Division where water is lacking, such as Madona High School at Ihitte, Bishop Shanahan Memorial Girls' Training College, Uboma, Domestic Girls' Training Centre, Ehime. I would like the Minister of Works to visit the Girls' Domestic Training Centre at Ehime and see for himself the difficulties and hardships encountered by the students in that

institution. This is a new and very important institution where girls are given the right type of training to make them serviceable and complete women in the home. It admits girls from all parts of the Eastern Region. They have no water and light. One Firm in the Region has been kind enough to give them a borehole but the girls find it difficult to draw water easily from this hole. All we need there now is that the Minister of Education may recommend to the Minister of Works for a grant to supply a pump to draw water quickly and easily for the suffering students. I would like to stress once again that much time and labour are wasted by the students in providing sufficient water for all practical classes. The standard of efficiency of their work is lowered and the discipline of the college suffers. The Principal has worked very hard and the students, in spite of all difficulties and hardships, have progressed considerably.

Before I conclude, I would like to say that the N.B.C. employees have often times failed to give satisfaction in their work. There is a lot of partiality played by them and news has always been distorted. Not only that, they also discriminate in news publication. It is supposed that most of them are Action Group supporters. In the N.B.C. you can only hear verbatim reports of the Opposition and that of the Government is treated with distortion. I think in an Independent Nigeria we cannot condone such partiality and distortion. What we want is fair-play and no favour.

The last point is about rural areas. I have to stress once again that rural areas have always been neglected and relegated to the background. Most of the Government's plans for this year, e.g., establishment of a number of industries and a number of technical schools are all centred in the urban areas. This is the reason why most people from the rural areas are attracted to the urban areas. This is responsible for sounding a death-nail to agriculture which leads to privation.

The Government should do something to build one or more technical schools in some Divisions, e.g., Okigwi Division, to reduce congestion, excess of people and unemployment. What happened during the last entrance examination to G.T.C. was a striking example



of the truth of what I say, where 3,000 candidates sat for the examination and only thirty-six candidates were considered.

The next point is about the Mbano Rural Hospital. In supporting the points raised by my colleague it is interesting to note that the Mbano Hospital which was completed as far back as 1957 is still not opened in spite of all delegations and supplications. The building of this Hospital was the first biggest project undertaken by the people of Mbano under community effort and by dint of hard work. They risked everything to raise the money and the building has cost nearly £40,000 and of course with Government financial assistance on the basis of fifty-fifty. The point is that there was a little dispute which flared over the management and the Minister of Health aggravated the situation by giving the Council an impossible condition; that is, that the entire community of Mbano should come to him and request him to open the hospital. But seventeen people drawn from various organisations—the League, the Council and representatives from all the Denominations met the Minister of Health in his office in Enugu, and during the course of discussion, only two members of the delegation disagreed and fifteen were in favour and yet the Minister was not moved. Worse still, the majority decision of the Council was that the hospital should be a joint-hospital. This was utterly rejected.

It was the Minister who promised firmly to give a grant of £20,000 from C.D. and W. to make the hospital a 60-bed hospital. We did everything humanly possible to get the Minister to open the hospital. Sometimes he said, "Oh! I failed to get your letter" or "Oh! I saw it but I have not read it." In other words a matter of great vitality was trifled with.

Now, the decision was given that the hospital should have thirty-two beds and £20,000 was diverted to unknown destination. This decision was greatly disappointing and intentionally meant to punish the 200,000 people of Mbano.

I am a member of the Government party and the Chairman of that Council, yet the Minister could not rely on me as one who could not bamboozle him. But he decided and his decision was to let my poor people suffer.

The people of Mbano, in particular, and Okigwi in general, are predominantly N.C.N.C. and have always given the N.C.N.C. a hundred per cent support. Why then should they be treated with indignity?

Much has been said and done about this hospital. We now plainly ask the Minister of Health whether he has arranged to open the hospital within a comparatively short time to relieve the poor tax-payers of their sufferings and provide the people with medical facilities?

**Mr H. U. E. Edelduok** (Eket Division): I rise to support the Motion of Thanks to His Excellency for His Speech from the Throne. Other Members have said most of what I intended to say. We Africans as far as I know are generally grateful to people who do us good and we do not give thanks to people who do us bad. As I have gone through the Speech from the Throne there are so many things which have struck me that are not good enough. I will only give thanks to the Governor or the Government where I feel thanks are due. For instance, I have gone through the Speech from the Throne and I have not been able to find a plan or a scheme whereby we would be able to stamp out bribery and corruption. I should have thought that as we are getting nearer Independence everyday and every minute, we should make plan to stamp out this evil in our social and civil services.

I will now turn to the Ministry of Agriculture. A lot has been said about this Ministry. I want to make only a few suggestions.

Now, I want to suggest to the Minister of Agriculture that if we have to go on with experiments, which we have started many years now, it should be brought home to the farmers. Some of our farmers live hundreds of miles away from the centre of experiment. They have no chance to derive advantage from this experiment. I would suggest that experimental farms should be established on Provincial basis. We have now twelve Provinces in the Region; therefore we should have twelve Provincial farms, so that our farmers might be able to go there and derive some benefit.

I will go up to the Ministry of Commerce. I have noticed that the Government proposes to establish industries in the Region, and I



[MR EDELDUOK]

would suggest that these industries be spread all over the Region. I would warn against unfair play and the unfair policy of concentrating industries on one side of the Region and leaving the rest to suffer.

Now I pass on to the Ministry of Education, where I would like to dwell a little longer. Reading through the Speech from the Throne, I notice that the Ministry of Education has left out the plan for expansion of our educational system. If you read paragraph 46 of the Speech from the Throne, you will find that when the Minister starts counting the cost of education in a few places, he stops there. No expansion, no plan for the future. I have to point out to the Government that in a growing country like ours, even in older countries of the world, educational system must continue to expand every year, *pari passu* with the expansion of the population. Why should we try to narrow down our educational system. In the field of technical education Government efforts are merely hopeless. On the whole we have only four institutions with about 560 students out of 8½ million people of this Region. That is not very satisfactory. I say again that the Ministry of Education efforts to narrow down the educational system in this country is very painful. More painful is the Ministry of Education's refusal to approve applications for the opening of new Secondary Schools in the Region.

I go down to the bottom of our educational system. Mr Speaker, you might not find time to go to the rural areas. The so-called U.P.E. Scheme is a flop both educationally and administratively. The schools are not well managed and teaching is hopeless and harmful to the unfortunate children who happen to attend them. I do not know what obtains in other Divisions, but in my Division it is never all well with the U.P.E. Imagine when some of these schools are headed by men who practised as native doctors for over 20 years and had been to prison on several occasions for burglary simply because they had had "C" Slips. Is it "C" Slip in native medicine or burglary?

Coming to paragraph 48 of the Speech from the Throne, the Governor has made a revelation of the true position of our finances. With your permission, Mr Speaker, I beg to read:

"In the coming year the revenues of the Region will continue to expand. An important contribution to their growth will be made from now on by the expanding Oil Industry of the Region. On the other hand, the growth in the cost of the social services, to which I referred in my speech last year, has kept pace with the growth of revenue and may well overtake it unless the effort to expand the economy of the Region and hence the buoyancy of its revenues is intensified".

Unless this statement has not been overtaken by time, I see no reason why Government should cover up by postponing many of its projects like the tarring of Uyo-Abak, Eket-Oron and Uyo-Ikot Ubo Roads. But for the proposal in paragraph 5 of the Speech I should have no doubt that insolvency stares this Region in the face in the next two years. The Government is trying to cover up by postponing its projects.

In the field of labour the Government's only plan is a vague partnership with the Federal Government in connection with the Coal Corporation trouble. No plan whatever is mentioned in the Speech from the Throne about resettlement of displaced Nigerian workers in the Southern Cameroons. As for finding jobs for Standard VI School leavers who come out in thousands every year the Government is simply unconcerned.

Coming to the Ministry of Local Government I would say that this Ministry appears to be the worst of all.

**Mr Speaker:** Order! order! I wish the hon. Member will observe Standing Order 30 (10) which says:

"A Member desiring to speak shall rise in his place and if called upon shall address his observations to Mr Speaker or the Chairman."

**Mr Edelduok:** I was addressing the Speaker and no one else. As I was saying about the Ministry of Local Government, it is not a good Ministry, and I want the hon. Premier to do something. Government's intentions in paragraphs 79 to 81 of the Speech from the Throne are all fine paper work. No right thinking man can take Government seriously in these declarations judging from current events in the Region in connection with that Ministry.



Paragraphs 82 to 89 of the Speech from the Throne deal with the Ministry of Town Planning. Last year I pointed out to the Government the importance of planning our growing townships in the Region. I am not satisfied with the progress made so far. It appears so little or nothing worthwhile has been done in this direction. The planning of these growing towns and big villages is sure to attract many of our Standard VI school leavers to settle in their own native towns or villages and engage themselves in farming or other industries and thus help to reduce the now alarming rate of influx into big towns in quest of jobs. This is another way to solve the question of labour problems.

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Local Government (Mr P. U. Amaefunah):** We do not understand what the hon. Member is talking about.

**Mr Edelduok:** I know hon. Members from the Government side will not understand.

**Mr S. N. Alo (Abakaliki Division):** I rise to support the motion of thanks to His Excellency for His Excellency's Most Gracious Speech from the Throne. In doing so I would like to make the following observations. I thank the Government for having built three bailey bridges for the people of my Division, the Abakaliki Division. I should also like to place on record that already the people of Ezzagu have embarked by medium of community effort on building a bridge. The people of this Region have shown keen interest in community development and I would suggest that the Government should explore means of setting up a Community Development Advisory Board in order to advise the Government on matters connected with community development.

One hon. Member mentioned the existence of quack doctors who go about in the rural areas selling dangerous drugs to people and I would like the Government to devise a means of checking these harmful practises by quack doctors. By providing mobile dispensaries which can give medicines to sick people in the rural areas Government will go a long way in relieving the suffering people in the rural areas. What is more, the quack doctors will not get any patronage from the people and illicit practices with drugs will therefore be gradually eliminated. It is also true that the health of people generally will be much improved.

It is alleged that some of these so-called doctors do administer quinacrine injections to the people of rural areas.

I have been reliably informed that Government has made a provision to tar the road from Ubahu to Eha, while leaving the Abakaliki portion of the same road. I should like the Government to make adequate provision to cover the Abakaliki portion of the road in order to connect Abakaliki and Nsukka with the Northern Region of Nigeria. There was provision in the last year's estimates for tarring the Ameke Effum Road, but up to this time nothing has been done on that road. I should like Government to tar this road as well as Effum Izogo, and Izogo to Iboko market. This will relieve the Izi District Council concerned of a heavy expenditure of maintaining untarred roads which are very easily damaged during the rainy season.

I would like to register my support for what the hon. Member from Ikam said this morning. He said that there are undeveloped provinces and I wish to point out that Abakaliki is one of these undeveloped places and I hope that Government will soon establish new primary and secondary schools in Abakaliki. Otherwise the gap of these undeveloped areas will be increasing every year.

I would also like to bring the attention of the Minister of Works to what is said at paragraph 94 of the Speech from the Throne. It is rather embarrassing to the people of Abakaliki to mention in the report that the Abakaliki waterworks has been modernised. This is untrue. I have just returned from Abakaliki and I can assure you that there is no single water from Abakaliki waterworks and I want the Government to make the necessary arrangements to give the people of Abakaliki adequate water supply.

I was just trying to say the difficulty the people of Abakaliki continue to experience in getting water. Now I shall also mention two teacher-training colleges and a secondary school which are affected by this water problem. These three institutions have found it very difficult to get water and it is rather very painful for the parents to see the students travelling three to four miles to fetch water in order to drink or wash their dresses. I am now putting it to the Minister of Education to help these institutions to have their water supply in the premises so that the students would not continue to suffer.



[MR ALO]

The Minister of Town Planning mentioned during the last Budget Session that arrangement was being made to set up a Planning Authority in Abakaliki Urban area but up till this time the Planning Authority has not started to function; also the new layout which has 300 plots marked out has not yet been in use. We should like the Minister to speed up the programme because that will add much progress to the Abakaliki Urban town.

As far as Abakaliki Urban Council is concerned, it is regrettable that the traditional rulers of the nine villages have not been included in the Council. I would want the Minister of Local Government to take note that even if the Councillors are not willing to inject the traditional rulers, an arrangement should be made because every urban town has got the original owners of such urban areas. I am therefore asking that every Urban District Council should also include traditional members in the Council.

**Mr Speaker:** The hon. Member has two minutes more.

**Mr Alo:** I also want to suggest one or two things to the Minister of Finance with regard to the Board of Internal Revenue. I say this because all what appears to be outstanding tax in some cases do not really exist. In the nominal roll names of dead people continue to exist as people who are to pay tax and in most cases those who are so poor are included. I know of an instance where a blind man was assessed to pay £15 as tax. How can a blind man afford £15 to pay Income Tax?

**Mr J. O. Ihekwoaba (Orlu Division):** Speaking in support of the Motion, I wish to seize this opportunity to thank the Government for the able way in which they have created the House of Chiefs in this Region. I want to point out that the enemies of this Government who have been making much noise about the House of Chiefs have now realised that this Government is always serious with their decisions. At the same time, I have to point out that the creation of Provincial Commissioners has brought a very great link between this Government and the

people that they govern. Since the appointment of the Provincial Commissioners they have made the natives to understand and know what the Government is doing for them. Previously, it was placed on the shoulders of the Assemblymen to go to the people and interpret what was the work of this Government; but now, with the Provincial Commissioners, they do their best to educate the people on the efforts of Government. At the same time I am appealing to this Government to see that the opening of Provincial Assemblies take place in three months' time in order to allow the system to function properly. It is unfortunate that the Speaker has limited our time from 30 minutes to 15 minutes. Most of us here are not frequent speakers and we speak occasionally.

**Mr Speaker:** I am afraid it is not the Speaker. It is by the general consent of the House.

**Mr Ihekwoaba:** I want to point out that when we are praising this Government for what they have done for this Region, it is the same time that we point out what we feel has been an oversight on the part of the Government and that is the announcement which has just been made by the Minister of Education for opening what he called Teacher Training Colleges. It is just a wedge in the way of the teachers in this Region. In view of the University project we have in hand at present, and in view of the fact that most of the teachers are now switching over to Government employments, we should have allowed these Teacher Training Colleges to be opened in order to get some teachers who would go to overseas and then have more educational qualification or professional degrees to teach in this University. But now, you could see what is being put in the way of these institutions. I am referring to the fact that the Orlu District Council has applied to this Government to open a Teacher Training College since 1958 and up till now they have not received a reply from this Government in order to allow them to open the teacher training college. Here is the application before me which the Council sent since 1958 for the opening of this college. In view of the large population of the U.P.E. schools in the whole division, even if the Government has taken a firm decision, Orlu Division should



have been given consideration for it is the first Division in this Region to establish a good U.P.E. school. Even it had materialised for over 2 or 3 years before the Government thought of implementing theirs. I therefore feel very strongly that the Government should think twice about this matter and give Orlu Division some preference.

There are now seventy-seven schools with 12,000 pupils and 400 teachers. Out of these 400 teachers only forty are trained teachers, and yet it is there in the Law that every school which is up to Standard II or III should have a trained teacher to be the Headmaster of the school. This Council has already committed itself by acquiring land from the natives and signing agreement in order to build a Teacher Training College. After all, this Council is part and parcel of this Government and I am appealing very strongly to the Government not to allow them to be so committed. Even if it is only one Training College that is allowed to be in existence in this Region, I think that Orlu Division should be given that chance.

Another point I want to make is about Orlu Government Station Water Scheme. I understand that £50,000 has been earmarked for Orlu Government Station Water Scheme and the plan was to cover a radius of six miles within Orlu. But this plan has been altered to provide two miles radius instead of six miles. I am appealing to this Government to see that the votes are increased to £100,000 in order to cover the previous plan.

I want to point out again that the establishment of a permanent Magistracy has been one of the burning desires in the minds of the people of Orlu Division. The two Divisions, Awka and Awgu, are small compared to Orlu. About two-thirds of the cases come from Orlu, and we see no reason why the Magistrate should be stationed at Awka from where he tours Orlu, whereas Orlu is more populous and larger than Awka.

Another point is the building of a Court Hall in Orlu Division. This is very essential. Where the Magistrates and Judges have their sittings are in the ordinary native court halls, and whenever the Magistrates and Judges are sitting the native court Judges are kicked

out from their halls. This belittles them, considering their traditional status. So I am appealing to the Minister of Justice to look into this matter and build a court hall in Orlu.

Another point I want to raise is about the position of the Police in Orlu Division. Orlu Division has only twenty-two policemen. This is grossly inadequate for a population of 356,256 people. It works out roughly at one policeman to every 16,000 people which does not afford a good measure of police protection. We are appealing very strongly that more policemen should be sent there in order to provide sufficient protection for the people.

Another point I want to raise is about produce inspection in this Region. May I seize this opportunity to thank the Produce Inspectors of this Region for the good work which they have started since last year with regard to the new introduction of testing at B.O.P. This is a very important point and it is unfortunate that the Speech from the Throne has entirely omitted this vital point which should have been included by telling us the quality of our produce. I am happy to announce that this new introduction has made the produce of this Region to be about the best in world market.

The next point I want to make is about having some of the licensed buying agents in the Marketing Board. The licensed buying agents feel very strongly that they are denied their right by not allowing even one or two of them to be members of the Marketing Board in order to educate members of the Marketing Board as to what is going on. The Africans and expatriates of this Region invest about £18½ million every year on this and yet they have no single representation on the Board. We feel that if representation is accorded these licensed agents it will solve most of the problems which confront them.

The Ministry of Commerce should set up a Committee to investigate the problems that confront businessmen of this Region and find out ways and means of helping them. They are the live-wire of this Region. The independence we are talking about is nonsense without them because most of the tax collected in this Region comes from the traders and businessmen of this Region, and I hope the



[MR IHEKWOABA]

Government will not overlook this very important point. They have no facility of any kind. The Federal Government has appointed some Committee to investigate the problems that confront businessmen. If Government cannot appoint Committee we should write to the Federal Government to give us a copy of their report. From this Government can extract some points which may help the businessmen of this Region.

I do not want to take much of the time of the House, but I hope Mr Speaker will give me sufficient time during the debate on the Budget to complete my speech.

**Mr M. C. Awgu** (Awka Division): Previous speakers have treated the points raised in the Speech from the Throne very comprehensively and paragraph by paragraph that scarcely has one who goes to speak last as myself much to say. However, I rise to support the Motion and shall very briefly examine the Speech both subjectively and objectively. There were times of trial, when faithless ones might think that all was bad, forgetting that the universe is God's. He alone is able to control it for our highest good. The Government has come to be and has already scored tremendous successes and made unsurpassable achievements in numerous fields of activities. The atmosphere the country over has been charged with cosmic rays of love and joy. It is an indication of peace and freedom of mind. People had watched to see chaos and confusion in the Chieftaincy scheme but were disappointed as a result of the feat of ingenuity on the side of the Cabinet. It was most wonderful and I congratulate the Government. I have visioned, and the present signs of cordiality on all sides do confirm my vision, that time will not be long when Government and Opposition shall form one body or, in other words, when the Government will absorb the Opposition or at least form what we call a coalition Government. To serve our dear country this is absolutely necessary. In actual fact there is nothing to oppose. The Opposition merely exists now for the sake of expediency and red-tapism. It is high time we built on lasting and sure foundations. As long as we continue to think from the artificial centres of prejudice, fear, hate and separation, we shall always expect strife, disharmony and violence, which evils we shall no more allow to exist in our dear Eastern Nigeria. Hon. Members, let us not be

all material. On the eve of our independence there are still signs of unpreparedness. It is not enough to budget huge and colossal sums of money for visible decorations. What about feeding the inner self? How much has your Committee on Independence Celebrations budgeted for the heart of man? The leaders of the country and the Legislators all must unite in love. Celebrated politicians and metaphysicians all over the world are now closing ranks together to uphold the law of unity. We cannot hurt others without hurting ourselves. The world is ourselves in aggregation. That is why you see many politicians, ignorant of the law of oneness of life, suffer themselves from the evils secretly plotted against others.

**Helping the Government:** There must be interaction between the Government and the governed. Hon. Members, we must not conceal evils, so that peace may abound. Our advice and vigilance are essential. On the eve of our independence bands of criminals are ravaging the country. Services in offices are paid for before they are rendered properly and on time. Our advice to local Councils and mass meetings on honesty and citizenship is extremely essential.

Let me now come home and nearer to Awka Division, and I shall begin with the Ministry of Education. What more act of love and encouragement can one show to teachers—the selfless builders of the nation—than good consideration for their stomach? The 12½ per cent award is a generous gesture and is appreciated with the understanding that it is an aid to Agencies.

**The Ministry of Transport:** My thanks are immense and my gratitude profound for the tarring of Ekwuluobia-Umunze road, and the bridging of Aghomili stream for my people of Orumba in Awka Division.

**The Ministry of Works:** As this Ministry has ever been excellent in carrying out the rural water supply scheme in the Region, I do not doubt that it will also come to the rescue of the towns in Agulu and Aguata Court areas. If this is done without delay under fifty-fifty basis we shall be very grateful. Our Government has it as its policy to help those who help themselves. In Awka Division today we have



many maternity homes and post offices erected under self efforts. We are really very grateful and we still appeal to the Government to help these establishments to run properly.

I must at this juncture touch some of the irregularities now prevalent in some District Councils in Awka Division. The District Council scholarship awards are not done under basis of academic qualification but under basis of the highest bidder. This must be investigated into and a stop put to this loathesome practice. Road workers under District Councils are employed to stay only for three months and then they are done away with, with a view to obtaining £30 from each of the new employees. This must be gone into and a check should be made without delay.

I am very grateful for the time allowed me to speak. I must finally say that I wish peace, truth and wisdom to continue and wish the Premier and his Ministers long life.

*And it being 2.15 p.m. Mr Speaker interrupted the business and the Debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed Tomorrow.*

**Mr Speaker:** I am happy to remark that by that general consent granted this morning we have been able to exhaust the list of Members who desire to speak on the Governor's Speech, and although everybody has not had the chance of putting all his points across, yet very grand opportunity will afford itself during the debate on the Budget Speech.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

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

#### ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

##### Shooting of Africans in South Africa

**Mr Okoi Arikpo (Obubra Division):** In supporting the Motion for adjournment

I wish to call the attention of the House to a matter of very serious concern; and that is the tragic incident which has taken place in South Africa, where, according to the news this morning, over 70 of our fellow Africans were killed and nearly 200 were seriously wounded.

According to the report, the cause of this ruthless murder was the passive demonstrations of South Africans against the inhumane treatment of carrying medals as if they were dogs. I have no doubt that all civilised men throughout the world will condemn in the most severe terms this very brutal action of the South African Police; but I also hope that it will be the wish of this House that the Government be urged to make the strongest representations through the Federal Government to the South African Government. This is not the first time this House has had to protest against the inhumane treatment of our fellow Africans in South Africa, but this protest is particularly significant in that in another six months representatives of this Country will be able to make direct protests to the Government of South Africa against their racial policy. It is clear to anybody with the minimum of commonsense that the racialists of South Africa are fighting a losing battle. But it is most unfortunate that in their downward journey to defeat, they should consider it necessary to destroy as many African lives as they are destroying at present. It is therefore our duty to show by words and resolutions—and when it becomes necessary, by action—that we think it is unnecessary that in the very natural march against oppression that so many of our brothers and sisters in South Africa should be sacrificed. Throughout world history people have had to gain their liberties and to gain for others the right to exist, but in 1960 I consider it completely unnecessary that any class of men who have any claim to civilisation should resort to the old method of settling differences.

The rulers of South Africa still belong to the Commonwealth to which, Nigeria on her independence, expects to belong. It is therefore most unfortunate that these rulers of South Africa should not show the slightest consideration for the feelings of Nigeria and other African countries which have agreed to continue association with the British Commonwealth of Nations. Of course, it is not for us to decide



[MR ARIKPO]

for Britain whether the association with South Africa should continue but I consider it our duty, and I am sure the House will urge our Government to take necessary steps, to make it clear through the Federal Government, that the people of this Region will find it very difficult to value an association with any country which has no regard for our fellow Africans. I am therefore asking whether the House will support this view: that the Government should take the earliest possible steps to make known through the Federal Government the feelings of disgust of the Members of this House and of the people of the Eastern Region over the incident.

**The Premier (Dr M. I. Okpara):** We of the Treasury Bench are shocked by this outrageous act of murder by the South African Government, as the hon. Member is. We shall

convey our utter condemnation of the South African Government for this inhuman and barbarous slaughter of our fellow Africans to the Federal Government for transmission to Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, so that the strongest protest may be lodged against the South African Government. (*Hear! Hear!*).

Many people, as the hon. Okoi Arikpo has said, are beginning to wonder whether the same Commonwealth can contain Nigeria and South Africa (*Hear! Hear!*). It is quite clear, therefore, that unless South Africa drops her unrealistic policy of apartheid, which has now boiled over to open murder, then Africa will irrevocably be lost to the Western World. (*Applause*).

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Adjourned accordingly at twenty minutes past two o'clock p.m.*



## EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 24th March, 1960

The House met at Ten o'clock a.m.

## PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

## ORDER OF THE DAY

## Governor's Speech (Debate on the Address)

(EIGHTH ALLOTTED DAY)

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on Question—(15th March):

That this House expresses its loyal and dutiful thanks to His Excellency the Governor for His Excellency's Most Gracious Speech addressed to both Houses of the Legislature from the Throne.

Question again proposed.

The following Amendment stood upon the Order Paper:

**Mr E. O. Eyo:**

To add at the end of the motion the following words:—

"but that this House regrets the omission in the Speech of any reference to steps taken by His Excellency the Governor to ascertain the wishes of the Annangs and Aro-Ibos as regards their inclusion in the proposed Calabar Minority Council in accordance with paragraph 53 of the Report of the London Constitutional Conference of 1958"

**Mr E. O. Eyo** (Uyo Division): My proposed Amendment on the Order Paper arises from paragraph 53 of the Report of the Resumed Nigeria Constitutional Conference of 1958, lines 2 to 5 which read as follows:—

"...The Conference agreed that there should be a Calabar Minority Area consisting of Calabar Province, subject to subsequent enquiry by the Governor of the Region and decision in his discretion as to whether any or all of the Annangs and Aro-Ibos should for this purpose remain in or be excised from the Area".

When I put down my Amendment I overlooked the fact that the Governor's decision in the matter is in his discretion. I therefore think that it will be unfair to drag the Regional Government into the matter by moving my Amendment since the Speech from the Throne

is purely the Regional Government's responsibility. I think the issue is one in which even this House cannot take a decision. I propose, therefore, to raise the matter when I come to discuss the Governor's Head on the Estimates of Expenditure in the Committee of Supply. For this reason, I do not move.

**Mr Speaker:** Is it the wish of this House that the hon. Member should withdraw his Amendment?

**Hon. Members:** Yes.

*Amendment by leave withdrawn.*

**The Minister of Internal Affairs (Mr I. U. Akpabio):** In support of the Motion of Thanks to His Excellency, I should like to comment on some of the views expressed by some hon. Members over certain duties of Government which affect me and my Ministry.

Hon. Iwueke said a lot on the alarming increase of road accidents in the Region and suggested nine ways of minimising them. The ninth of these ways is the formation of a Road Safety Committee in different Council areas. It must be recalled that during the last Budget Session of this House, Mr Iwueke asked whether in view of many reported road accidents and general complaints that the Traffic Law was not being observed strictly Government did not consider it expedient to appoint Local Road Safety Committees. This was followed by a suggestion from His Excellency the Governor-General as to the desirability of forming Road Safety Committees both on Regional and Provincial levels.

The hon. Member will be glad to hear that on the direction of this Government, a Regional Road Safety Committee has been formed with me as Chairman and the Commissioner of Police as Vice-Chairman. Membership is drawn from all the Ministries concerned with Roads, Information, Local Government and Education.

The function of this Committee is to co-ordinate the work of Provincial Road Safety Committees which have now been set up and to transmit the Eastern Region requirements to the Federal Road Safety Committee. At present Sub-Committees formed for the purpose are busy redesigning and issuing the Highway Code and translating it into Efik and Ibo. Posters of various designs and conventional road signs are being made for use of the public. Others of appropriate



[MR I. U. AKPABIO]

sizes are also in preparation for all drivers who have been instructed by the Police and other members of the Road Safety Committee to display on their cars to indicate their willingness to co-operate.

The Regional Road Safety Committee, however, is faced with financial problem. To redesign, translate and print the Highway Code for use of the innumerable drivers in the Region, funds will have to be provided. The thousands of posters and other road signs required by the Road Committee cannot be obtained free. It is therefore hoped that Government will do something to help progress this philanthropic work undertaken by the Regional and Provincial Road Safety Committees.

It cannot be doubted that with the co-operation of the general public and all the users of vehicular traffic the activities of the Road Safety Committee will bear the desired fruit.

During the debate on the Speech from the Throne on the 15th of this month the hon. Chief Whip, Mr G. C. Okeya expressed an opinion which reads as follows:—

“... The Government Press under this Ministry needs an immediate re-orientation to save most of the oppressed workers there from frustration and hyper-tension . . .”

As a matter of comments I must say that the Government Press has over the past three years expanded considerably and is now proud and jealous of its reputation as being the foremost printing establishment in Nigeria. Such development reflects on the foresight of this Ministry and devotion to duty of the staff responsible for ensuring printed matter is quickly and efficiently executed.

The Press has an excellent nucleus of trained indigenous officers the majority of whom have received instruction overseas and who are forming the senior staff structure of the Division. These officers who were, in the majority, in-service trainees are proving themselves admirably and in consequence the rate of Nigerianisation is indeed encouraging. Only four senior posts in the Division are held by expatriates and for a working unit of its size this clearly indicates the policy constantly pursued by this Ministry.

The position of the junior apprentice complement of the Press as regards training is being pursued constantly. During the ensuing financial year, it is proposed to build a printing school as an annex to the Printing Division and appoint qualified instructors who will be solely responsible for the correct training of this class of officer who will receive their instruction as part of their training as apprentice printers. This is a big step forward as to embark on a policy of Nigerianisation it is necessary to concentrate on training in this country as well as sending officers abroad for courses; the advantage of the former method being that all members of the staff will directly benefit and so produce at all times a wide field of officers suitably trained, not only in the initial stage to take over the key posts occupied by expatriate officers but in the broader futuristic appreciation when it will be necessary for a Nigerian to take over from a Nigerian.

Every officer in the Division has an equal opportunity of progressing rapidly—the onus rests on him to prove his worth to Government. It might be appropriate at this juncture to refer to paragraph 24, Part III of the Public Service Commission's Regulations, 1958, which has laid down the condition under which an officer of Government can be promoted. It cannot, therefore, be understood why such a statement has been made—there can be no question of oppression or frustration as conditions of service are better than they have ever been. In any technical productive organisation there must be a high degree of discipline—this is essential as expensive and complicated machinery has to be handled and run economically to produce at a moment's notice printed matter so essential in the correct functioning of Government.

Hon. Iwueke has also commented on crime wave in the Region with particular reference to the incident of highway robbery committed recently at Onitsha. As the Minister of Internal Affairs, I feel I should say something about this.

There is indeed a rise in crime wave but it is not in an accelerating rate at any alarming extent. But it is a natural function where development of towns is carried out in an accelerated manner. Regarding the broad day robbery referred to in Onitsha, the Police arrested the criminals and part of the property was recovered. From records available it has been known that crime rate is higher from



December–March every year. This is accounted for by the fact that during Christmas a lot of people spend more than they can afford and also there is at this time a holiday spirit by which criminals are tempted to get money by any means.

It is not advisable to arm the Police as has been suggested. If this is done the natural reaction of the criminal is to arm himself too. It has been proved from experience in other countries that the public will suffer and their personal liberty jeopardised. If the Police were armed the criminals would band and arm themselves too.

At the moment the Police are combating crimes and incidents of crimes in Onitsha and Enugu have dropped considerably. Citizens of Enugu have joined the special constabulary and vulnerable parts of the town are now well protected by conscientious citizens and special constables and also extra Police is being drafted to Enugu for this purpose.

In order to keep level with increase in population in towns there is a provision for increase in the Police establishment in the Eastern Region. At present the establishment is 3,093 and it is recommended to increase this to 6,699, and this will soon be implemented.

As for C.I.D. there is an increase in training and in technical aids for the Regional and Provincial C.I.D. A new block of building at the Police headquarters will be constructed to house the C.I.D. personnel and the professional and technical aids for detection of crimes. A fleet of saloon cars will arrive in a few weeks' time for use of the Police in traffic and in crime detection. Two launches are also available to patrol the riverain areas.

**The Minister of Local Government (Mr P. O. Nwoga):** I rise to support the Motion for an Humble Address of Thanks to His Excellency the Governor for His Most Gracious Speech from the Throne. In doing so, I wish to concern myself mainly with a number of matters affecting my Ministry which hon. Members have raised during this debate and I should like to answer them whilst they are still fresh in everyone's memory.

First is the question of the postponement of elections to the Calabar, Oron, Ugep and Ikom

Urban District Councils over which the Leader of the Opposition, the Opposition Chief Whip and some other Members of the Opposition have been generating heat and causing unnecessary alarm of a threat to parliamentary democracy. I wish to say right away and without any fear or favour that I take full responsibility for the decision to postpone elections to these four Councils and I do so with the greatest peace of conscience and in the belief and understanding that I have no cause now and in the future to regret my action in this regard.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I hope so.

**The Minister of Local Government:** What I would like the Leader of the Opposition and the Opposition Chief Whip to know and appreciate is that as Minister of Local Government I am not interested in who runs a Council but solely in the efficient administration of the area of the Council concerned.

The decision to postpone the elections to the Calabar and the other three Urban District Councils was taken in the interest of justice and fair-play and in the interest of peace and good government in the areas concerned.

Petitions were received from the Calabar community to the effect that certain individuals including the Leader of the Opposition Mr S. G. Ikoku and the Opposition Chief Whip Mr E. O. Eyo conspired to inflate the present Federal register of voters with people from all over Calabar Division— . . .

**Mr S. G. Ikoku (Enyong Division):** Name them; name the petitioners.

**The Minister of Local Government:** . . . people who have no stake or interest whatsoever in the welfare of the area to which the authority of the Calabar Urban Council extends. The petitioners insisted that only *bona fide* residents of the Calabar Urban area and not hirelings should be permitted to play an active role in the selection of those to be entrusted with the destiny of the inhabitants of the ancient and historic city of Calabar.

I considered this a just, fair and reasonable request and agreed that it is most unfair and most unjust that unscrupulous individuals should take undue advantage of Government's



[MR NWOGA]:

declared policy of using the existing Federal register for all Regional elections, to import hirelings into Calabar to disturb her peace and tranquillity.

I had to order that a fresh registration be made for elections into Cababar U.D.C. so as to exclude all hirelings and agents of confusion and disorder and permit only those persons who actually reside in the Council's area to be registered for these elections. This does not mean a departure from the Government policy of using the Federal register for Regional elections because Regulation 2 of the Local Government (Elections) Regulations makes it explicit that this policy is able to be modified to suit local conditions under unforeseen circumstances such as now exist in Calabar Urban area.

I would like hon. Members to know that the electoral procedure based on separate registration which I propose for Calabar had a precedent in the former Instrument of the Port Harcourt Municipality. This being so, I have no doubt that hon. Members will agree with me that hon. Ikoku's accusation of rigmarole in Local Government elections in areas where, according to him, the Government party is on "shaky grounds" is completely false and without foundation. Certainly hon. Ikoku ought to know that no matter which way the elections go in the whole of the former Calabar province this Government will still be as solid and staunch as the rock of Gibraltar.

The Ikom, Oron and Ugep urban councils were established about six months ago and the decision to postpone the elections to these councils for a few months was taken after considering requests from people of the areas concerned.

I do not wish to go into details but suffice it to say that after due consideration of the case placed before it, Government decided to postpone elections to these councils in the interest of peace and good government. For instance, there was a general appeal from the Ikom community that elections to their U.D.C. should be withheld for some time so that the collections which are at present in progress for certain development projects in the area may not be interrupted by intra-party election

strife. Federal election campaigns in Ugep and Oron were characterised by hooliganism and violence. The Ugep people have asked for postponement of elections to their council so that wounds inflicted during the Federal elections may heal completely and the possibility of people seeking opportunity for revenge made remote by the passage of time.

Such are the reasons for the postponement of the elections to these councils and I have no doubt that hon. Members will agree with me that Government's decision in this connection was influenced only by an ardent desire for the peace and good government of the people of the Eastern Region.

The hon. M. N. Onwuma asked me to make a statement on the action of certain councils in appointing persons to sit on the councils who are not chiefs or traditional members. If some councils are doing so the appointments are *ultra vires* since councils have no power themselves to appoint councillors. Let me state the procedure and the latest policy on this matter:—

- (a) Traditional members and chiefs are appointed to councils by me with the approval of Government. It has also been decided that the total number of appointed councillors shall not exceed 20 per cent of the full council.
- (b) Before appointments are made notices are published in the areas concerned stating that I propose to amend the Instrument of a council by making such appointments and giving people the opportunity to make representations.
- (c) Provided they are not disqualified from being councillors Second-class Chiefs will be appointed members of their respective District Councils.
- (d) Where the appointment of Second-class Chiefs to a council brings the appointed members above the 20 per cent limit a system of rotation will be devised so that the number of appointed members sitting at any one time shall not exceed 20 per cent of the total membership of the council.
- (e) If the number of Second-class Chiefs is less than 20 per cent of the total membership of the council, traditional members may be appointed to be members of the council as well, if the council so wishes,



provided they are persons of genuine traditional authority, and provided the 20 per cent limit is not exceeded.

- (f) In some council areas traditional members were appointed before the selection of Chiefs and not all of those who were selected as Second-class Chiefs were also traditional members. In such cases the Second-class Chiefs will be appointed to be councillors in addition to the existing traditional members and if the 20 per cent limit is exceeded they and the traditional members will have to sit in rotation.
- (g) A circular embodying these decisions has recently been sent to all councils and Divisional Officers. I have asked for the names and titles of Second-class Chiefs selected in their divisions and when I receive the information I require I shall arrange for them to be appointed to their respective councils.

I am surprised that the hon. A. G. Umoh should attempt to mislead hon. Members with inaccuracies. He said that Government unexpectedly established an Okopedi Urban District Council in 1959 although a decision had previously been taken not to establish an Urban District Council there. He clearly misread the Instrument at page B 451 of the 1959 *Gazette Supplement*. In large print it announces the establishment of the Okopedi Local Council with effect from 1st October, 1958. Nowhere in the Instrument is the expression "Urban District Council" to be found. Secondly he complains that strangers have more representatives on the Council than the indigenous landowners and implies that there must have been a conspiracy between an Ibo Minister and Ibo officials to give the Ibos living in Okopedi a majority on the Local Council. Such was not the case. The representation on the Okopedi Local Council was recommended by an expatriate Divisional Officer after considerable local consultation.

The Ibos in Okopedi number just about half of the total population. The fear of the Ibiono elements was that under a geographical ward system in Okopedi the Ibos would dominate in every ward. This situation was averted by the fact that it was impossible to define wards geographically by relation to features on the ground. Instead a ward

system based on tribal groups was proposed and agreed to locally. It provided for a Council of thirty-eight members of whom nineteen were Ibos, eighteen Ibibios and one from the other Nigerian or West African strangers. This would appear to be a satisfactory solution to an admittedly difficult problem and since it was discussed fully with the people on the spot I see no reason why the hon. Member should imply that the representation was rigged or fixed to the disadvantage of the indigenous people. Such irresponsibility does him no credit. As to the hon. Umoh's uncharitable and disparaging remarks about my religious susceptibilities I hope he will, in good time, make reparation for his sin of calumny and slander hatched out of his embittered mind, and since he speaks so much of conscience, I leave it to his own conscience. It is not for me to say that my motives have been honest and my hands clean in the discharge of my functions in the Ministry of Local Government.

I am afraid I am unable to agree with the hon. A. O. Chikwendu that now is the time to abandon the controls in the present Local Government Law in favour of general freedom of action for Councils. The present Law was introduced to deal with abuses and irregularities arising from the operation of the 1950 Ordinance. No doubt there are many individual councillors with the intelligence and moral fibre to make Local Government work properly. But from my own experience gained from meeting councils and from working in my Ministry I am clear in my own mind that the stage has not yet been reached when councils generally can discharge their functions without the supervision and control imposed by the present Law.

However the Bill for a new Law which I shall shortly introduce to the House at this meeting does contain a clause empowering me to grant a certain measure of autonomy to any Council which I consider merits it. I, too, look forward to the time when controls of all kinds can be relaxed and Councils can become fully autonomous bodies but it would not be in the best interests of this Region to permit such fundamental changes and increased powers to be generally granted until Councils have first demonstrated their ability to work with the minimum supervision under the present Law.



[MR NWOGA]

Finally, I should like to make an appeal to all hon. Members. This is the year of our Independence. The eyes of the world are focussed on our activities as we prepare for the great event. Local Government will play a not inconsiderable part in ensuring stability in the future. In fact, a stable and efficient system of Local Government is essential for the well-being of this Region. I would therefore ask all hon. Members when they are at home in their constituencies to help their Councils as much as they can to understand their duties, to give services and value for money to the rate-payers and to be straight and honest in all their dealings. The best of organisations cannot compete against self-interest and it is a spirit of service for the benefit of the people of this Region that I shall do my best to encourage amongst the Councils so long as I hold this portfolio. I am appealing to all hon. Members to assist me with that task.

**The Minister of Education (Mr G. E. Okeke):** I seize this opportunity to thank all the hon. Members who have kindly paid tribute to the achievements of my Ministry during the year under review, and those who have offered concrete suggestions for improvement. There are, of course, some pessimists who see nothing good about this Ministry. I know that in their hearts of hearts they do appreciate the phenomenal expansion in our educational programme. Some hon. Members criticised the alleged restriction in the expansion of Secondary Schools and Primary Schools in the Region. This is very untrue. Rather, the reverse is the case as can be seen from the following particulars. I will use the 1957 and 1959 school years because this is the period of our Universal Primary Education Expansion. In 1957-1958 the actual expenditure for education was 5.5 million pounds as against 6.2 million pounds now. This is an indication of expansion anyway. In the same year 1957 the number of primary schools was 6,986 with a total enrolment of 1.2 million children compared with an estimated total enrolment of 1.5 million children this year; as also in 1957 there were sixty-eight Secondary Schools with a total enrolment figure of 14,832 as against 106 at the end of the last school year, with an addition of thirty-one new schools given permission to open, giving

a possible total of 137, with a total estimated enrolment of 20,136 in this year. Hon. Members devoted much time in criticising expansion on secondary education. It is, as I said earlier, untrue in that within the three years under review there will be an increase of sixty-nine as against sixty-eight in sixty years under the British rule. That is an average of just over one Secondary School a year as against a possible thirty-one in twelve months. If this is not expansion I doubt what it is. The number of Teacher Training Institutions in 1957 was 111; a total enrolment of 9,413 as against 146 with a total enrolment of 12,000 at the end of 1959. The number of teachers in 1957 was 42,649 as against estimated 46,000 teachers now. There is, of course, need to restrict indiscriminate expansion of education in order to maintain standards and in order to protect the tax-payers' interests. The expert opinion has it that four per cent of any generation is an adequate figure for Secondary School expansion.

Last year, we had 2.7 per cent and it has increased to 3.6 this year leaving a gap of only .4 per cent. I do not consider that it would be appropriate for me to allow all this in one year alone. What I have done so far is to announce that after the opening of the 31 we would watch the progress and, in the meantime, there would be no more. I did not say that the embargo was placed forever, nor did I suggest it is the Government's policy to restrict expansion indefinitely. There is, of course, one aspect which I would like Members to consider. We want to know who these applicants are. They are generally under four categories: You have the Local Government Councils, the communities, the Missionary and private Voluntary Agencies. Now you are aware that some of these have been old in the field and some are new. But one striking evidence you can collect from these applications is that some people who fail in their trading in the market choose to run schools for their children.

This morning before I left, I saw one old woman who has been a trader all the years asking to open a school. I do not think that the hon. Members here will want me to allow indiscriminate expansion of schools. Secondly, we must guard against dilution of the standard.



Some time ago, on the floor of this House some people said certain things about the standard in our Primary Schools. Obviously, if in the past you had 30 children in a class, you had Certificated Teachers to look after them, and now you have no less than 40 children because of the expansion and a limited number of Teachers, limited number of Inspectorate Staff to go round, surely you are calling for a low standard in our education. We must look at these figures before we consider to open more schools. If you want me to open 188 schools because 188 applied, then I will disagree with you.

Another aspect I would want Members to consider is that sometimes some Members have been approached . . . (*Interruptions*).

If they meet you and tell you their tall stories about how these restrictions came about you never stop for a moment to ask them to give your explanations or to ask me to give you. I will give just one instance. During the U.P.E. year some voluntary agencies conducted classes in open compounds, and claimed that they had private schools. (*Several hon. Members: Who are they?*). I would like hon. Members to be a little more serious about this. Some of them under the guise that they want to open private schools or more schools will tell you that one school is over-crowded. The fact is that the moment you give him permission to open a private school the next moment they turn back to convert them into grant-aided schools. In most cases there is evidence to show that there are no children in these private schools, and the teachers in them draw salaries from this Government. I think it is a height of recklessness in the expenditure of Government funds.

Another point is that I have given permission to all Managers allowing them to transfer children from one school to another within their own managerial areas. We must make sure that the classes are full before they are given permission to open more schools. It is not the intention of this Government to restrict the expansion of schools but we must be discreet in this expansion. That is all. I have instructed all Provincial Education Officers to report to me all such cases. I do not want to hear from the proprietors themselves that there is need for expansion. I want my

officials to go round and report to me where there is need for expansion, otherwise you will find the Government throwing the money that could have been used for the expansion of education into some people's pockets. This is mainly what I have done so far. On the floor of this House I announced that I would not allow "sideway" expansion. By sideway expansion I mean allowing one class to grow from one to say twenty-five streams, as the case may be. In some cases there are now seventeen and in some ten instead of one or two. There are classes of thirteen instead of forty, and yet you have to spread them over a number of schools. This is what we want to restrict and I hope hon. Members will help me to advise these people that they must be fair and honest in dealing with the Government's funds.

The hon. J. A. Agba was complaining about secondary scholarship awards in Ogoja Province. At least in certain parts of Ogoja Province, Abakaliki in particular, the Ministry of Education had gone into the matter and found that they have not enough people to take up the secondary scholarship awards allocated to them. It is no fault of mine whatsoever, and you need to ask what Government is doing to help those places to progress. In Abakaliki alone I allowed six secondary schools to open out of the 31 newly approved, and in most cases they will not come forward to seize this opportunity. In Ikom, Obubra and Enyong Divisions I have even invited people to come forward and open secondary schools. I have even advised voluntary agencies to shift over to these areas. I have a survey of the whole Region. In each Division I have worked on the *datum* of 1 for every 70,000 population—that is for the whole Division. Already there are some Divisions that are over supplied with secondary schools. (*Several hon. Members: Like Onitsha*). Like Onitsha, I agree; like Owerri, Orlu and many other Divisions. In these places I have definitely refused to allow more schools to be opened until other places have been served. This is one of the restrictions you hear of. I have asked the voluntary agencies to make some shifts in order to allow Abakaliki and Ogoja to produce more secondary schools.

Of course, some hon. Members advocate scholarship awards on population basis. Here



[MR G. E. OKEKE]

I am referring to the hon. S. O. Achara. Government has already recognised the fact that some divisions are much larger than others and that population varies considerably from one Division to another or from one district to another. It is a fact that some of the Councils ask for the amendment of the policy paper on scholarships which had been formulated. We had not 102 Councils at the time this was formulated and I am told that some of them were lured into splitting these Councils because of these amenities. I have already taken steps in this direction for Okigwi, Orlu and Udi to be given further awards and you might have read of these recently. However, I am going to take into consideration the points made by the hon. Achara and it is the intention of my Ministry to revise these awards accordingly.

The hon. D. E. Akilo wanted some Special uncertificated teachers to become pensionable. There is no doubt there are so many shadow Cabinet Ministers of Education in this House. This is because there are many more teachers in this House than others. The pension scheme which the hon. Member referred to is probably the uncontributory pension scheme. It will be excessively expensive to apply this scheme to 46,000 odd uncertificated teachers. The Regional Government is already spending more than it can afford in educational matters. There is already a scheme for certificated teachers to be absorbed in the pension scheme, and I think he is aware of that.

The hon. J. A. Agba again called attention to the fact that assistance should be given to the under-developed areas. As I said earlier on, my Ministry is taking all the steps in this direction.

However, the point I would like to make here is in connection with Standard VI results and the criticisms levelled thereon. But before I go on to it I would like to take this opportunity to answer to the remarks made by the hon. Ihekwoaba. Hon. Ihekwoaba wanted us to believe that because Orlu has seventy-seven primary schools, therefore it is necessary to allow Orlu District Council to open a teacher training institution.

I just want to show you how it is impossible to allow expansion indiscriminately. Seventy-seven primary schools with 400 teachers

require only eighty certificated teachers. If you allow this council to open one Teacher Training Centre in two years it would produce 120 trained teachers. What will happen in the following years? More teachers than required will be produced. I have advised that if all local government councils want to open one Teacher Training Centre I will consider that, but I will not allow local Government councils to open one Teacher Training Centre each. That is not reasonable.

Turning to the Government Standard Six Examination results, some of you must have heard that the results are out. I have told you some time ago that it was not possible for us to finish this in time. We had 65,500 candidates, and remembering that there are three papers for each candidate the total number of papers will be over 200,000. Everybody will agree that it is really difficult to get these papers corrected in time. However, I have made arrangements to ensure that in the ensuing years it will be possible to get the results out in time, but not as early as you would wish. I have made the following arrangements:—

1. The examinations will be conducted a little earlier than this year but not too early to interrupt the work in the schools.
2. More people will be asked to mark the papers.
3. The time-limit given to each marker for the number of papers he marks will be reduced.
4. Transport will be arranged in advance for transferring the examination papers to the various centres where they will be marked.
5. The headquarter staff that will compile and check the marks as well as type the results will be  $\frac{2}{3}$  increased if necessary only temporarily.

It is hoped that the effect of this will make the results appear quicker than this year. The final number of passes this year is 28,655. This represents 45.1 per cent pass as against 41.8 per cent last year. 4.3 per cent of the people who entered for the examinations obtained distinctions as against 3 per cent last year. I have given instructions that, for this year only, no student should be withdrawn from any college or institution as a result of his



failure in this year's examination, provided that he passed the prescribed entrance examination. The 75 per cent attendance for this year has been reduced to 60 per cent in order to enable the children to return to school this year.

Mr Speaker, may I stop so far for time is against me, and I propose to speak fully on these points during the Budget Speech.

**The Minister of Works (Mr P. O. Ururuka):** I rise to support the Motion. It is not my intention at this stage to elaborate on the achievements and the plans of my Ministry for I intend to do this during the Budget Speech. I merely wish to clarify some of the matters raised by some hon. Members in connection with my Ministry. Some Members have praised certain activities of my Ministry while others have condemned them and nearly all have expressed impatience in having this or that road tarred or this water supply installed. This is as it should be for everyone of us is really anxious to see that we have some developments in the Region. However, I must warn hon. Members that good engineering and good architecture are not subjects one can do in a rush. If you design in haste you have to regret at leisure.

**Mr Speaker:** May I call the attention of the Chief Whip of the Opposition to the fact that there are now very few hon. Members of the Opposition sitting in this House.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I will take note of that, Sir.

**The Minister of Works:** This fact is really true for undue rush in engineering work and design generally results in poor quality work and waste of money. If I may give one example, the new Port Harcourt water supply has been methodically and well planned. This entailed extensive surveys resulting in no less than 260 drawings, twenty-five indents for pumps, pipes and special equipment and no less than ten major contracts had to be prepared and supervised. The result will be, I am sure, a first-class water supply of about 2½ million gallons per day for Port Harcourt when the work is finished.

The hon. Member for Afikpo has cited an opposite example where design and supervision were not all they should have been. I refer to

the Afikpo–Okigwi road and parts of the Afikpo–Abakaliki and Enugu–Awgu roads. I really hold no brief for the Costains who were the contractors that did the work. I am certainly not impressed with their work on this particular project, but to be fair to the Firm I must say that the failure in certain respects should be attributed to design, insufficient base course and insufficient drainage, and the contract was not properly supervised. It must be remembered that pressure was put on the Minister of Transport to carry on the tarring programme quickly and cheaply at the time and the result is as hon. Members have just seen. What I want to impress in the minds of hon. Members is that there is no short cut to engineering activities. We must have time for design; we must have time for surveying and we must have time for proper supervision. So I implore hon. Members to have little patience and as stated in the Speech from the Throne, the past year has been one for designing and preparation of contracts. Very soon Members will see the result in the present development.

I am accused by my fellow Member for Aba that there are schemes for everything in every Division except my own constituency of Aba. Government has assiduously tried to share equitably the amenities throughout the Region and I think that it is modesty on my side not to seek for more than a fair share for Aba Division. Even then, Government has spent £106,000 on the Aba urban water supply. It has also provided pump and piped water supply for Mbawsi and Omoba whilst £24,000 has been spent on sinking wells all over the Division.

It is not my intention to go and enumerate one after the other the amenities that have been extended to Aba Division. I think my hon. Friend was on the other hand very unfair to the Creek areas when he deplored the fact that my Ministry has provided the Councils with Launches. I think he was very unfair to them. Launches and Waterways are mediums of transportation just in the same way as roads and road transport are in the hinterland areas. In an area where roads are impossible, and I think the Members will agree, it is only fair and reasonable to assist Councils with their water transport and this my Ministry has done and nothing more.

Whilst hon. Onwuma takes me to task for providing amenities in the Creek area, hon.



[MR URURUKA]

Umoh accuses my Government of giving no amenities to those constituencies represented by the Opposition Members. I challenge this—is it not a tarred road presently being constructed from Ikot Ekpena to Itu? And is not a pumped and piped water supply scheme being constructed at present at Okopedi? Or am I to be told that the water or this road is only for the benefit of the Ibo strangers leaving in Enyong Division? The Calabar-Arochuku road, including the Okpoka ferry in Enyong Division costing Government about £100,000 will be another great amenity for the people of Enyong Division. I do not propose to cite a long list of amenities given by Government to those other constituencies represented by Opposition Members but they are there for all the Members to see in the Development Scheme as well as in the Estimates.

My Friend hon. Chikwendu has mentioned the Umuahia Urban Water supply and Electricity undertaking. Both are nearing completion and will shortly be a boon to the people of Umuahia, and as to the roads in Bende Division, the Umuahia-Alayi-Ohafia road is now out to tender, so that work on the bituminous surfacing and reconstruction will soon start.

Hon U. Enyi has mentioned Agbani-Okposi-Afikpo road and I am afraid I must report that the Government has been badly let down by the contractor on that particular road. Moreover, this is not the isolated case where some indigenous contractors have not come up to expectation. These indigenous contractors have been very vocal in pressing Government to give them contract works and it is a pity that so many of them have failed us. This does not mean that Government is going to change its policy of considering indigenous contractors in the award of contracts but the fact is that the sheep will be separated from the goats and contractors will be given jobs within their capabilities. This is the reason why Government has introduced registration of contractors so that contractors could be placed in their different categories where they will be capable of doing the work given to them on contract. Returning to this road, may I say that the work in this particular road will now have to be completed by direct labour but as hon. Members will realise before this is done, it will have to take more than two or three times the amount of money which was originally intended for it.

I do not understand hon. Arikpo's remarks about the location of water supply being mixed up in Ugep area. If he were here, most probably, I would have asked him to explain further on this and perhaps if he puts this matter in form of a scheme, I will be able to answer him but I wish to say that there has not been any suspension of work in Ugep in regard to water supply.

Hon. Akilo also asked about water supply and I can assure him that Ngwo pumped and piped water scheme will be implemented and a scheme has now been prepared which will supply water not only to Ngwo-Uno but also Abboh and Ngwo Asa. Briefly, the reservoir constructed at the Ninth Mile Corner will be connected up with a bore-hole water supply. I think this answers his question.

The hon. Member for Awgu, G. I. Oko, also referred to rural water supply pump scheme, and in this case also my Ministry is preparing a plan to provide Lengwe and Ndeaboh with a piped scheme. Attempts to find ground water at Ndeaboh have failed as the hon. Member has stated. As a result of an expensive hydrological survey by the geologist, they recommended a piped scheme from water originating on the escarpment. Ugep is also in the same category. This refers to hon. Anaba's comment. However, in this case, the geologists have found some small sandstone aquifers and it is hoped that the series of wells into this aquifer will produce the necessary water supply for Ugep town.

Hon. Imeh has requested my Ministry to look to the maintenance of existing wells. This we propose to do to a much greater extent in this coming year, as priority attention is presently being given to the construction of new wells.

Hon. Rev. Opara also raised the question of water supply for Mbieri. I wish to say that during the time of the preparation of the scheme that we are now undertaking, this particular town was not included. But it is intended to take note of what he has said when preparing the next scheme which we are embarking upon.

Hon. Okpokam observes that Ogoja Province was neglected at first although not by



this Government. By this he implied that the present Government was doing something but he would like more to be done. Certainly, the Government is doing something in this area. Already, we are spending over £150,000 to construct an entirely new road from Ikoma to Obudu over an area densely forested. When completed, it will open up very fertile cocoa producing area. The Yahe-Ogoja road is also out to tender. Mr Okpokam would like a road to be opened between Ikoma and Obubra. I assure him that my Government has already taken a detailed survey or is undertaking a detail survey of this particular road which has not been opened before but I have to say that as heaven helps those who help themselves, people in this area should be advised to supplement Government development with communal efforts as is done in other areas as Onitsha, Owerri and Calabar Provinces.

I refer to hon. Iwueke's remarks about road safety. Government is very much concerned about the number of fatal accidents on our roads. I do not want to delve very much into this case; the hon. the Minister of Internal Affairs has given some points on this but what I have to say in this respect is that his suggestion will further be carried to that Ministry whose Minister is the Chairman of the Committee. I would like to seize this opportunity of thanking all those people who have showed appreciation to the Ministry and who have made different suggestions and I hope I will be able during my Budget Speech to clarify certain issues and to raise their hopes in the same respect about what my Ministry intends to do.

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** In supporting the Motion of Thanks to His Excellency on His Speech from the Throne, I wish to comment upon criticisms levied on the Ministry of Town Planning by the hon. Members for Owerri, Ikot Ekpene and Ahoada.

The hon. Eronini, Member for Owerri, and the hon. Okeh, Member for Ahoada, have both criticised the Ministry of Town Planning for the recent acquisition of land by the Government in Port Harcourt. Hon. Eronini said that the area acquired was too large and that the acquisition should have been spread throughout the Region and not confined to one town or area. He added that the acquisition

amounted to dispossessing the people of the area concerned and enslaving them. Hon. Okeh said that the acquisition of such a large area without proper arrangements for safeguarding the interests of the landowners was, to use his own words—"economic decapitation". He suggested the setting up of a sort of Lagos Executive Development Board in place of the present Port Harcourt-Obia Town Planning Authority, adequate compensation to the landowners, regular award of contracts to the landowners, e.g., by Shell-BP., proper rehabilitation schemes for the people and injection of natural rulers into the Port Harcourt Municipal Council.

I must say that it is most surprising that even hon. Members who claim to speak in the interests of the people around Port Harcourt do not appear to appreciate the tremendous development that is bound to take place in Port Harcourt, and is in fact already taking place. Even without the discovery of oil, Port Harcourt had always been a very important town. With the rapid development that is bound to follow the discovery of oil in the place, the *tempo* of development in the area will be phenomenal.

It is an accepted fact that Port Harcourt is already congested. Crown land is unavailable for extension of both high-density and low-density residential areas. There are over 2,000 applicants on the waiting list for plots for residential and commercial purposes, but there is not a single such plot left now in Port Harcourt.

Along the Port Harcourt-Aba and Port Harcourt-Owerri roads haphazard development is fast taking place which would produce an unsightly slum difficult to eradicate afterwards. Sanitation and sewage-disposal arrangements are already deplorable; and water and power supplies are inadequate. In order to plan effectively it is necessary to have long-term programme and not to attack the problem piece-meal. It will be a very shortsighted Government that would fail to envisage the shape of things to come and take appropriate and immediate action in anticipation.

Coming now more specifically to the points raised by the hon. Members whom I have mentioned, I must explain that one of the



[MR EMOLE]

chief reasons for Government acquisition of land is to guide development, and the extent of land acquired in any place is dictated by the *tempo* of development in that place. It would serve no useful purpose for Government to acquire large acreages of land in places where development is not so rapid. It is not only in Port Harcourt that large areas of land have been acquired. Relatively large areas have been acquired in Aba, Enugu, Umuahia and Onitsha, and more land will be acquired both in these towns and elsewhere as the need arises. It is wrong for hon. Members to interpret the acquisition of land in Port Harcourt by the Government as an attempt to dispossess the people and enslave them. On the contrary it is in the interests of the people that the land has been acquired. The fruits of development will be shared by all but probably more by the people whose land Government has acquired and intends to develop.

Acquisition of land by Government is, of course, never popular. But in the particular case of the acquisition in Port Harcourt Government has assured the owners of the land that there is no intention to disturb existing villages. All such villages will be excised from the area acquired and provision will be made for more land for them than they actually utilise at present. Adequate compensation will be paid for land taken and for crops destroyed in the process of needed development.

I am inclined to believe that the protests against the recent acquisition of land in Port Harcourt are engineered by people other than the actual owners of the land. From the numbers of claims received in this Ministry in respect of large parcels of land in the area, it is clear that about one half of the land outside the villages has been sold by the actual owners of the land. These claims are supported by properly executed documents. But for bad taste I would have read out to this hon. House a very revealing list of the claimants, and it would have been fully appreciated what subtle forces are behind the protests against the acquisition.

With reference to the formation of a sort of Lagos Executive Development Board in place of the present Port Harcourt-Obia

Town Planning Authority, I must say that Government is fully aware of the existence and functions of the Lagos Executive Development Board; but it will be wrong to think that because such an organisation with executive powers fits into the Federal arrangement it will work equally well in Port Harcourt.

The other points raised by the hon. Member for Ahoada are merely clouding the issue. The Ministry of Town Planning or the Government for that matter does not control the award of contracts by Shell BP., and it is irrelevant and improper for the hon. Member to suggest in this House that Shell BP. contracts should be regularly awarded to the people whose land has been acquired by the Government. The injection into the Port Harcourt Municipal Council of natural rulers of the areas acquired by the Government is, of course, a matter for the hon. Minister of Local Government and has nothing to do with land.

Hon. Etuhube, Member for Ikot Ekpene, criticised the Ministry of Town Planning for setting aside, according to him, a qualified Nigerian who had been acting in the post of Principal Land Officer, and appointing instead an expatriate officer substantively to the post. May I remind the hon. Member for Ikot Ekpene that according to the present Constitution, promotions and appointments into the Public Service of this Region are entirely the responsibility of the Public Service Commission in which no Minister may interfere. If the hon. Member wishes the Constitution changed to enable the Minister of Town Planning to include in his portfolio the appointment or promotion of officers in the Regional Public Service, the criticism of the Ministry is certainly not the proper course of action for him to take.

Finally, I wish to point out that our work in the Ministry of Town Planning as regards the acquisition of land by the Government is delicate and difficult. Sometimes our actions may appear wicked, but hon. Members will agree that there are times when a mother or father must appear to be wicked in order to be kind to a child. I can assure hon. Members that every action taken by the Ministry as regards the acquisition of land is very carefully considered beforehand and is calculated to be in the general interest of the Region. In



making comments on the acquisition of land by the Government hon. Members should therefore do so with caution and restraint.

With these comments, I beg to support the Motion.

**The Minister of Commerce (Mr J. U. Nwodo):** I rise to support the Motion of Thanks to His Excellency for the Speech from the Throne.

This year has been one of great events in the parliamentary history of this hon. House. For the first time our Chiefs sat side by side with us to listen to the Speech from the Throne; truly this is commendable. It is a worthy achievement. In the past there was loose talk as to the existence of Chiefs in the Eastern Region and Government's honest intention to introduce a House of Chiefs was almost misconstrued. It took critics time and energy to placard this unwholesome news. But when Government was determined, in less than two weeks a House of Chiefs was inaugurated. This is because Chiefs were there; they were easily and quickly identified by their people and Government simply accorded recognition. It is wrong for the Opposition to suggest in their speech that Government imposed some Chiefs on the people. Government never believes in the imposition of Chiefs. On the other hand Government's view is that where a Chief, for a long time past has been recognised by his people, that Chief cannot be deposed, thrown off or rejected on the flimsy grounds that such a Chief was susceptible to one political opinion or the other.

Another important land mark in our political evolution is the Nigerian Independence which takes place on 1st October, 1960. I join the Leader of Opposition in paying tribute to Dr Azikiwe and other leaders of the various political parties, who have fought to make this struggle a reality. I regret to say, however, that there is one amongst the lot the Leader of Opposition mentioned who was determined to foil these genuine and honest efforts of his colleagues by chanting, at the eleventh hour, the gospel of tribalism and agitation for fragmentation of this country into tribal groups. It was crystal clear that the national movement and emphasis was towards solidarity and unity of purpose. In

other words, the yearnings of the people of this country was for one free and united Nigeria, one constitution, one country, and one destiny. It beats my morale to hear any hon. Member of this House talk of domination of one tribe by the other. The issue is too domestic and tends to lower the standard of this hon. House. If tribalism does anybody any good in this Region, most of us would like to know. Where it was employed as an instrument of political propaganda, the people had always stood to lose. (*Mr E. O. Eyo: Where did you lose?*) I am going to tell you where you have lost! I, personally, am not happy that in the present Federal set-up not a single man or woman of Ibibio or Annang descent is in the Cabinet as an elected representative of the people. Truly, the saying that "life is a boomerang" cannot be more true. A word is enough for the wise.

Our leader, Dr Azikiwe, deserves the tribute of any true and conscientious nationalist of this country for demonstrating beyond any shadow of doubt that his mission is not for self-satisfaction but for the well-being and over-all interest of the country and generations to come. He refused to be lured by the crumbs of office and stood by his conviction that the ultimate goal of his life's ambition is the redemption of this country from all forms of imperialism. Once this was accomplished—and it is now accomplished—he was satisfied. Nigeria will therefore be living in a fool's paradise, much more a Government run by a political party of which he, Dr Azikiwe, is at the head, if at any occasion such as this no tribute was paid to him. (*Mr E. O. Eyo: Will the hon. Minister tell us more about his Ministry.*) I will tell him more about my Ministry; this is the Speech from the Throne.

Dr Azikiwe left this Region on 12th December and handed over to Dr M. I. Okpara as Premier of the Eastern Region. The present Premier, Dr Okpara, is a man who has risen to this exalted office of the State by his industry, honesty of purpose, devotion to a course and above all, loyalty to leadership. It will not remove things from their proper perspective if I re-affirm here the declaration of all the Ministers of the Eastern Region to work in harmony and co-operation with the hon. Premier, Dr M. I. Okpara. (*Mr E. O. Eyo: He will sack you if you do not do that.*) But I was not sacked by his predecessor in office.



[MR NWODO]

While it may be said that declaration is not enough, I will add that we pledge to him, the Premier, our loyalty and willingness to co-operate with him on all matters pertaining to the efficient Government and administration of this Region.

May I now reply to some of the points raised in connection with my portfolio by some hon. Members. Hon. C. A. Abangwu praised the efforts made to arouse overseas interest in industrial undertaking in this country. Hon. Enyi praised the activities of the Ministry of Commerce and would like a salt factory to be established at Okposi and Uburu. Much as we would like to help, my information is that a survey has been conducted by experts and the proposition has not been found to be feasible.

Hon. Ito would like a factory to be established in Ikot Ekpene for the utilisation of Piassava. The export quota of this product is being studied and negotiations are in train as to whether it is a worthwhile venture. Hon. Arikpo has suggested that a Gas Producing Company should be formed to make gas from the coal at Enugu. We are already studying this possibility. There are many complications, I must warn. Gas as a fuel would compete with both coal and electricity. Further, the natural gas obtainable from the oil fields is considerably cheaper. Nevertheless, my Ministry is examining seriously the alternative use of Enugu coal, not only necessarily in gas production but also in other forms of chemical products. I also think that if this Region can have the sympathy and co-operation of the Federal Government, the best alternative industry for our coal would be iron and steel. Already in this Region there are limestone and iron-ore in abundance and fortunately all are located in the same vicinity with the Enugu Coal.

Several hon. Members criticised what was described by some of them as the concentration of industries in one particular locality, namely, Port Harcourt. May I say, that the siting of an industry is governed by many factors. This is a matter which is usually handled by technical experts who have got to take into consideration the economic viability of an industry before deciding in favour of one site against the other.

The hon. Etuk mentioned the limestone deposits in the Calabar area. I agree that it would be excellent if we could find a use for them.

Hon. Ikoku, Leader of the Opposition, suggested the setting up of an Industrial Committee which would investigate and recommend the establishment of industries. He calls it a bi-partisan Economic Policy Making Body. The same hon. Gentleman raised an alarm on the various Economic Conferences going on in Paris and other parts of Europe and deduced that the sole intention was to raise capital in order to perpetuate "economic imperialism" on the already impoverished colonial countries. I have said it often in this House and I would not mind repeating it. It is the policy of the Governments of the Federation of Nigeria to attract overseas capital. A joint statement to this effect, signed by the various political party leaders, was issued in London by the Governor-General in 1957 after the Constitutional Conference.

This statement is reproduced at page 17 in the pamphlet entitled *Investment Possibilities in the Eastern Region of the Federation of Nigeria*, which was circulated to hon. Members of this House. It will interest hon. Members to know that practically every country in the world has built itself up through the help of investments from other countries. This was true of America itself. The American economy is based on unbridled, free enterprise capitalism. I do not say that their system is perfect, or necessarily what we want exactly, but it has produced the most powerful nation industrially in the world. Government policy was not to restrict the control of large quantities of the means of production by one individual or one company, but rather to encourage those who showed the ability to do this to increase their power. Government legislation was permissive not restrictive. Andrew Carnegie one of the greatest millionaires the world has yet seen says in his Essay on wealth:

"Not evil but good has come to the American race who rose from the accumulation of wealth by those who have ability and energy to produce it".

Let me give hon. Members another example of what happened in other parts of the world



during their economic growth. The Japanese Government, for instance, long before 1867, made a positive effort to prevent the inflow of capital into its country. No foreign trader was allowed to set foot in the country; very little trade was carried on in any way with other nations. In short, there was lack of commercial contact and trade, and consequently importation of new ideas and techniques was absent. After 1868, the Government which determined to build up a strong and modern Japan realised that they must make themselves as materially powerful as the Western nations. The Government at once removed many old and traditional restrictions on the movement of people and goods from one part of the world to another, on entry into business and professions. All of us here today know that Japan is one of the industrially developed parts of the world.

We do not mind overseas industrialist coming to this Region; on the contrary we welcome them investing their money in this Region. It is in every way to our advantage that we should do so provided that there are certain safeguards, and this is an important proviso. Overseas industrialists are cautious people; they do not want to invest their capital in countries which are hostile or tend to be hostile.

The policy of this Government is perfectly clear. It is to attract overseas investors, not from one country only but from countries all over the world. This policy is consistent with the foreign policy of the Government Party—the N.C.N.C.—i.e. non-alliance with any particular bloc of the world.

Every country in the world depends on other countries for assistance in one form or another. While we must guard against all forms of economic imperialism, there are two kinds of them, however, which we must guard against. One is if all our investments and industrial developments come from one country only. But there is no indication that this is happening today in Nigeria. The most extreme form of this kind of economic imperialism is where the economy of one country is entirely tied to the economy of another and the imperialist country is able to dictate what kind of industrial development shall take place so that it can arrest and not compete against the development of the imperialist country. It is understood

that the example of this kind of imperialism is to be seen in the relations between Russia and her satellite states. A second form of economic imperialism would be if all development goes into the production of primary products only and none into the production of the manufactured goods which we import from overseas. This again I understand, is a classical economic imperialism. But we are establishing all sorts of factories which will actually prevent former Imperialist powers from unloading their finished products upon us. Provided we have proper safeguards, therefore, which we are already taking, we can ensure that in most of these industries Government has some measure of control. In certain industries like the William and William in Port Harcourt our investment is as high as 50 per cent. In the Nkalagu Cement Industry, the capital structure of this company is made up of investment by the Federal Government, the Eastern Region Government, the Eastern Region Development Corporation, the Tunnel Portland Cement Co. a Danish company, the Colonial Development Corporation and members of the Nigerian public. Is there anything wrong with that? I am not seriously suggesting that Government must have a stake in all the industries, but I am saying that, consistent with the policy of Government, we must create a favourable atmosphere for overseas industrialists and Government control can be effected not necessarily always by having a share in the industry but in various other ways—by taxation, by the land policy, by the labour policy and most of all by mutual understanding between Government and the overseas interest. As I have indicated in this speech, Government has under serious consideration the establishment of an Iron and Steel Industry in this Region in order to solve the problem of the slump in the present coal industry. The Government stretches its hand to all parts of the world and whoever comes over to "Macedonia to help us" will be welcome. I spoke recently to a Japanese Economic Mission on the urgency for establishing this industry, and I was given to understand that it would cost at least thirteen million pounds. My appeal to the Japanese Mission and any other overseas interest is that if they can establish this industry either alone or in partnership with the Government, they will be welcome.

Let us therefore have no more loose talk about "economic imperialism" and let us



[MR NWODO]

adopt a more responsible attitude to the attraction of industrial investment from overseas. We are just now at a most exciting stage when we are on the edge of big industrial developments in this Region. I would like hon. Members therefore to do everything they can to encourage overseas industrialists to invest in this country and to stop the kind of talk which may have the effect of driving them away.

**The Minister of State (Information and Welfare) (Mr B. C. Okwu):** I rise to speak in support of the Motion for a Humble Address to His Excellency for his Most Gracious Speech from the Throne.

This is our last Budget Meeting under the Union Jack and naturally we feel very excited at the prospect of our approaching Independence, six months from hence. In retrospect, it might be in order for me to recall briefly and pay tribute to the great ones of the land living and dead and national organisations and movements that provided the light and guidance that have made possible our close nearness to the promised land of freedom.

"Freedom, Freedom, Everywhere there MUST BE FREEDOM"—it was a prophetic song composed and popularised by late Mazi Ojike and his choir long before the Accra and Tunis conferences. Today Africa is aflame with thirst for freedom and everybody sings the freedom song. In igniting the fire of nationalism in Africa, Nigeria played a glorious part and after our independence in October, we shall be called upon to make an even greater contribution to free all Africa from every taint of colonialism. It is my ardent hope that we shall be equal to the task.

For some years past the tenor of our evolution to nationhood, has been comparatively smooth but let us not forget the stormy or tempestuous period that preceded it. Many there are today in Nigeria enjoying exalted positions in public service, in business and in politics who not only took no part in the struggle, but actually in the words of *Shakespeare's Macbeth*, "Did line the rebel oppressor with hidden help and vantage".

But all said and done the name of one man, now and in after years, as both his admirers

and critics within and without Nigeria have acknowledged, will always loom large. That one man, as you all know, is no other than six feet jungle Ghandi of West Africa (with apologies to imperialist papers of Britain) Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Dr K. O. Mbadiwe's tallest tree in Africa's political firmament. Zik did not show the light for us to find the way and go it alone, but led it himself to make possible the forthcoming great event of 1st October, 1960. Had he been a selfish, corrupt and timid person he would have accepted the offer to join the fraternity of Knight Commanders of the British Empire—an empire that has long since ceased to exist. Zik demonstrated that the pen is mightier than the sword. Through the medium of the *Pilot* and his other newspapers, the *Renascent Africa* and other books, his lectures and public utterances, he succeeded in rousing the youths, the workers and the masses of our people from their deep hypnotic sleep. After they came flocking around him the mighty stampede for freedom began. The British Raj was taken by storm and forced into conceding and retreating until he negotiated to surrender on 1st October, 1960. A small number of political ingrates have had occasion to attack him in the course of this debate. To defend Dr Azikiwe would be to lend weight and merit to ungenerous attacks made. Come what may, Dr Azikiwe will remain hero number one not only of Nigerian nation but of the whole of the African Continent.

As we live through this era of Rock and Roll and Tea Time dance, let it not fail to reflect awhile and pay homage to the heroes in the struggle for freedom, both living and dead. In this class one remembers first and foremost the youthful heroic knights of King Arthur's Round Table that was the Zikist Movement whose positive action and exploits made a decisive impact on the imperialists. By our foreign oppressors they were labelled rebels while our native stooges and quislings chose to christen them as irresponsibles. Many of the youths courageously faced up to thrumped up charges of sedition, were tried and sentenced to terms of penal servitude. Undeterred, they went to gaol singing the freedom song.

I am thinking of men like R. Abdulla, Tony Enahoro, O. C. Agwuna, Mkwugwo



Okoye, Oged Macaulay, Fred Anyiam, Bob Ogbuagu. The history of the struggle cannot be written without a place for these men. There were many others who though were not jailed contributed mightily to the pool. To this class of warriors I have to mention late Herbert Macaulay, Mbonu Ojike, Alhaji Adelabu, Mallam Zad Zungu, who have passed away, and Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara, and Mr Jaja Wachuku, Mrs Ekpo, Dr Orizu, Nduka Eze, M. C. K. Ajuluchukwu, S. O. Masi, Kola Balogun, V. K. Onyeri, S. O. Achara, Ikenna Nzimiro, John Umolu and others who are very much alive today. These were the men and women who responded to Zik's call to arms in the era of fear and gloom in our national history. Nigerian workers deserve an honourable place in our history. You have not forgotten the 1945 general strike and the events that followed in its wake. The record in working class unity, selfless leadership and disciplined followership shown by the then T.U.C. of Nigeria has yet to be equalled. We must remember that it was in the self-same struggle that twenty-one Enugu miners were shot dead in cold blood.

“Show the light and the people will find the way”—that is the *West African Pilot's* mission and today this mission has been consummated. No newspaper or combination of papers have done as much as this leading nationalist daily in championing the cause of our nationalism and the workers. This paper had the sole distinction of being banned for championing the striker's cause in 1945. Let us therefore, show our gratitude to the *West African Pilot*. Let us not forget those dark days when it was unwritten seditious offence for civil servants especially those in junior grades to be found with a copy of the *West African Pilot* in their office or residence.

The last but by no means the least, Lord Milverton, deserves a mention. He more than any other Colonial Governor reminded Nigerian nationalists that colonialism was founded on the doctrine of “*Might is Right*” and that independence could not be won through membership of the Island Club or attendance at Cocktail parties, but by positive action. Of course, the N.C.N.C. under Zik's leadership and the Zikist Movement accepted the challenge without delay or conditions.

#### *After Independence—What?*

With our independence assured, Nigerians should begin now to give serious thought to the hazards involved and the task of consolidating and preserving the freedom won at the cost of decades of patient planning and sacrifices. One of the major tasks a free Nigeria will have to face is the need to re-educate the world about the Negro. For centuries the negro has been the subject of systematic international slander and ridicule by imperialists in their press, radio and films with the sole object of justifying and sanctifying the slave trade, the partition, subjugation and rape of Africa. Through the aforementioned media other races of the world for centuries now have been persuaded to believe that we, the Niggers are inferior in body and spirit and were created by God to serve the superior races of the earth as hewers of wood and drawers of water. This heresy has for long been so subtly but effectively disseminated that today, in many imperialist parts of the world it is now claimed to have scriptural authenticity. This state of affairs has given rise to apartheid in South Africa. Sir Roy Welenskyism in Central African Federation and the specially guided British democratic system which provides for the rule of the African majority by the microscopic white settler minority in multi-racial sections of Africa under the British rule. In Britain it takes the form of concealed racial discrimination and snobbery or occasionally manifests in the form of Notting Hill violent outburst. In the U.S.A. it takes the shape of KKK lynchings of the negroes or fillibuster politics in the U.S. Congress to kill the bill of rights in order to keep the negroes off the polls.

To correct this unsatisfactory situation and remove a potential source of discord between black and white states of the earth, Nigeria after independence, will have to rewrite all our history texts written by imperialists and give them our own slants. By so doing it will be possible in due course to raise a new breed of youths with great confidence in themselves, more pride in their country and race, and ever ready to live or die for the complete emancipation of Africa and for justice and equality for Africans and people of African descent. The media of our press, radio, cinema and television must be geared up and utilised in building up abiding unity amongst our people and getting



[MR OKWU]

them to see themselves from a new self-confident perspective. Through these modern technique we should be able to correct the errors about us and teach them new truths about our aims and objectives.

Nigeria is a large country in terms of population, size and natural resources, but she is not necessarily great or qualified to lead Africa on these accounts alone. To lead Africa we must earn the right by our services and sacrifices to the cause of Africa. We must positively declare for and positively support Pan-Africanism. At present we are being flattered into alignment with the N.A.T.O. bloc and out of Pan-African movements by the Western press and imperialist agents. As a positive contribution to Pan-Africanism, we should as early as possible after our independence, call a Lagos Conference of African States, all States having colonial territories in Africa and the two leading world Powers, U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. in order to formerly abrogate 1885 Berlin Conference agreements on the partition of Africa and reach agreement on complete and unconditional independence for all African territories still under any form of colonial rule.

*Regionalisation and Nigerian Unity:*

On a more homely note, I wish hon. Members to know that in spite of the efforts of the Regional Government within its limited resources to establish and encourage the establishment of new industries in the Region, the pace of unemployment is growing. This distressing situation arises from various causes, namely—the growing drift of school leavers to towns, the displacement of ever growing number of Easterners from the other Regions as a result of the Regionalisation—rather than Nigerianisation policies of the other Regional Governments and, of course, the Cameroonisation policy of the Southern Cameroons Government. There are also the thousands of miners dismissed from the Coal Industry as a result of the coal crisis. The Government is making detailed study of the problem of unemployment with a view to arresting it before it gets out of hand.

On Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara's appointment, we on the Treasury Bench have noted with infinite satisfaction the universal acclaim with which Dr hon. M. I. Okpara's appointment as

the Premier of the Region has been received by Members of both sides of the House and the general public. By every measurement Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara was the obvious choice for the sacred and difficult office of Premiership of this colourful Region. The great qualities he manifested as an able, loyal and consistent lieutenant gave early indications that he would sooner or later lead and would succeed as such having first succeeded as a follower. His appointment is of special significance in that he is a young man and the youngest Premier in the Federation. Thus for the first time in our political history the youths have been given an opportunity to build according to their own pace and specifications, hence all young men of this country have a stake in Dr Okpara's success.

*Opposition Criticisms:*

To us of the N.C.N.C. a constructive and virile opposition is indispensable to the smooth running of the democratic machine. We are always eager to hear what the Opposition feels about our performance and to listen and profit by its constructive criticisms. Our growing fear has been the fast diminishing size of its members. Let it be borne in mind that unlike elsewhere we do not regard members of the Opposition as enemies but as political opponents. My Friends opposite will agree with me that in spite of the flare of some of them for violent methods and tribal politics this Government has the distinguishing mark of having no police force of its own nor does it resort to taxing political opponents of the Government out of existence, nor do we employ the courts to humiliate those who share not our political views. Let us hope that with independence around the corner both the Members of the Government and the Opposition parties will co-exist in the interest of peace and progress of the Region.

*Sitting suspended at 12.10 p.m.*

*Sitting resumed at 12.40 p.m.*

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice (Mr M. O. Ajegbo):** Hon. Members have been exceedingly generous in their comments under the Ministry of Justice and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who spoke about the Ministry for their indulgent and very constructive comments.



My learned and hon. Friends the hon. C. A. Abangwu and the hon. Okoi Arikpo spoke on the inadequacy of the pay of Judges, Magistrates and Crown Counsel. In their opinion, the present salaries of Magistrates and Crown Counsel are not such as would attract really able and experienced men into the service. They consider that people engaged in the administration of justice should receive special consideration. I agree with them that people who serve the nation in the administration of justice should be well provided for but it seems to me that our Judges are well looked after and have nothing to complain about. Their salaries and other conditions of service compare very favourably with those of their counterparts in the Federation, Western and Northern Regions. These conditions of service are protected by law and cannot be revised to their detriment during the period of their service.

As far as Magistrates and Crown Counsel are concerned we, in this Region, do not pay less than the Federation or the Northern Region. As a matter of fact, I think we pay more. Initially, we pay more than the Western Region but the West pay more in the end. Again, it must not be forgotten that in revising the scale of a class of officers the effect on the service as a whole has to be taken into consideration and there are usually consultations between the Governments of the Federation. Representations made by and on behalf of these officers have been noted and will be considered by the Government.

The hon. Okoi Arikpo spoke of the need to improve court buildings in the Region. He is not alone in his criticism of the unsatisfactory state of some of our courts. The hon. Ito has referred to me the case of Ikot Ekpene Magistrate's Court. I am not unaware of the undesirable nature of some of our court houses and steps are being taken to effect improvements. As far as the Onitsha High Court mentioned by the hon. Okoi Arikpo is concerned, I am happy to say that a good site has been obtained for a new High Court there and contract for the work has been signed. I have no doubt that a new High Court will emerge at Onitsha in the next few months.

The hon. I. U. Imeh, J. Ihekwoaba and E. U. Eronini wish for a Magistrate's Court

at Abak, a Magistrate's Court at Orlu and a High Court at Owerri respectively. The Government will give the matter careful consideration. I can only counsel patience.

The hon. C. A. Abangwu, D. E. Akilo, S. E. K. Iwueke and N. O. Onwudiwe spoke on the inadequacy of the pay of members of Customary Courts.

The Government of this Region readily recognises that the institution of Customary Courts is an improvement on that of the Native Courts and is satisfied so far that within two years of the establishment of Customary Courts in the Region the Government has not had any reason to change its mind and go back on the old Native Court system. Much will have to be done still before I can feel satisfied that the courts have been placed at the level where I want them to be.

First, there is the question of pay and service conditions of these court members. There is no doubt that their pay and service conditions are not what I would like them to be and that there is room for improvement, but let me here issue a warning against comparing the pay and service conditions of the Customary Courts in the Western Region with those of this Region. Firstly, the courts in the West are graded into A, B, C, D, with Grade "A" possessing the powers of the High Court in many offences and Grade "B" approximating the jurisdiction of the Magistrate's court. Our Grades "A" and "B" Customary Courts have the same jurisdiction as Grades "C" and "D" Courts in the Western Region. Secondly, the Presidents in these Grades "A" and "B" Courts are Lawyers unlike our own where legal training is unnecessary. Finally, the Presidents have two or three assessors unlike the position in this Region where there are five members in the County Court and seven in the District Court. Clearly, this number does not help to increase speed, but the Government has decided, however, that the structure will remain, at least for the moment.

There is another difficulty which exists in the improvement of service conditions of the court members in this Region. It is the fact that at the moment, the District Courts are owned and controlled by District Councils who finance the Courts. The Government,



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however, makes good any deficit. It is an established fact that Councils are, generally speaking, not on a very strong financial position, in view of the many financial programmes which they carry out. Consequently most of the Courts run at a deficit and it is natural that the Government will hesitate to create new Courts indiscriminately or increase the service conditions of the existing Court members. That is why Government does not easily yield to the frequent requests that some Courts which were merged should be separated, or that Native Courts which were closed down should be resurrected—requests which in some cases could be justified on other grounds. I can assure hon. Members that service conditions of members of Customary Courts are under constant care.

The hon. Idoko asks that a separate Customary Court be established for the people of Eteh because they are non-Ibo speaking and at present attend the Enugu-Ezike Customary Court. The Igbo-Eze District Council is willing to finance the Court and I am sure that Government will view the request of the hon. Idoko with sympathy.

The hon. Onwuma and the hon. Enyi have asked that Customary Courts be introduced in the remaining parts of the Region early. I agree entirely with them and efforts are being made to do so. I consider it highly undesirable that two types of court—one "Native" and the other "Customary" should be operating side by side in the Region. I hope to be able to establish these Courts during the first few weeks of the new financial year.

The hon. G. I. Oko has asked that members of Customary Courts should be given a course of training. I am happy to say that I have already arranged courses of training for court members at Awgu to start sometime in April or May. My officers and I will endeavour to address these court members and instruct them on how to run their courses.

The hon. Oko has observed that:

"In the past under the Native Courts Ordinance, the Administrative Officers were always serving as guiding officers to the Native Courts and protection of the oppressed, but as it stands today Customary

Courts have power to sentence and execute without adhering to any authority".

I would like to remind the hon. Member that judgments of Customary Courts, of course, are appealable and that any person who is dissatisfied with the judgment of a District Court can go and appeal to the County Court, Magistrates Court, High Court, and even to the Federal Supreme Court. I cannot think of any protection greater than these. Customary Courts adhere to the authority of the law when they perform their functions.

Lastly, I would like to thank the hon. C. A. Abangwu for his most welcome statement about the strict observance of the rule of law in the Eastern Region. I think it is time the fact was known that no where in the Federation does democracy and the rule of law flourish as they do in this Region. We in the Eastern Region have hitherto, because we are a very modest people, kept our light under bushel, but the time has come when we should let the whole world know of our achievements.

**The Premier (Dr M. I. Okpara):** In speaking to this Motion I would first of all thank all hon. Members for the general charitable tenor of the debates. The Opposition has surprised everyone by being largely objective and constructive. Naturally, now and again a few Opposition Members have found it difficult to forget the past and have slid back to the bitter old days of costly bickering. But we cannot wait for these; the Region must move forward to its destiny of greatness.

On listening to, and reading the debates, four salient points stand out conspicuously: firstly, problems of Nigeria Independence; secondly, the proposed London Constitutional Conference in May; thirdly, Parliamentary Democracy; and fourthly, outside capital and Nigeria Development.

**Independence:** Many hon. Members have raised doubts as to the nature of Nigeria Independence partly because the two leaders of the two major political parties, namely Dr Azikiwe and Chief Awolowo are outside the Government of the Federation; and partly because of the allegation that Nigerian Governments are going to sign away bases to Britain for military purposes. There are yet those



who are not satisfied with the structure of the Federal Government. I must say, however, that in spite of these apparent handicaps to Independence none had suggested that it should be postponed beyond the 1st October. There has been a sinister allegation by the Chief Whip of the Opposition that the forces of reaction and treachery and specifically Chief Festus Okotie-Eboh have treacherously forced Zik to retire. For this, according to Eyo, Chief Okotie-Eboh was awarded the C.M.G. While we may hold differing views about foreign honours I think this allegation is quite unfair to the Chief. May I quote the relevant passage from the *Hansard* of the 18th March, column 84:

“The forces of reaction and treachery have forced this man to retire, and he has agreed to accept this medal. The Federal Minister of Finance, Chief Festus Okotie-Eboh, has succeeded Dr Azikiwe as Parliamentary leader of the N.C.N.C. in the House of Representatives. For this, he has been awarded a C.M.G. by the British.”

This is a subtle attempt to give the world the impression that Zik's greatest enemies are his lieutenants, who have manoeuvred him out of politics. But we cannot all be so easily taken in for we have heard that before. Immediately after the Federal elections the Leader of the Action Group made strenuous efforts to persuade us, the N.C.N.C., to form a Coalition Government with the Action Group. The terms were very generous to the N.C.N.C.: we were to appoint the Prime Minister and all other ministries were to be distributed alternately and equally to the two parties starting with the Action Group. There was no mention of States as Chief Awolowo erroneously published later. After very careful consideration by the leaders and thinkers of the N.C.N.C. this offer was rejected because:

- (a) It was likely to jeopardise the unity of the country.
- (b) It was likely to fail, because mercenary motives might lead to a sufficient number of defections from the Coalition Government as to lead to its down fall. After all, the N.P.C. with 144 seats then merely needed thirteen more seats to have the majority to run the Government. And with the Ibadan rebels under Mr Adisa, it was not inconceivable that the

N.P.C. could get the necessary majority, especially as Sir Abubakar had already been appointed Prime Minister before a clear picture of the results was evident.

- (c) The third reason why we rejected the Action Group was that we regarded the type of politics played by Chief Awolowo as the greatest single factor that generated disunity in Nigeria. In all our trials and tribulations as a party, it was the Action Group that nursed our adversaries and spearheaded all attacks on us. I need not mention them now as I would rather try to heal old wounds than to open them.
- (d) We also had our election manifestos to think about: The extension of Lagos boundary thirty miles; the creation of the Mid-West State and our policy of non alignment in Foreign policy. No one really could expect the Action Group to support the coalition in these vital issues.
- (e) But above all, we could not trust the Action Group. After all, such a vital coalition, to usher in Independence for which most of us have sacrificed a lot, must be based on absolute mutual confidence. On the other hand, an alliance with the N.P.C. did not suffer from any of the handicaps enumerated. Indeed we had hoped that it might lead to a new understanding between the N.E.P.U. and the N.P.C. for the progress of the country and the Northern Region. Above all, Zik and Sardauna were great friends and we could not imagine either of them being insincere to the other.

In view of these, I must deplore any suggestion by any one that Zik was let down by his lieutenants. Adequate arrangements have been made for his future to his entire satisfaction and those of all the N.C.N.C. leaders. It would be ridiculous to imagine now that Eyo's disappointment at Zik not being the Prime Minister is real, nor could it possibly be as great as those of his lieutenants who had been loyal to him and had accompanied him in all his campaigns and trials during the last hectic six years. Let us face it, the N.C.N.C. did not win the Federal elections. We had hoped to win as we worked very hard. Indeed some of us almost worked ourselves to death. Although



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victory eluded us, it might have been worse. I must therefore warn all our supporters that electoral defeat must not make us lose all sense of proportion and be taken in now by crocodile tears.

The Independence we are going to have is a real and lofty thing. The terms were clearly set out in the London Constitutional Conference Reports of 1957 and 1958 and subsequently in the Nigeria Constitution Order in Council Amendments. The Federal structure has many draw-backs. It is a costly and a weak form of Government. It could spring surprises such as we had after the Federal election. But I submit it were better to have a united country with a Federal system of Government than to disintegrate. We as a party have not found great favour with the Federal system of Government. We prefer the Unitary system where the little tribalism will be eliminated. I hold the view that if we want a really strong country then we must have either a unitary Government or a Federal Government with many small weak states not larger than the old provinces and with powers little more than those of big counties. Let the Action Group have second thoughts about these. It is still possible after Independence to alter the constitution and enshrine what we want.

May I now turn to the *Proposed London Constitutional Conference*. It is not really a Constitutional Conference but rather a meeting of Nigerian Governments and Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. Dr the hon. N. Azikiwe, President of the Senate, and hon. Chief Awolowo, Leader of the Opposition in the Federal House, have also been invited.

In the Conference Report paragraph 84 it says:

"It would be generally agreed that when the new Federal Government was formed it would need to hold final discussions with Her Majesty's Government before the Act of Independence could be drawn up and the final Constitution Order in Council be drafted."

This meeting in May; is it? Incidentally Mr Eyo has deliberately missed out this portion of the report in his quotation. This agreement

to meet again could not possibly be the bases of the serious allegations made in this House.

During the present debate on the Address from the Throne, the Leader of the Opposition and his Chief Whip alleged that I, and other members of the Regional and Federal Governments have been invited to London to sign a Defence Pact which will confer on the United Kingdom the right to maintain military bases in Nigeria. This is a very serious allegation, because the impression created is that the Independence which we are attaining on the 1st of October will not be real independence but a glorified and disguised continuance of our present colonial status.

It is unfortunate that such a serious and unjustified allegation has been made in a Regional Legislature, where it cannot be adequately answered. Members are aware that External Affairs and Defence are matters within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Federal Government, and, as such, the Federal Legislature is the proper forum to raise these matters.

I feel, however, that I cannot let these allegations go unchallenged, particularly those of the Opposition Chief Whip which challenged me to deny that I have been invited to sign the Defence Pact, the draft of which is already in my possession. Nothing could be farther away from the truth.

As I quoted earlier, the fact is that at the Resumed Constitutional Conference in 1958, it was agreed that when the new Federal Government had been formed after the Federal Elections, it would be useful if there could be final discussions between the Governments of the Federation of Nigeria and of the United Kingdom to consider the detailed aspects of the transfer of sovereignty in October of this year. There is nothing sinister about this; a Nigeria Independence Bill has got to be passed by both Houses of the British Parliament before that sovereignty can be transferred, and it is reasonable and logical that Nigeria's leaders should play a full part in the drafting of that Bill if only to ensure that it does not contain all the hidden restrictions on full Nigerian sovereignty which Mr Ikoku and Mr Eyo have claimed to fear it will contain.

It is for the Prime Minister of the Federation to announce the dates when these discussions



will take place and to inform the country of the subjects to be considered.

As representatives of the Government of the Eastern Region are invited, I can assure all the people of the Region that my Government shall not be party to any agreements which will, in any way, have the effect of limiting Nigeria's sovereignty or independence.

I wish now to turn to *Parliamentary Democracy*. In spite of what the Opposition have said, I am sure that it would be difficult to find any other part of the world where parliamentary democracy is as firmly established as in the Eastern Region. Just because Calabar Urban District Council elections have been postponed for three months pending the revision of the register, the use of which would have meant a complete nonsense of the Local Government system, some Opposition members have questioned our assertion that the East is the most democratic place in Nigeria. The Opposition knows that the Federal register is loaded with names of people not resident in Calabar. It is only fair that such people should be excluded from Local, repeat Local Government elections. What is undemocratic about this? One of the surest signs of democracy is whether the members of the Opposition are free to express their views, whether the leaders of the Opposition are behind bars or are free. Lord Atlee had his own test for this: on reaching a new country he would ask where the leader of the Opposition was. If he was behind bars or in exile, then there was no democracy. Here in the East taxes and social services are uniformly spread out irrespective of the political beliefs of Divisions. Take a look at other countries that call themselves democracies—South Africa, France, Portugal—and you will agree that the East is a genuine model. I need not reiterate that I will uphold the best traditions of this system. But of course, we must accept that it does not always imply that there must be a definite Opposition party. If the Opposition does not exist, provided there is free discussion in the one party and provided every one person of age has a genuine free vote, then I call that a Democracy. But for Democracy to thrive in this country tribalism must be eschewed.

Finally, I would like to touch the important question of *Outside Capital and Economic*

*Planning*. The hon. the Leader of the Opposition made some valuable contributions here. While I agree with most of what he said in the regard, I must say that we hold different view on two essentials.

I do not think that Economic Planning could be the subject of a Parliamentary Committee. This is properly the function of Government. But no doubt, this House will always have the opportunity of scrutinising, debating and altering the plans when made.

I also disagree with that portion of the Leader of the Opposition's speech which could easily scare away investors. In 1952 in this House with naive enthusiasm, we insisted that outside investors must not take up more than 49 per cent share capital in any new industries. That would leave us with 51 per cent share capital and controlling rights. The industrialists refused to come. We did not even have our 51 per cent to offer. The result again was that industrial growth was retarded. Now all are much wiser, and the conditions for outside capital are very flexible. The hon. Leader of the Opposition would agree that Capital is scarce and very much in demand. We have to woo it into the East. I therefore support that portion of his speech (column 38 of the *Hansard* of 17th March) which says:

“Fourthly, we must secure foreign capital at the lowest rates of interest and with no strings attached. Nigeria must be absolutely free to borrow anywhere in the world at the most favourable terms to her.”

No emergent country which wants fast development can afford to scare away outside capital. It was outside capital that made America one of the most industrialised regions today. In November, 1958, I visited Puerto Rico and saw what marvellous development outside capital was generating for the people. In ten years the *per capita* income had jumped from 200 dollars to nearly 450 dollars.\* I agree wholeheartedly that outside capital must not be allowed to compromise our freedom or jeopardise our interests in any way. But we must woo it into the East. I am so keen on outside capital, since enough capital is not here, that I am reminded of what the late Mbonu Ojike used to say regarding criticisms of Scholarships from Russia;



[THE PREMIER]

"If the devil gives you a scholarship take it. Your education will teach you how to deal with him."

Finally, may I thank all those who have made valuable contributions and all those who have found it difficult to rise above the social needs of their constituents. I am particularly gratified by the astonishingly generous encomiums showered by the Opposition on our leader, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe. Perhaps they have discovered why we have stuck by him through thick and thin. His being the Chairman of the University Provisional Council should be welcomed by all and should cause no misgivings as the former proposed Chairman, Mr M. O. Balonwu, declined to serve. I assure the hon. S. O. Achara that my interest in the University of Nigeria is second to none and that that interest will grow rather than diminish. The subject is still in my portfolio and there is no intention to alter that arrangement. University administration is a highly specialised field. There is no need to make alteration in the membership of the present Provisional Council as I am confident that the members will discharge their duties creditably.

In conclusion, I agree entirely with the Leader of the Opposition that we should close

ranks in order to build a modern and prosperous nation and make independence a worthwhile achievement. Towards this end, I propose to call before long a meeting of all leaders of business, thought and opinion in Eastern Nigeria irrespective of tribe or politics who for one reason or another are unable or hesitant to contribute towards the progress and good government of our Region.

I support the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

Resolved: That this House expresses its loyal and dutiful thanks to His Excellency the Governor for His Excellency's Most Gracious Speech addressed to both Houses of the Legislature from the Throne.

**The Address to be presented by Members of the Regional Executive Council.**

#### ADJOURNMENT

Resolved: That this House do now adjourn. (*The Minister of Finance, Dr S. E. Imoke*).

*Adjourned accordingly at twenty minutes past one o'clock p.m.*



## EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Friday, 25th March, 1960

*The House met at Nine o'clock a.m.*

## PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker *in the Chair*)

## BILL PRESENTED

## Local Government

Bill to make provision for Local Government in the Eastern Region of Nigeria and for connected purposes, presented by the Minister of Local Government, Mr P. O. Nwoga; read the First time; to be read a Second time Today.

NOTICE OF THE PRESENTATION  
OF A BILL

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** I beg to give notice that on Monday, 28th March, 1960, I shall present a Bill entitled: "The 1960-61 Eastern Region Appropriation Law, 1960".

## ORDER OF THE DAY

## Local Government Bill

*Order for Second Reading read.*

**The Minister of Local Government (Mr P. O. Nwoga):** I beg to move that the Bill be now read a Second time.

This Bill is designed to replace the existing Local Government Law which came into operation on 1st July, 1955, nearly five years ago. Since that time there has hardly been a session of this House when amendments to that Law have not been sought by the Minister of Local Government. Quite often, those amendments were considerable. And the result has been that anyone who has to use the Law regularly in the normal course of his duties must needs wade through an untidy volume festooned with amendment slips which are both irritating and confusing. On all sides there has been a general demand for a reprint of the Law consolidating all the amendments and I have always myself acknowledged

the need to have a more convenient volume of the Law.

I was not, however, merely concerned with amendments. I was charged also with carrying out the policy set out in Chapter VI of Sessional Paper No. 2 of 1957 and referred to often in this House, which was to change the nomenclature of Councils so that Urban District and District Councils could become Urban County and County Councils. To change the names of Councils in this way would have involved a very large number of amendments to the existing Law—in fact about eighty. Amendments on that scale would have added considerably to the already confused state of the Law. It therefore became quite clear that what was required was a new Law. A new Law would also have the additional advantage of giving me the opportunity to revise the drafting of certain sections which were either not completely clear in their intent or not as well expressed as they might have been. It would also enable me to introduce one or two new matters.

The monumental task of compiling a new Law was therefore undertaken. It has taken a long time but we have it at last and I am sure that hon. Members on both sides of the House will welcome it. It will make a tremendous difference to those people whose daily job is local government and I trust that it will speed up business and improve accuracy.

It is of course a formidable looking piece of legislation but it does, in fact, look much bigger than it really is. I want to say from the outset that as far as substance is concerned, there is nothing fundamentally different between this Bill and the existing Law. The reason for this Bill is the need to tidy up and put some coherence into existing legislation; it is not to introduce some new form of local government organisation. If hon. Members compare this Bill with the existing Law they will not find much that is new. They will find many examples of changes in words, expressions and the construction of sections—changes which in my opinion improve the sense and readability of the Law. But they will not find anything to change the method of Local Government as we know it in this Region or to disturb its organisation. What changes there are, are designed to improve its technique. In short this Bill is the existing



[MR NWOGA]

Local Government Law with the following additional features:—

- (1) all amendments since 1955 have been incorporated;
- (2) all District Councils have been renamed "County Councils";
- (3) the drafting of a good many sections has been revised;
- (4) certain new matters have been introduced.

My task therefore, is made much easier. I am not confronting hon. Members with matters of which they have neither knowledge nor experience. Ninety-nine per cent of the substance of what they read in their copies of this Bill has been approved by them already from time to time, and I am thankful to be spared the difficulties of introducing something really new. There are, of course, some changes and I should now like to bring to the notice of hon. Members the important matters by which this Bill is distinguished from the existing Law.—

*Clause 3 (3).*—This provides that on the appointed day all Urban District and District Councils become Urban County and County Councils without the need for altering all their instruments. An intolerable situation would arise if we had to issue new amending instruments for all Councils. Steps will be taken to make new seals for all County Councils but there is provision for the present seals to be used until the new ones are provided.

*Clause 7* broadens the scope of the matters which can be amended in a Council's Instrument by the issue of an amending Instrument instead of the more cumbersome procedure of revoking an Instrument and issuing a completely fresh one.

*Clause 14 (2)* introduces a penalty for a person convicted of an offence of refusing to attend as a witness or neglecting to make an answer or to produce a book which he is required to make or to produce at an inquiry held under *Clause 12*. Previously we had a statement of the offence but no penalty for committing it.

*Clause 20 (c)* : This brings disqualification for office into line with that laid down for

Regional Assemblies under the Constitution by prescribing imprisonment for a term exceeding six months. Previously the term of imprisonment was unspecified.

*Clause 60 (5)*: Under the present Law a disqualified councillor who refuses to relinquish his seat can only be removed as a result of court proceedings instituted by an elector. Experience has shown that no elector is willing to give up time and money for such court proceedings. I consider therefore that I also should have the power to institute such proceedings.

*Clause 65 (2)* provides for an appeal to the Federal Supreme Court from a decision of the High Court given on an election petition. Previously the decision of the High Court was final. I consider that an appeal to the Federal Supreme Court as in the case of Federal or Regional elections is necessary.

*Clause 78* deals with a Council's power to contract. It aims at relaxing centralised control where it appears to be common sense to do so and at stiffening that control where the performance of many Councils suggests that it is necessary. An amendment to the present Law made a year or so ago permitted a Council to purchase up to £100 worth of medical stores without having to invite tenders. I now wish to extend this exemption from the Tenders Board procedure to certain other stores whose prices are by and large fixed or which are readily purchaseable in Nigeria and in most cases locally. Paragraph (a) of subsection (3) would permit me to do this. On the other hand, I am becoming increasingly tired of the continued evasion of the Tenders Board procedure by Councils splitting contracts and awarding them in series so that each is less than £50 and therefore does not need to be advertised and does not require approval. Subsection (4) will assist me to tackle this problem. A deterrent might well be the fact that a breach of this subsection would involve expenditure contrary to Law and therefore subject to disallowance and surcharge by the Director of Audit.

Subsection (5) will also enable me to amend the Tenders Board Regulations to enable a Council with my approval to employ the selective tendering procedure whereby instead



of calling publicly by advertisement for tenders a Council may invite selected firms who are known to be capable of doing the job to submit tenders. This is standard Government procedure and on the occasions on which it is employed, saves a great deal of time and money by excluding the submission of tenders from firms and individuals who would be quite incapable of undertaking the work. Such occasions do not often arise so far as Local Government contracts are concerned and it is my intention only to approve this procedure when I consider it to be absolutely necessary. But on the occasions when it is necessary I must have the power to approve it.

*Clause 90:* This concerns adoptive bye-laws and introduces a procedure hitherto not used in this Region. This clause would make it possible for me to make model bye-laws, publish them in the *Regional Gazette* and permit Councils by resolution to adopt them. This would eliminate the tiresome procedure whereby each Council has to make its own bye-laws which then have to be separately examined in my Ministry and separately published. Under the "adoptive" system publication of the notice of the Council's resolution in the *Regional Gazette* is all that would be required to apply the provisions of a bye-law to that Council's area.

*Clause 119* repeats the existing provisions regarding annual and supplementary estimates but it does now enable me to restrict the powers of Councils to transfer funds from one sub-head or item to another and to augment votes. In the past the indiscriminate use of these powers has led to unreasonable expenditure which has not only been contrary to the intention of the Estimates but has also caused excessive reductions in Council's reserve funds.

These are the new matters which have been incorporated into the Bill. As I said earlier, there are many changes in words and expressions elsewhere in the Bill but they have been made for greater clarity and neater drafting and do not affect the original substance. Let me give a single example of this. Section 69 (1) of the existing Law on the general functions of Councils is as follows:—

"69 (1) It shall be the duty of every Council established under this Law to

discharge the functions conferred by this or any other written law and generally to maintain order or good government within the area of its authority; and for these purposes a Council within such limits as may be prescribed by the Instrument by which it is established may either by its own officers or by duly appointed agents do all such things as are necessary or desirable for the discharge of its functions and for the maintenance of the health, safety and well-being of all persons living within the area of its authority."

*Clause 74* (1) and (2) of this Bill says the same thing in the following manner:—

"74 (1) A Council shall—

- (a) except in the case of a power exercisable in its sole discretion, discharge the functions conferred by this Law or another written law, and
  - (b) generally maintain order and good government within its area.
- (2) In order to implement those purposes, a Council may, within the limits prescribed by its Instrument, either by its own officers or by duly appointed agents, do all things necessary or desirable for—
- (a) the discharge of its functions, and
  - (b) the maintenance of the health, safety and well-being of the persons living within its area."

You will note a greater economy of words and a much more straightforward construction. The breaking down of the old text into paragraphs dealing with specific items is a feature of the whole Bill.

Before I finish, may I refer to one more point. It has been mentioned in this House from time to time that although controls must be applied where necessary it should be possible for me to relax those controls and grant a greater measure of autonomy to any Council which merited it. I should like to say that the Government agrees with this point of view. There is already provision for this in the Bill under *Clause 7 (b)*. Under this clause I am empowered to add to, take away from, or impose a condition on the exercise of, any of the functions of a Council. For example, if I decided that a certain Council had demonstrated sufficient efficiency to make it unnecessary



[MR NWOGA]

for it to submit annual and supplementary estimates for my approval, it would be in order for me to amend that Council's Instrument accordingly under Clause 7 (b).

I trust that the Bill commends itself to Members on both sides of the House. It has as its objects the greater convenience of those whose business is Local Government and the improvement of Local Government itself. It must therefore surely not be contentious and I am confident that it has the support of all Members of this House.

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

**Mr Speaker:** Hon. Members have, I believe, a copy of this Bill which reached them only yesterday. I do not know whether it is their desire to commence with the Bill today or to adjourn it till Monday.

**Several hon. Members:** Monday.

**Mr S. G. Ikoku (Enyong Division):** If I may answer the suggestion made by the Speaker, if the Minister of Local Government wants this Bill passed as quickly as possible, then we are prepared, after the Budget is

presented on Monday, to go on direct to this Bill; but if he is not very anxious to have it passed then we can take it any other day. It is true the bulk of it is just a rehearsal of the old thing but there are certain new things, and I think that hon. Members are anxious to contribute their own experience in Local Government for the past five years. So we are making a very friendly request to the Minister of Local Government.

**The Minister of Local Government:** I am prepared to have the debate on this Bill on Monday or any other day.

**Mr Speaker:** I think Monday will be appropriate because on Monday there will be the Budget Speech after which nothing else happens; so that immediately after the Budget Speech we can go on directly to this Bill.

*Debate adjourned until Monday, 28th March, 1960.*

#### ADJOURNMENT

Resolved: That this House do now adjourn. (*The Minister of Finance, Dr S. E. Imoke*).

*Adjourned accordingly at twenty-five minutes past nine o'clock a.m.*



EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Monday, 28th March, 1960

The House met at Ten o'clock a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

PAPER

Presented:

The Draft Estimates of the Eastern Region (including Memorandum thereon) 1960-61. (The Minister of Finance).

Ordered: That the said Paper do lie upon the Table.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Government Printing Department Staff

5. Mr S. E. K. Iwueke asked the Minister of Internal Affairs, how many Yorubas, Efiks

and Ibos are working in the Government Printing Press; how many of each category are holding senior posts; when did they enter the service and what are their qualifications.

The Minister of Internal Affairs:—

(a) In the Government Printing Press we have the following:—

(i) 128 Ibos (both Eastern and Western).

(ii) 12 Yorubas.

(iii) 14 other tribes—comprising the Urhobos, Ijaws and Binis.

(iv) 35 Efiks.

(b) Particulars of those of them holding senior posts will be circulated in the Official Report.

Chief Morphy: How many Ogoja sons are there ?

The Minister of Internal Affairs: Appointments are not made on tribal basis.

Particulars of those holding Senior Posts

Names	Rank	Qualifications	Date of 1st appointment	Tribe
G. A. Idowu..	Higher Technical Officer.	Government Class V Certificate. Trained in the United Kingdom, four-year course in London School of Printing and Graphic Arts—Full Technological Certificates. (a) General Survey of Printing Industries. (b) Design and colour in Printing; (c) Technical Process. City and Guilds—Final in Compositor's work. Certificate in Printing Estimating.	1-4-37	Yoruba.
P. K. C. Mba	Higher Technical Officer.	Cambridge School Certificate, Middle VI. Trained in the United Kingdom. Heriot-Watt College Certificate, Intermediate City and Guilds Composing and Machine.	15-8-46	Ibo.
R. O. Isichei ..	Higher Technical Officer.	General Certificate of Education. Trained in the United Kingdom. City and Guilds Final Certificate in Photo Engraving.	22-11-56	Ibo.
I. E. Eta ..	Technical Officer ..	Cambridge School Certificate. Trained in the United Kingdom. Diploma in Printing (1st Class Honours) B.F.M.P. Costing (Intermediate); City and Guilds Intermediate.	15-8-46	Efik.
E. O. Asuquo	Technical Officer ..	Cambridge School Certificate. Twelve months training with the Crown Agents in stores and Warehouse practice.	5-9-47	Efik.



[MR I. U. AKPABIO]

APPENDIX A

Posts	Ibos	Yorubas	Efiks	Other tribes
Higher Technical Officers .. .. .	2	1	—	—
Technical Officers .. .. .	—	—	2	—
Printers, Grade I .. .. .	5	5	1	1 (Urhobo)
Printer, Grade II .. .. .	12	4	3	—
Printers, Grade III .. .. .	36	—	11	2 (Ijaw)
Press Engineer's Assistant .. .. .	—	—	1	—
Assistant Press Mechanic .. .. .	2	—	—	—
Chargemen .. .. .	2	1	—	—
Senior Bookbinding Assistant .. .. .	1	—	—	—
Mechanic and Craftsman .. .. .	4	1	—	1 (Ijaw)
Bookbinding Assistants .. .. .	13	—	5	2 (Ijaw and Sierra Leone)
Typewriter Mechanics .. .. .	4	—	1	—
Senior Press Attendants .. .. .	3	—	—	—
Press Attendants .. .. .	7	—	2	1 (Ijaw)
Telephone Attendant .. .. .	—	—	1	—
Senior Staff Officer .. .. .	1	—	—	—
1st Class Clerks .. .. .	1	—	—	1 (Ijaw)
2nd and 3rd Class Clerks .. .. .	3	—	2	—
Stenographer, Grade II .. .. .	—	—	1	—
Clerical Assistants .. .. .	5	—	—	—
Stores Superintendent .. .. .	1	—	—	—
Senior Stores Assistant, Grade I .. .. .	1	—	—	—
Senior Stores Assistant, Grade II .. .. .	—	—	1	—
Senior Stores Assistant, Grade III .. .. .	7	—	1	—
Stores Assistants .. .. .	7	—	2	—
Stores Attendants .. .. .	2	—	—	—
Storemen .. .. .	5	—	—	2 (Ijaw and Urhobo)
Driver, Grade I .. .. .	—	—	—	1 (Benin)
Caretakers and Gatemen .. .. .	2	—	—	2 (Benin)
Cadre of Established Workers .. .. .	2	—	1	1 (Benin)
	128	12	35	14

Television

8. Mr S. N. Alo asked the Minister of State (Information and Welfare), which towns in the Region will be benefited by the television service; is Abakaliki town one of them.

**The Minister of State (Information and Welfare):** The Government proposes to establish a television network in the Region, which will progress in stages beginning with Enugu, Port Harcourt, Onitsha, Aba and Calabar. The network will extend from these centres to other towns which are supplied with electricity. Towns which are not supplied with electricity cannot be served by the television service as sets to be used cannot be operated by battery. Abakaliki enjoys an adequate supply of electricity and should therefore hope to benefit by the proposed television service for the Region.

Local Government Councils for Mbutu-Umuojima and Amairinano Clans

18. Mr M. N. Onwuma asked the Minister of Local Government, whether in view of the serious and constant disagreement between Mbutu-Umuojima Clan and Amairinano Clan Government would not consider it desirable in the interest of law and order to constitute them into two separate Local Councils.

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Local Government (Mr P. U. Amaefunah):** I am directed to answer as follows:—

Yes, Sir, Government is aware of the constant disagreement between Mbutu-Umuojima Clan and Amairinano Clan in Aba Division. An



Administrative Officer has recently been appointed to conduct an inquiry and report on the desirability or otherwise of reconstituting the Amairinano Local Council to form two Local Councils. The inquiry will probably commence on the 4th of April, 1960 and the report will be carefully considered by the Government.

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

#### Rinderpest in Cattle

**The Minister of Agriculture (Mr P. N. Okeke):** I have just been informed by my Chief Veterinary Officer that a most contagious disease of cattle has broken out in the Region. It is called rinderpest. It is almost unknown in this Region, the last known outbreak being in 1955 in Awgu on a small scale. It is affecting our dwarf cattle. They are not resistant to the disease and 98 per cent of the animals that get it are likely to die.

The Hausa cattle are more resistant and can be inoculated with greater safety. The vaccine in dwarf muturu cattle may cause severe reactions, but it is the only protection. The history of the outbreak is this: the Veterinary Division bought some dwarf cattle half way between Abakaliki and Afikpo and took them to the Ezamgbo Veterinary Investigation Centre. A trader bought some in the same market and took them to Calabar. His cattle in Calabar and ours in Ezamgbo are dying. In order to localise the outbreak, I have agreed that the movement of all cattle from the new Abakaliki and Calabar Provinces shall be restricted. The Hausa cattle are automatically inspected and issued with permits at our control posts. Other cattle will only be allowed to move if they come from areas which my Veterinary Division is satisfied are not infected and if the movement is authorised by a permit issued by that Division. I am very happy to say that the Federal Veterinary Service have offered to send officers to assist. This offer is a measure of the seriousness with which the disease is regarded. That is the reason why I have ventured to take up the time of this House by making this statement.

### NOTICE OF THE PRESENTATION OF A BILL

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** I beg to give notice that on Thursday, 31st

March, 1960, I shall present a Bill entitled: "The Finance (Amendment) Law, 1960."

### BILL PRESENTED

#### Appropriation (1960-61)

Bill to appropriate the sum of fifteen million, five hundred and three thousand, seven hundred and seventy pounds to the service of the year ending on the thirty-first day of March, one thousand nine hundred and sixty-one, to authorise expenditure of six million, six hundred and seventy-three thousand, one hundred and twenty pounds out of the Capital Development Fund and for other related purposes, presented by the Minister of Finance, Dr S. E. Imoke, read the First time; to be read a Second time Now.

Motion immediately made as follows:—

### BUDGET SPEECH

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** I rise to move that the Bill be now read a Second time.

When I introduced my last Budget I told the House that after a difficult period in which we had been obliged to practise economy and restraint in expenditure we were facing a new year which would be notable for the substantial increase in revenue available. This came about partly because of the improvement in this Government's share of Federal revenues following the adoption of the Report of the Fiscal Commission and partly because of increases in Federal taxes introduced early in 1959. This improvement in our financial position enabled us to do two things. Firstly, it permitted some resumption in the advance of our social services after the setback of the previous year. Secondly, we were able to set aside £850,000 from revenue as a further contribution to our Development Programme. As the House knows, capital expenditure has, since a year ago, been financed from a separate Capital Development Fund created for the purpose.

At the opening of the year, therefore, I forecast a surplus of £221,000 and stated that the Consolidated Revenue Fund, which I estimated to stand at £5,250,000 that is, after splitting off the Capital Development Fund, would remain unimpaired and might increase



[DR IMOKE]

slightly. In the event the general revenue balance stood at the beginning of the current year at £5,887,000 and I estimate that on the 31st of March, 1960 it will stand at £6,310,000.

Thus we have come through the year with a substantially larger surplus notwithstanding a number of important new commitments on the expenditure side which Government has assumed during the course of the year. The most important of these were the cost of paying as from the 1st of September, 1959 an interim award of a 10 per cent increase in the salaries of Government servants and employees, excluding those in the super-scale grades, and of Voluntary Agency teachers, nurses and midwives and Local Government employees; and secondly the cost, which has to be met from Grants-in-Aid, of abolishing the Assumed Local Contribution in respect of Standard II for Primary Schools and certain other concessions.

The cost of these new commitments has been partly offset during the course of the year by an improvement in the estimated yield of revenue. We budgeted for a total revenue of just over £14,000,000. We now expect to get £14,480,000 the increase being largely due to an increase of £121,000 in the statutory share of Federal Revenue, an improvement of £150,000 in interest received on Government investments and an increase of £203,000 under the Miscellaneous Head 411 due to education grant refunds. Regional Income Tax and Purchase Taxes are expected to yield almost exactly the amount estimated.

To this improvement in revenue totalling £470,000 may be added a substantial saving accruing from under-expenditure on a number of Heads of the Estimates and in particular on the Grants-in-Aid which are always difficult to forecast. Under-expenditure has for several years been a feature of our budgets and it was particularly marked before the Capital Budget was established last year. It is difficult to judge, except in the closing weeks of the financial year, how far under-expenditure may have occurred; but since the Supplementary Estimates for 1959-60 were presented to the House in February it has become clear that we must again reckon with it this year. Compared with the position as I saw it six weeks ago I now

estimate that the outturn of expenditure for the year will be £13,210,000, which is £602,000 less than the combined total of the original and supplementary estimates presented to the House.

The net effect of the supplementary expenditure counterbalanced by improved revenues and savings will be to leave a surplus of £420,000 on the year's workings, after transferring £850,000 to the Capital Development Fund from the Consolidated Revenue Fund. This surplus will increase the General Revenue Balance to £6,310,000 at the close of the current financial year.

I have dwelt at some length on the outturn of the current year because in spite of the sizeable surplus which we have achieved, I see in the current trend of revenue and expenditure certain dangers for the future.

Looking at the revenue side I must warn the House that although in 1959-60 we enjoyed an exceptional increase in revenue and can now expect a substantial further gain in 1960-61, this is not something which can be repeated every year. The most careful forecasts which I can make suggest that a truly buoyant revenue cannot be sustained until a real expansion takes place in this Region's economy. In saying this I am keeping fully in mind the hopeful prospects of our new mineral oil industry. But the rate of expansion in that sector which it would be prudent to assume for purposes of revenue estimating is not such as to produce an increase of nearly £2 million each year, which is what we are enjoying this year and in the year to come. Indeed this Region's share in rents and royalties from oil cannot be expected to grow from year to year at even one-quarter of that rate.

It is a fact that at present 64 per cent of our total revenue comes from Federal sources and its buoyancy depends on the expansion in the economy of the whole country and on the world prices of Nigerian exports. The 36 per cent that we raise through Regional taxes may well expand as we press ahead with our own Development Programme. But the contribution which that expansion can make to the growth of our total revenues must be proportionately small in the early years of our development. We must never forget this when we make plans for the future.



I mention this now because it has a close bearing on the speed with which we can hope to expand our social services during the next few years. I shall show in a moment how rapidly the cost of these is rising. The danger of which I have spoken is that the cost will increase faster than the increase in our revenue, a situation which obviously cannot continue indefinitely.

My estimate of revenue in the coming year at present rates of tax is £16,258,000. Of this the statutory share of this Region in Federal revenue is expected to be £10,596,000 which is £1,375,000 more than in 1959-60. This improvement is due to higher receipts from this Government's share of Federal import duties on Motor Spirit, to increased royalties on oil and to an increase in our share of the Distributable Pool. Regional revenues will amount to £5,663,000 at present rates of tax. Of this income tax should yield £2,514,000 at present rates, or £299,000 more than in the current year.

To a great extent this improvement in Regional income tax receipts reflects the continuing growth and improved efficiency of the Revenue Service which we established only four years ago. In the Internal Revenue Division recruitment of senior service Revenue Inspectors and junior staff has continued and we have obtained some promising candidates with University and professional qualifications. Training Courses are an important part of the work of the Division and the results are encouraging. The ultimate aim of the Division is to take over completely from the Administration the work of tax assessment and collections.

Other Regional revenues include various indirect taxes, licences and fees. Most important among these is the Produce Purchase Tax which I estimate will yield £1,100,000. This is slightly less than the revised estimate for the current year.

I wish to say something about this Region's revenue from the newly developing Oil Industry. Hon. Members will have seen statements made on behalf of the Oil Companies which suggest that during the next few years there is likely to be a very considerable increase in the output of mineral oil.

In forecasting the revenue which will accrue to the Federal Government and to Regional Governments from oil rents and royalties, account has been taken of this hoped-for expansion. Hon. Members must not, however, regard this as the golden key which will at once unlock the door to our financial future. The Federal Government on whose forecast we mainly rely expects that rents and royalties from the mining of oil will in 1960-61 be more than double what they were during the current year. The 50 per cent share which this Region receives in respect of oil mined within its borders yielded rents and royalties totalling £344,000 during the current year and the estimate for next year is put at £658,000. Thereafter it is possible to hope that further increases of the order of £300,000 a year will take place; but such forecasts are, of course, subject to considerable uncertainty and no prudent oil mining engineer would be prepared to say more than that if the indications yielded by extensive prospecting and the inferences to be drawn from it are not falsified by fresh discoveries about the geology of the Region, then an increase of oil production of this order is possible. Having given these figures I am sure that hon. Members will realise why I said earlier on that we cannot yet look to the Oil Industry to provide any significant element of buoyancy in our revenues for some years to come.

Before I rose to speak this morning the estimates of expenditure for the coming year were circulated and the House will have seen that provision has been made for a total of £15,965,000. In estimating expenditure at this figure the Government has insisted that Ministries should practise the most rigid economy in stating their needs and I am convinced that this figure cannot be reduced, without damage to efficiency and possibly loss of revenue.

I propose to comment briefly on the main features of the Estimates in so far as they reflect certain important policy decisions which Government has already announced or which will become known with the publication of the Estimates.

I have already mentioned that Government has accepted with certain qualifications the recommendations of the Mbanefo Report.



[DR IMOKE]

It is true to say that everyone is feeling the impact of the rising cost of living; it is equally true to say that people in the lower income groups are, by comparison, feeling that impact a great deal more. This is the main reason why Government decided to limit the extent of the award. Government takes the view that there is too large a gulf between the higher and the lower salaries paid in Government service and it has felt impelled to implement the Mbanefo award in such a way as to reduce the disparity.

The cost of implementing the Mbanefo Report and of making a related concession to Voluntary Agencies and Local Government Bodies will be heavy. I estimate that it will amount to no less than £1.5 million annually. In the time available it has not been possible to revise the scales of salary which will appear in the table at page E 7 of the Estimates before you. The scales of salary shown there are therefore the pre-Mbanefo ones and a one-line entry has been made under each Head to provide for the Mbanefo increases. The final revision will, however, be shown in the Supplementary Estimates to be introduced later in the year.

Total expenditure in 1960-61 will be £3.0 million higher than in 1959-60. The provision for Personal Emoluments has risen from £2.9 million to £3.5 million, an increase of £600,000 which is mainly due to the Mbanefo award but partly also to the provision of new posts in a number of Ministries. During the past three years the existing staff has had to take on greatly increased duties. Overtime work has become a normal feature and this has been detrimental to efficiency.

Apart from this, some of the new posts created have been permitted in order to push ahead with our Nigerianisation policy: suitable Nigerian officers who already have some experience will thus be encouraged to undertake high responsibilities under their guidance and thereby prepare themselves for higher responsibilities in future. I here refer in particular to the eight Senior Assistant Secretary and two Establishment Officer posts in the Premier's Office, one Assistant Regional Electoral Officer post in the Electoral Commission, and the financial provision now

made for the post of Assistant Chief Education officer and also the Adviser on Education in the Ministry of Education.

The staff of the Eastern Region Commissioner in the United Kingdom is to be expanded so that it can take over the work of our existing Students Unit from the Federal organisation. A Recruitment Unit will also be set up which, in consultation with the Public Service Commission, will in time assume responsibility for all overseas recruitment to the Regional Public Service. The increases proposed have been made under the Premier's Office Head of the Estimates. Under the same Head is also shown the initial staff required for the Institute of Administration and Local Government which is referred to in paragraph 103 of the Development Programme.

The Audit Department has been strengthened by the provision made for a further Principal Auditor to be posted to Port Harcourt where the impact of the oil industry is now increasing the volume of accounting and auditing work in that station.

The buildings, establishments, hospitals and other institutions created and still being created under our Development Programme have to be maintained and staffed. I have earlier referred to considerable increases in staff and other charges particularly in the Ministries of Agriculture, Town Planning, Works, Education, Health and Finance. A feature of the Ministry of Agriculture Head of the Estimates is the staff increases which have been permitted in connection with the assistance rendered in this field by the United States International Co-operation Administration. This organisation is sending out Specialists in various fields of Agriculture to ensure that our agricultural pursuits are conducted on sound lines. The International Co-operation Administration will also help train staff for Government educational institutions. The Health needs of the Region, in particular in the growing Municipality of Port Harcourt, have been for increased provision. Some provision has also been made for recruiting medical staff and trainees in the 1960-61 financial year.

It is hoped to establish all Customary Courts as planned in the coming financial year. On



the assumption that some of the Courts will not be self-supporting initially, additional grants to Local Government Bodies totalling £48,000 have been permitted for the purpose of sustaining the poorer Councils.

As foreshadowed in the Speech from the Throne, two new Ministries have been created in the Estimates for the coming year: they are the Ministries of Economic Planning and Information. With the coming of Independence these two Ministries will play a most important part in our affairs.

Before I pass on I must mention the grants-in-aid which now form so prominent a part in the annual budget. In the coming year, Education Grants-in-Aid alone will stand at a figure of £6.3 million which represents an increase of £1,480,000, or no less than 31 per cent on the 1959-60 figure. In the coming year education expenditure will account for 45.86 per cent of total expenditure as against 43.82 per cent in the year just closing. If the grants-in-aid of Local Government bodies and certain grants made to hospitals by the Ministry of Health are included the total sum that has to be provided will be £7,958,000 and it will amount to 50 per cent of the entire budget. The exceptional increases in grants-in-aid which are required in the coming year are accounted for partly by the application of the Mbanefo Award and partly by the abolition of the Assumed Local Contribution in Standard II of primary schools with effect from the 1960 school year.

A few moments ago I spoke of the danger to our financial stability if it were assumed that we attempted to plan for such large increases in the cost of our Social Services each year. Looking at the trend in our revenue I feel it my duty to say that we shall be unable to afford for some years to come any further broadening in the basis of the large subsidy which we now pay towards the cost of primary education. It will require the most careful and far-sighted application of the funds that are available if we are to ensure that the cost of this service, so dear to our hearts, is not to outstrip our means.

I now turn to consider the Capital Budget. When we decided a year ago to create a separate Capital Development Fund and to show our capital receipts and expenditures under a

self-contained section of the Estimates, this was no mere gesture of accounting convenience. The Capital Budget is the record from year to year of the progress we make with our Development Programme. It ensures, of course, that capital expenditure, like the current expenditure, is properly subjected to the authority and control of this House. But it enables Government from year to year, and according to circumstance, to vary the provision made for the carrying out of the long-term projects which go to make up our four-year Development Programme.

It is to that four-year Programme rather than to the provision required for any one year that I now invite the House to address its attention. A year ago Government published a White Paper setting out the Development Programme 1958-62 which had already been started in the year then ended. That paper stated that just over £2 million had been provided for expenditure of a capital nature in the 1958-59 consolidated budget and that with the creation of a separate Capital Development Fund on the 1st of April, 1959 further provision would be made for expenditure of some £10.7 million during the three years ending 31st March, 1962. Thus we envisaged a total expenditure over four years of about £12.7 million within the Government's budget. In addition expenditure totalling £3.9 million was envisaged outside the Government's budget mainly for the construction of the new University of Nigeria. This money was to be advanced by the Eastern Region Marketing Board.

During the course of the past year Government has twice reviewed the general shape and content of the Development Programme and the progress made with it. In July, 1959 the total four-year provision was raised by £1 million to £13.7 million. Some but not all of the changes were reflected in the Supplementary Estimates passed by this House in February, but it was expected that there might be further changes when the extent of the capital funds likely to be available for completing the Programme had become clearer. During the past few weeks there has been a further revision and I am happy to say that at this midway point in the Programme, we can now hope to find the means to finance a total expenditure of £16,000,000 during the four-year period ending 31st March, 1962.



[DR IMOKE]

I propose to issue, within the next few days, a White Paper setting out in greater detail the changes which have been made in the Programme and indicating the means by which it is now hoped to finance it. But hon. Members can get a good idea of the Programme by looking at Heads 801 to 808 of the Capital Budget and at the summary on page E 122 of the Estimates. A statement of the expected receipts into the Capital Development Fund appears under Head 800 but it must be borne in mind that the receipts shown under that Head do not include the funds which were applied towards capital expenditure under the consolidated 1958-59 Budget. This expenditure formed part of the Programme but the money was provided and spent before the Capital Development Fund was actually set up.

I should like to say something more about the aims of our Development Programme. It is, of course, only one of a series of plans through which Government hopes to make a contribution towards higher productivity and higher living standards for the people of this Region. Hon. Members will observe that in the current Programme the construction of new buildings has a leading place. This is not accidental. In this year of Independence Government attaches great importance to establishing the Legislature and the services of Government in buildings and quarters which, without being extravagant, are worthy of the enhanced status of this self-governing Region. We have also to provide suitable buildings for the newly created Provincial Assemblies and for the accommodation of the organs of Provincial Government into which it is our desire to infuse new life. In Enugu the provision of new quarters and the construction of a new Government House have become urgent matters.

These are immediate commitments, heavy but inescapable. Comparable to them in importance, however, is the building of new roads. Indeed the priority programme for road construction adopted by Government is so large that we cannot expect to complete it during the current four-year development period. The allocation made for roads in the original Programme was £3.6 million. Our target is now £6 million of which we hope to complete £3.5 million by the end of 1961-62. In the Capital Estimates, I have shown by

means of a token vote the further extensive road construction programme which we shall eventually carry out. I expect that the hon. Minister of Works will wish to give the House a fuller account of these plans.

Under Head 803 Government has during the past two years spent considerable sums on improvements in water supply installations in Enugu, Aba, Umuahia, Abakaliki and above all in Port Harcourt. It is now engaged on the first phase of new installations in Ikot Ekpene, Owerri, Uyo, Nnewi, Okrika and Orlu; and the House will note that plans have been drawn up and provision is now included in the programme for major expansions in Enugu and Onitsha.

The sections of the Development Programme which will, I believe, assume ever-growing importance are those relating to industrial and agricultural development. We have included provision under Head 804 for capital contributions to industrial projects which have either already taken shape or are likely to do so in the next two years. Government also contributes or proposes to contribute to the capital structure of Investment Companies such as the Industrial and Agricultural Company and the Investment Company of Nigeria which have been established in this country with the active support of institutions such as the Colonial Development Corporation and the Commonwealth Development Finance Company. This Government's view is that this type of promotional company can do much to focus the interest of private investors on the development potential of the Region and to mobilise capital from various quarters for carrying out well-planned and soundly-managed undertakings. I am sure that the hon. Minister of Commerce will wish to tell the House more about this Government's hopes for industrial development during the course of the debate.

Head 805 is a rather mixed assortment of capital items which include the requirements of various Ministries which are not recurrent in character or represent new development in various fields. I need hardly stress the growing importance of Port Harcourt in our economy and the need for orderly development there. Government is prepared to do all that it can to assist this development and I would draw



the attention of the House to the provision of £500,000 for the development of the Trans-Amadi Layout at Port Harcourt for which an integrated plan has been prepared by the Government's Town Planning Adviser. This is a substantial new item to which Government wishes to give high priority. The House will also note that the four-year allocation for Community Development has been increased from £64,000 to £104,000. I am sure that hon. Members will share my admiration for the way in which village communities have responded to the encouragement which Government seeks to give them through the Community Development Programme and will agree that money provided for this purpose is exceedingly well spent.

Finally, I must mention the Colonial Development and Welfare programme. Colonial Development and Welfare grants have been the backbone of Nigerian development for the past fifteen years but they will come to an end with the attainment of Independence. Not all of the eleven schemes operated in this Region will have been completed by the 30th of September but Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom has generously agreed that the unspent balance of the allocations to scheme will be handed over in the form of a free grant to enable us to carry on the schemes and to ease the problem of dovetailing them into the Development Programme when they come to be extended.

The first stage of this process was in fact carried out last year when Colonial Development and Welfare expenditure was transferred to the Capital Budget and the grants were included in the estimate of receipts into the Capital Development Fund.

I take this opportunity, in presenting my last Budget before Independence, to say how much this Government values the assistance which has been given us over the years through the Colonial Development and Welfare programme. Hon. Members will be glad to know that this is not to be the end of United Kingdom assistance towards our Development Programme. We have been offered technical assistance in the execution of development schemes. We hope that this will take the form of providing technicians already engaged on several of the more important schemes such

as Rural Water Supplies hitherto financed from Colonial Development and Welfare funds. The House will, I know, welcome this practical expression of goodwill from Britain.

In what I have so far said about the Capital Budget, I have been speaking with reference to the four-year allocations of expenditure which have been revised from time to time and now stand at a total of just over £16 million. The provision made in each year is partly a question of phasing and partly of the speed with which plans can be mounted and executed. It has in fact taken considerable time to get the bulk of the projects under way and expenditure is only now gathering momentum. Thus in 1958-59 we spent £1.9 million. In 1959-60 we have spent about £4.3 million. In 1960-61 we hope, as will be seen from the Estimates, to spend £6.7 million and in 1961-62, the final year of the Programme, we shall still have to spend about £3.3 million to complete it. This coming year proves to be the heaviest period for expenditure because it is only now that detailed blue prints have been prepared for the main building and road projects in the Programme and large contracts are about to be placed for their execution.

To meet the cost of all this we have had, or expect to have, the funds which are summarised under Head 800 of the Estimates. When the Capital Development Fund was established a year ago we transferred to it from the Consolidated Revenue Fund and from other local funds and accounts an initial endowment of approximately £3.3 million. To that we have during the past year added £850,000 from current revenue and I propose that a further sum of £500,000 be transferred from current revenue during the course of the coming financial year. In my Budget Speech last year I told the House that over the four-year period we hoped to be able to contribute in all £2 million from current revenue to strengthen the Capital Development Fund. We shall now have transferred £1,350,000 and I think it proper to provide for a further transfer of £500,000 in 1961-62 making a total contribution from the Consolidated Revenue Fund during the whole of the programme period as £1,850,000 instead of £2 million as heretofore.



[DR IMOKE]

Coming now to our capital financing operations in the year ahead, we continue to draw upon Colonial Development and Welfare funds under development schemes approved by the Secretary of State. When Colonial Development and Welfare assistance ceases on the attainment of Independence we shall have received about £1.8 million from this source since the 1st of April, 1959. This has been credited to the Capital Development Fund.

With regard to Federal loans, we have so far received a share of £588,000 in the Federal development loan which was successfully floated, and in the event over-subscribed, in May, 1959. The Federal Government intend, I believe, to float a further internal loan in October, 1960 and we have every reason to hope that Nigerian institutions and the investing public will again give this loan their full support. This Government has an assurance from the Federal Government, following consultations with the Federal and other Regional Governments in the Loans Advisory Council, that it can expect to receive a further share of the internal and external Federal loans which are to be raised in the coming year. About £2 million will come to us from this source and this will include this Region's share of £1 million in the Commonwealth Assistance Loan of £12 million which Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom has promised to extend to Nigeria after the attainment of Independence. Thus Federal loan funds totalling almost £2.6 million will have been made available to this Region during the present programme period.

I have to inform the House that of the Exchequer Loan of £3 million which Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom is to extend to Nigeria prior to Independence, £1 million will be made available to this Region under a special arrangement whereby the Federal Government is to authorise this Government to borrow direct from Her Majesty's Government. A Bill which seeks powers to do this will shortly be presented to the House.

In my Budget Speech last year, I told the House that I was hopeful that the Federal Government would be successful in raising loan finance from other overseas sources. I

regret to say that we have been disappointed in the results. We have discovered that at the present time none of the countries that have capital available for export to under-developed regions will consider giving loans "without strings", that is, without tying loans to exports. With few exceptions these conditions have made it difficult for us to take full advantage of various loan arrangements that have been suggested.

I shall now mention a further source of development finance which I propose to bring to account. There is now a firm expectation that the prospecting operations for mineral oil which had been going on for some time in the Eastern and Western Regions and off the Continental Shelf adjoining both Regions will be followed by the granting of long-term leases to Oil Companies. In addition to the royalties payable under such leases, a share of which will accrue to this Government, the Federal Government will raise premia which the Companies will pay on being granted these concessions. I am informed by the Federal Government that we can expect to receive £1,125,000 in premia during 1960-61 and I am showing this sum which is, of course, a once-for-all payment as a credit to the Capital Development Fund. We may hope that further leases will be granted during the next two years, the premia on which will be added to the funds available in the Capital Budget.

I must now return to the Recurrent Estimates. Government proposes to introduce at once certain new fiscal measures designed to increase the revenue. These will be circulated in a few moments and they will be brought into immediate effect by resolutions which I shall move in Committee later this morning. I shall then explain them fully to the House. I have earlier given notice of a Bill to amend the Finance Law which, in addition to embodying the new tax schedules also contains certain amendments which it is proposed to make in the administration of the law. The new fiscal measures are expected to yield additional revenue amounting to £321,000. Thus with total revenue at £16,579,000 and total expenditure at £15,965,000 we shall, after transferring £500,000 to the Capital Development Fund, have a modest Budget surplus of £114,000.

Following the established tradition in the Federation of christening every Budget, I



propose to call this the "Independence Budget". I cannot think of a better name. Quite appropriately its emphasis has been on development, and for the achievement of this it calls for restraint in expenditure and a fresh contribution from the people. I fully expect that the need for restraint will continue to dominate our finances until the fruits of development are at hand. I ask this House to give its full support to this policy which I am convinced is the only one which can provide a sound basis for future improvement in the welfare of our people and give reality to our newly achieved Independence.

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

*Question proposed and under paragraph (3) of Standing Order 77—Appropriation Bill—the Debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed on Thursday, 31st March, 1960.*

#### VARIATIONS TO THE SCHEDULES TO THE FINANCE LAW, 1956

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

"That this House resolve itself immediately into a Committee of the Whole House to consider certain variations in the Schedules to the Finance Law, 1956, in accordance with Section 66 of that Law".

Section 66 of the Finance Law is in the following terms, and, with your permission I quote:

"66 (i) Where a resolution moved by the Minister (of Finance) is passed with or without modifications by a Committee of the Whole House of Assembly providing for the revocation, replacement or variation of any Schedule to this Law such resolution shall have the effect as being contained in a Law".

The Section then continues with certain provisos, the effect of which is that the changes made by resolution must be confirmed by a

Bill (for a Law to amend the Finance Law) read a Second time within ten days of the date of the resolution.

It is necessary for this resolution to be introduced in advance of the Law since it is desirable that the new revenue measures proposed by Government should come into force on the first day of April, 1960. The Estimates which were placed before hon. Members reflects the changes in revenue which are based on the new measures.

A further reason for the need for this resolution is that much work is to be done in the way of printing and issuing revised tables, new tables for P.A.Y.E. deductions and other matters connected therewith. It is also necessary to organise the machinery which will deal with the new tax measures well in advance of the date of their introduction. The work involved cannot properly start until the House has expressed its approval of the new Schedule in some formal manner, such as adopting a resolution under Section 66 of the Finance Law.

This procedure has been adopted twice: in 1957 and again last year, 1959, when the Schedules to the Finance Law were varied. The present procedure is, therefore, not without precedent.

I hope that the House will agree with me that it is advisable and appropriate that we shall now resolve ourselves into a Committee for the purpose stated in the Motion.

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

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved:* That this House resolve itself immediately into a Committee of the Whole House to consider certain variations to the Schedules to the Finance Law, 1956, in accordance with Section 66 of that Law.

*Schedules immediately considered in Committee.*

(In the Committee)



FIRST SCHEDULE

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):**  
I beg to move, That this Committee resolve

that the First Schedule to the Finance Law, 1956, be revoked, and that it be replaced by the following Schedule with effect from the 1st day of April, 1960:—

THE FIRST SCHEDULE

INCOME RANGE	AMOUNT OF TAX			
	Single Persons	Married Persons with no Children	Married Persons with not more than 2 Children	Married Persons with 3 or more Children
	£ s d	£ s d	£ s d	£ s d
Under £ 60 .. ..	1 7 6	1 7 6	1 7 6	1 7 6
PART I				
£ 60 or over, but under £ 70 .. ..	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0
£ 70 or over, but under £ 80 .. ..	1 15 0	1 15 0	1 15 0	1 15 0
£ 80 or over, but under £ 90 .. ..	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0
£ 90 or over, but under £ 100 .. ..	2 5 0	2 5 0	2 5 0	2 5 0
PART II				
£ 100 or over, but under £ 110 .. ..	3 0 0	2 15 0	2 10 0	2 5 0
£ 110 or over, but under £ 120 .. ..	3 12 6	3 5 0	2 17 6	2 10 0
£ 120 or over, but under £ 130 .. ..	4 5 0	3 15 0	3 5 0	2 15 0
£ 130 or over, but under £ 140 .. ..	4 17 6	4 5 0	3 12 6	3 0 0
£ 140 or over, but under £ 150 .. ..	5 10 0	4 15 0	4 0 0	3 5 0
£ 150 or over, but under £ 160 .. ..	6 2 6	5 5 0	4 7 6	3 10 0
£ 160 or over, but under £ 170 .. ..	6 17 6	5 17 6	4 17 6	3 17 6
£ 170 or over, but under £ 180 .. ..	7 12 6	6 10 0	5 7 6	4 5 0
£ 180 or over, but under £ 190 .. ..	8 7 6	7 2 6	5 17 6	4 12 6
£ 190 or over, but under £ 200 .. ..	9 2 6	7 15 0	6 7 6	5 0 0
£ 200 or over, but under £ 210 .. ..	9 17 6	8 7 6	6 17 6	5 7 6
£ 210 or over, but under £ 220 .. ..	10 12 6	9 0 0	7 7 6	5 17 6
£ 220 or over, but under £ 230 .. ..	11 7 6	9 12 6	7 17 6	6 7 6
£ 230 or over, but under £ 240 .. ..	12 2 6	10 5 0	8 7 6	6 17 6
£ 240 or over, but under £ 250 .. ..	12 17 6	10 17 6	8 17 6	7 7 6
£ 250 or over, but under £ 260 .. ..	13 12 6	11 10 0	9 7 6	7 17 6
£ 260 or over, but under £ 270 .. ..	14 7 6	12 2 6	10 0 0	8 7 6
£ 270 or over, but under £ 280 .. ..	15 2 6	12 15 0	10 12 6	8 17 6
£ 280 or over, but under £ 290 .. ..	15 17 6	13 10 0	11 5 0	9 7 6
£ 290 or over, but under £ 300 .. ..	16 12 6	14 5 0	11 17 6	9 17 6
£ 300 or over, but under £ 310 .. ..	17 10 0	15 0 0	12 10 0	10 10 0
£ 310 or over, but under £ 320 .. ..	18 7 6	15 15 0	13 2 6	11 0 0
£ 320 or over, but under £ 330 .. ..	19 5 0	16 10 0	13 15 0	11 10 0
£ 330 or over, but under £ 340 .. ..	20 2 6	17 5 0	14 7 6	12 0 0
£ 340 or over, but under £ 350 .. ..	21 0 0	18 0 0	15 0 0	12 10 0
£ 350 or over, but under £ 360 .. ..	21 17 6	18 15 0	15 12 6	13 0 0
£ 360 or over, but under £ 370 .. ..	22 15 0	19 10 0	16 5 0	13 10 0
£ 370 or over, but under £ 380 .. ..	23 12 6	20 5 0	16 17 6	14 0 0
£ 380 or over, but under £ 390 .. ..	24 10 0	21 0 0	17 10 0	14 10 0
£ 390 or over, but under £ 400 .. ..	25 7 6	21 15 0	18 2 6	15 0 0
£ 400 or over, but under £ 410 .. ..	26 5 0	22 10 0	18 15 0	15 10 0
£ 410 or over, but under £ 420 .. ..	27 2 6	23 5 0	19 7 6	16 0 0
£ 420 or over, but under £ 430 .. ..	28 0 0	24 0 0	20 0 0	16 10 0
£ 430 or over, but under £ 440 .. ..	28 17 6	24 15 0	20 12 6	17 0 0
£ 440 or over, but under £ 450 .. ..	29 15 0	25 10 0	21 5 0	17 10 0
£ 450 or over, but under £ 460 .. ..	30 12 6	26 5 0	21 17 6	18 0 0
£ 460 or over, but under £ 470 .. ..	31 10 0	27 0 0	22 10 0	18 10 0
£ 470 or over, but under £ 480 .. ..	32 7 6	27 15 0	23 2 6	19 0 0
£ 480 or over, but under £ 490 .. ..	33 5 0	28 10 0	23 15 0	19 10 0
£ 490 or over, but under £ 500 .. ..	34 2 6	29 5 0	24 7 6	20 0 0
£ 500 or over, but under £ 510 .. ..	35 0 0	30 0 0	25 0 0	20 15 0
£ 510 or over, but under £ 520 .. ..	35 17 6	30 15 0	25 12 6	21 5 0
£ 520 or over, but under £ 530 .. ..	36 15 0	31 10 0	26 5 0	21 15 0
£ 530 or over, but under £ 540 .. ..	37 12 6	32 5 0	26 17 6	22 5 0
£ 540 or over, but under £ 550 .. ..	38 10 0	33 0 0	27 10 0	22 15 0
£ 550 or over, but under £ 560 .. ..	39 7 6	33 15 0	28 2 6	23 5 0



THE FIRST SCHEDULE — continued

AMOUNT OF TAX

INCOME RANGE	Single Persons			Married Persons with no Children			Married Persons with not more than 2 Children			Married Persons with 3 or more Children		
	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
£ 560 or over, but under £ 570 .. ..	40	5	0	34	10	0	28	15	0	23	15	0
£ 570 or over, but under £ 580 .. ..	41	2	6	35	5	0	29	7	6	24	5	0
£ 580 or over, but under £ 590 .. ..	42	0	0	36	0	0	30	0	0	24	15	0
£ 590 or over, but under £ 600 .. ..	42	17	6	36	15	0	30	12	6	25	5	0
£ 600 or over, but under £ 610 .. ..	43	15	0	37	10	0	31	5	0	25	15	0
£ 610 or over, but under £ 620 .. ..	44	12	6	38	5	0	31	17	6	26	5	0
£ 620 or over, but under £ 630 .. ..	45	10	0	39	0	0	32	10	0	26	15	0
£ 630 or over, but under £ 640 .. ..	46	7	6	39	15	0	33	2	6	27	5	0
£ 640 or over, but under £ 650 .. ..	47	5	0	40	10	0	33	15	0	27	15	0
£ 650 or over, but under £ 660 .. ..	48	2	6	41	5	0	34	7	6	28	5	0
£ 660 or over, but under £ 670 .. ..	49	0	0	42	0	0	35	0	0	28	15	0
£ 670 or over, but under £ 680 .. ..	49	17	6	42	15	0	35	12	6	29	5	0
£ 680 or over, but under £ 690 .. ..	50	15	0	43	10	0	36	5	0	29	15	0
£ 690 or over, but under £ 700 .. ..	51	12	6	44	5	0	36	17	6	30	5	0
£ 700 or over, but under £ 710 .. ..	52	10	0	45	0	0	37	10	0	31	0	0
£ 710 or over, but under £ 720 .. ..	53	7	6	45	15	0	38	2	6	31	10	0
£ 720 or over, but under £ 730 .. ..	54	5	0	46	10	0	38	15	0	32	0	0
£ 730 or over, but under £ 740 .. ..	55	2	6	47	5	0	39	7	6	32	10	0
£ 740 or over, but under £ 750 .. ..	56	0	0	48	0	0	40	0	0	33	0	0
£ 750 or over, but under £ 760 .. ..	56	17	6	48	15	0	40	12	6	33	10	0
£ 760 or over, but under £ 770 .. ..	57	15	0	49	10	0	41	5	0	34	0	0
£ 770 or over, but under £ 780 .. ..	58	12	6	50	5	0	41	17	6	34	10	0
£ 780 or over, but under £ 790 .. ..	59	10	0	51	0	0	42	10	0	35	0	0
£ 790 or over, but under £ 800 .. ..	60	7	6	51	15	0	43	2	6	35	10	0
£ 800 or over, but under £ 810 .. ..	61	5	0	52	10	0	43	15	0	36	5	0
£ 810 or over, but under £ 820 .. ..	62	5	0	53	10	0	44	15	0	37	5	0
£ 820 or over, but under £ 830 .. ..	63	0	0	54	0	0	45	0	0	37	5	0
£ 830 or over, but under £ 840 .. ..	64	0	0	55	0	0	46	0	0	38	5	0
£ 840 or over, but under £ 850 .. ..	64	15	0	55	10	0	46	5	0	38	5	0
£ 850 or over, but under £ 860 .. ..	65	15	0	56	10	0	47	5	0	39	5	0
£ 860 or over, but under £ 870 .. ..	66	10	0	57	0	0	47	10	0	39	5	0
£ 870 or over, but under £ 880 .. ..	67	10	0	58	0	0	48	10	0	40	5	0
£ 880 or over, but under £ 890 .. ..	68	5	0	58	10	0	48	15	0	40	5	0
£ 890 or over, but under £ 900 .. ..	69	5	0	59	10	0	49	15	0	41	5	0
£ 900 or over, but under £ 910 .. ..	70	0	0	60	0	0	50	0	0	41	5	0
£ 910 or over, but under £ 920 .. ..	71	0	0	61	0	0	51	0	0	42	5	0
£ 920 or over, but under £ 930 .. ..	71	15	0	61	10	0	51	5	0	42	5	0
£ 930 or over, but under £ 940 .. ..	72	15	0	62	10	0	52	5	0	43	5	0
£ 940 or over, but under £ 950 .. ..	73	10	0	63	0	0	52	10	0	43	5	0
£ 950 or over, but under £ 960 .. ..	74	10	0	64	0	0	53	10	0	44	5	0
£ 960 or over, but under £ 970 .. ..	75	5	0	64	10	0	53	15	0	44	5	0
£ 970 or over, but under £ 980 .. ..	76	5	0	65	10	0	54	15	0	45	5	0
£ 980 or over, but under £ 990 .. ..	77	0	0	66	0	0	55	0	0	45	5	0
£ 990 or over, but under £ 1000 .. ..	78	0	0	67	0	0	56	0	0	46	5	0
£ 1000 or over, but under £ 1010 .. ..	78	15	0	67	10	0	56	5	0	46	10	0
£ 1010 or over, but under £ 1020 .. ..	79	15	0	68	10	0	57	5	0	47	10	0
£ 1020 or over, but under £ 1030 .. ..	80	10	0	69	0	0	57	10	0	47	10	0
£ 1030 or over, but under £ 1040 .. ..	81	10	0	70	0	0	58	10	0	48	10	0
£ 1040 or over, but under £ 1050 .. ..	82	5	0	70	10	0	58	15	0	48	10	0
£ 1050 or over, but under £ 1060 .. ..	83	5	0	71	10	0	59	15	0	49	10	0
£ 1060 or over, but under £ 1070 .. ..	84	0	0	72	0	0	60	0	0	49	10	0
£ 1070 or over, but under £ 1080 .. ..	85	0	0	73	0	0	61	0	0	50	10	0
£ 1080 or over, but under £ 1090 .. ..	85	15	0	73	10	0	61	5	0	50	10	0
£ 1090 or over, but under £ 1100 .. ..	86	15	0	74	10	0	62	5	0	51	10	0
£ 1100 or over, but under £ 1110 .. ..	87	10	0	75	0	0	62	10	0	51	10	0
£ 1110 or over, but under £ 1120 .. ..	88	10	0	76	0	0	63	10	0	52	10	0
£ 1120 or over, but under £ 1130 .. ..	89	5	0	76	10	0	63	15	0	52	10	0
£ 1130 or over, but under £ 1140 .. ..	90	5	0	77	10	0	64	15	0	53	10	0
£ 1140 or over, but under £ 1150 .. ..	91	0	0	78	0	0	65	0	0	53	10	0
£ 1150 or over, but under £ 1160 .. ..	92	0	0	79	0	0	66	0	0	54	10	0



Eastern House of Assembly Debates

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[Variations to Schedules

28 MARCH 1960

to Finance Law, 1956]

376

THE FIRST SCHEDULE — continued

		AMOUNT OF TAX											
		Single Persons			Married Persons with no Children			Married Persons with not more than 2 Children			Married Persons with 3 or more Children		
		£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
£ 981 or over, but under	£ 990 .. ..	92	15	0	79	10	0	66	5	0	54	10	0
	£ 990 .. ..	93	15	0	80	10	0	67	5	0	55	10	0
£ 991 or over, but under	£1,000 .. ..	94	10	0	81	0	0	67	10	0	55	10	0
	£1,000 .. ..	95	10	0	82	0	0	68	10	0	56	10	0
£1,001 or over, but under	£1,010 .. ..	96	5	0	82	10	0	68	15	0	57	0	0
	£1,010 .. ..	97	5	0	83	10	0	69	15	0	58	0	0
	£1,011 .. ..	98	5	0	84	10	0	70	10	0	58	10	0
£1,012 or over, but under	£1,020 .. ..	98	10	0	84	10	0	70	10	0	58	10	0
	£1,020 .. ..	99	10	0	85	10	0	71	10	0	59	10	0
	£1,021 .. ..	100	10	0	86	10	0	72	5	0	60	0	0
£1,022 or over, but under	£1,030 .. ..	100	15	0	86	10	0	72	5	0	60	0	0
	£1,030 .. ..	101	15	0	87	10	0	73	5	0	61	0	0
	£1,031 .. ..	102	15	0	88	10	0	74	0	0	61	10	0
£1,032 or over, but under	£1,040 .. ..	103	0	0	88	10	0	74	0	0	61	10	0
	£1,040 .. ..	104	0	0	89	10	0	75	0	0	62	10	0
	£1,041 .. ..	105	0	0	90	10	0	75	15	0	63	0	0
£1,042 or over, but under	£1,050 .. ..	105	5	0	90	10	0	75	15	0	63	0	0
	£1,050 .. ..	106	5	0	91	10	0	76	15	0	64	0	0
	£1,051 .. ..	107	5	0	92	10	0	77	10	0	64	10	0
£1,052 or over, but under	£1,060 .. ..	107	10	0	92	10	0	77	10	0	64	10	0
	£1,060 .. ..	108	10	0	93	10	0	78	10	0	65	10	0
	£1,061 .. ..	109	10	0	94	10	0	79	5	0	66	0	0
£1,062 or over, but under	£1,070 .. ..	109	15	0	94	10	0	79	5	0	66	0	0
	£1,070 .. ..	110	15	0	95	10	0	80	5	0	67	0	0
	£1,071 .. ..	111	15	0	96	10	0	81	0	0	67	10	0
£1,072 or over, but under	£1,080 .. ..	112	0	0	96	10	0	81	0	0	67	10	0
	£1,080 .. ..	113	0	0	97	10	0	82	0	0	68	10	0
	£1,081 .. ..	114	0	0	98	10	0	82	15	0	69	0	0
£1,082 or over, but under	£1,090 .. ..	114	5	0	98	10	0	82	15	0	69	0	0
	£1,090 .. ..	115	5	0	99	10	0	83	15	0	70	0	0
	£1,091 .. ..	116	5	0	100	10	0	84	10	0	70	10	0
£1,092 or over, but under	£1,100 .. ..	116	10	0	100	10	0	84	10	0	70	10	0
	£1,100 .. ..	117	10	0	101	10	0	85	10	0	71	10	0
	£1,101 .. ..	118	10	0	102	10	0	86	5	0	72	0	0
£1,102 or over, but under	£1,110 .. ..	118	15	0	102	10	0	86	5	0	72	0	0
	£1,110 .. ..	119	15	0	103	10	0	87	5	0	73	0	0
	£1,111 .. ..	120	15	0	104	10	0	88	0	0	73	10	0
£1,112 or over, but under	£1,120 .. ..	121	0	0	104	10	0	88	0	0	73	10	0
	£1,120 .. ..	122	0	0	105	10	0	89	0	0	74	10	0
	£1,121 .. ..	123	0	0	106	10	0	89	15	0	75	0	0
£1,122 or over, but under	£1,130 .. ..	123	5	0	106	10	0	89	15	0	75	0	0
	£1,130 .. ..	124	5	0	107	10	0	90	15	0	76	0	0
	£1,131 .. ..	125	5	0	108	10	0	91	10	0	76	10	0
£1,132 or over, but under	£1,140 .. ..	125	10	0	108	10	0	91	10	0	76	10	0
	£1,140 .. ..	126	10	0	109	10	0	92	10	0	77	10	0
	£1,141 .. ..	127	10	0	110	10	0	93	5	0	78	0	0
£1,142 or over, but under	£1,150 .. ..	127	15	0	110	10	0	93	5	0	78	0	0
	£1,150 .. ..	128	15	0	111	10	0	94	5	0	79	0	0
	£1,151 .. ..	129	15	0	112	10	0	95	0	0	79	10	0
£1,152 or over, but under	£1,160 .. ..	130	0	0	112	10	0	95	0	0	79	10	0
	£1,160 .. ..	131	0	0	113	10	0	96	0	0	80	10	0
	£1,161 .. ..	132	0	0	114	10	0	96	15	0	81	0	0
£1,162 or over, but under	£1,170 .. ..	132	5	0	114	10	0	96	15	0	81	0	0
	£1,170 .. ..	133	5	0	115	10	0	97	15	0	82	0	0
	£1,171 .. ..	134	5	0	116	10	0	98	10	0	82	10	0
£1,172 or over, but under	£1,180 .. ..	134	10	0	116	10	0	98	10	0	82	10	0
	£1,180 .. ..	135	10	0	117	10	0	99	10	0	83	10	0
	£1,181 .. ..	136	10	0	118	10	0	100	5	0	84	0	0
£1,182 or over, but under	£1,190 .. ..	136	15	0	118	10	0	100	5	0	84	0	0
	£1,190 .. ..	137	15	0	119	10	0	101	5	0	85	0	0
	£1,191 .. ..	138	15	0	120	10	0	102	0	0	85	10	0



THE FIRST SCHEDULE — continued

		AMOUNT OF TAX											
		Single Persons			Married Persons with no Children			Married Persons with not more than 2 Children			Married Persons with 3 or more Children		
		£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
£1,192 or over, but under	£1,200 .. ..	139	0	0	120	10	0	102	0	0	85	10	0
	£1,200 .. ..	140	0	0	121	10	0	103	0	0	86	10	0
	£1,201 .. ..	141	0	0	122	10	0	103	15	0	87	0	0
£1,202 or over, but under	£1,210 .. ..	141	5	0	122	10	0	103	15	0	87	0	0
	£1,210 .. ..	142	5	0	123	10	0	104	15	0	88	0	0
	£1,211 .. ..	143	5	0	124	10	0	105	10	0	88	10	0
£1,212 or over, but under	£1,220 .. ..	143	10	0	124	10	0	105	10	0	88	10	0
	£1,220 .. ..	144	10	0	125	10	0	106	10	0	89	10	0
	£1,221 .. ..	145	10	0	126	10	0	107	5	0	90	0	0
£1,222 or over, but under	£1,230 .. ..	145	15	0	126	10	0	107	5	0	90	0	0
	£1,230 .. ..	146	15	0	127	10	0	108	5	0	91	0	0
	£1,231 .. ..	147	15	0	128	10	0	109	0	0	91	10	0
£1,232 or over, but under	£1,240 .. ..	148	0	0	128	10	0	109	0	0	91	10	0
	£1,240 .. ..	149	0	0	129	10	0	110	0	0	92	10	0
	£1,241 .. ..	150	0	0	130	10	0	110	15	0	93	0	0
£1,242 or over, but under	£1,250 .. ..	150	5	0	130	10	0	110	15	0	93	0	0
	£1,250 .. ..	151	5	0	131	10	0	111	15	0	94	0	0
	£1,251 .. ..	152	5	0	132	10	0	112	10	0	94	10	0
£1,252 or over, but under	£1,260 .. ..	152	10	0	132	10	0	112	10	0	94	10	0
	£1,260 .. ..	153	10	0	133	10	0	113	10	0	95	10	0
	£1,261 .. ..	154	10	0	134	10	0	114	5	0	96	0	0
£1,262 or over, but under	£1,270 .. ..	154	15	0	134	10	0	114	5	0	96	0	0
	£1,270 .. ..	155	15	0	135	10	0	115	5	0	97	0	0
	£1,271 .. ..	156	15	0	136	10	0	116	0	0	97	10	0
£1,272 or over, but under	£1,280 .. ..	157	0	0	136	10	0	116	0	0	97	10	0
	£1,280 .. ..	158	0	0	137	10	0	117	0	0	98	10	0
	£1,281 .. ..	159	0	0	138	10	0	117	15	0	99	0	0
£1,282 or over, but under	£1,290 .. ..	159	5	0	138	10	0	117	15	0	99	0	0
	£1,290 .. ..	160	5	0	139	10	0	118	15	0	100	0	0
	£1,291 .. ..	161	5	0	140	10	0	119	10	0	100	10	0
£1,292 or over, but under	£1,300 .. ..	161	10	0	140	10	0	119	10	0	100	10	0
	£1,300 .. ..	162	10	0	141	10	0	120	10	0	101	10	0
	£1,301 .. ..	163	10	0	142	10	0	121	5	0	102	0	0
£1,302 or over, but under	£1,310 .. ..	163	15	0	142	10	0	121	5	0	102	0	0
	£1,310 .. ..	164	15	0	143	10	0	122	5	0	103	0	0
	£1,311 .. ..	165	15	0	144	10	0	123	0	0	103	10	0
£1,312 or over, but under	£1,320 .. ..	166	0	0	144	10	0	123	0	0	103	10	0
	£1,320 .. ..	167	0	0	145	10	0	124	0	0	104	10	0
	£1,321 .. ..	168	0	0	146	10	0	124	15	0	105	0	0
£1,322 or over, but under	£1,330 .. ..	168	5	0	146	10	0	124	15	0	105	0	0
	£1,330 .. ..	169	5	0	147	10	0	125	15	0	106	0	0
	£1,331 .. ..	170	5	0	148	10	0	126	10	0	106	10	0
£1,332 or over, but under	£1,340 .. ..	170	10	0	148	10	0	126	10	0	106	10	0
	£1,340 .. ..	171	10	0	149	10	0	127	10	0	107	10	0
	£1,341 .. ..	172	10	0	150	10	0	128	5	0	108	0	0
£1,342 or over, but under	£1,350 .. ..	172	15	0	150	10	0	128	5	0	108	0	0
	£1,350 .. ..	173	15	0	151	10	0	129	5	0	109	0	0
	£1,351 .. ..	174	15	0	152	10	0	130	0	0	109	10	0
£1,352 or over, but under	£1,360 .. ..	175	0	0	152	10	0	130	0	0	109	10	0
	£1,360 .. ..	176	0	0	153	10	0	131	0	0	110	10	0
	£1,361 .. ..	177	0	0	154	10	0	131	15	0	111	0	0
£1,362 or over, but under	£1,370 .. ..	177	5	0	154	10	0	131	15	0	111	0	0
	£1,370 .. ..	178	5	0	155	10	0	132	15	0	112	0	0
	£1,371 .. ..	179	5	0	156	10	0	133	10	0	112	10	0
£1,372 or over, but under	£1,380 .. ..	179	10	0	156	10	0	133	10	0	112	10	0
	£1,380 .. ..	180	10	0	157	10	0	134	10	0	113	10	0
	£1,381 .. ..	181	10	0	158	10	0	135	5	0	114	0	0
£1,382 or over, but under	£1,390 .. ..	181	15	0	158	10	0	135	5	0	114	0	0
	£1,390 .. ..	182	15	0	159	10	0	136	5	0	115	0	0
	£1,391 .. ..	183	15	0	160	10	0	137	0	0	115	10	0



Eastern House of Assembly Debates

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[Variations to Schedules

28 MARCH 1960

to Finance Law, 1956]

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THE FIRST SCHEDULE — continued

		AMOUNT OF TAX											
		Single Persons			Married Persons with no Children			Married Persons with not more than 2 Children			Married Persons with 3 or more Children		
		£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
£1,392 or over, but under	£1,400 .. ..	184	0	0	160	10	0	137	0	0	115	10	0
	£1,400 .. ..	185	0	0	161	10	0	138	0	0	116	10	0
£1,402 or over, but under	£1,401 .. ..	186	0	0	162	10	0	138	15	0	117	0	0
	£1,410 .. ..	186	5	0	162	10	0	138	15	0	117	0	0
	£1,410 .. ..	187	5	0	163	10	0	139	15	0	118	0	0
£1,412 or over, but under	£1,411 .. ..	188	5	0	164	10	0	140	10	0	118	10	0
	£1,420 .. ..	188	10	0	164	10	0	140	10	0	118	10	0
	£1,420 .. ..	189	10	0	165	10	0	141	10	0	119	10	0
£1,422 or over, but under	£1,421 .. ..	190	10	0	166	10	0	142	5	0	120	0	0
	£1,430 .. ..	190	15	0	166	10	0	142	5	0	120	0	0
	£1,430 .. ..	191	15	0	167	10	0	143	5	0	121	0	0
£1,432 or over, but under	£1,431 .. ..	192	15	0	168	10	0	144	0	0	121	10	0
	£1,440 .. ..	193	0	0	168	10	0	144	0	0	121	10	0
	£1,440 .. ..	194	0	0	169	10	0	145	0	0	122	10	0
£1,442 or over, but under	£1,441 .. ..	195	0	0	170	10	0	145	15	0	123	0	0
	£1,450 .. ..	195	5	0	170	10	0	145	15	0	123	0	0
	£1,450 .. ..	196	5	0	171	10	0	146	15	0	124	0	0
£1,452 or over, but under	£1,451 .. ..	197	5	0	172	10	0	147	10	0	124	10	0
	£1,460 .. ..	197	10	0	172	10	0	147	10	0	124	10	0
	£1,460 .. ..	198	10	0	173	10	0	148	10	0	125	10	0
£1,462 or over, but under	£1,461 .. ..	199	10	0	174	10	0	149	5	0	126	0	0
	£1,470 .. ..	199	15	0	174	10	0	149	5	0	126	0	0
	£1,470 .. ..	200	15	0	175	10	0	150	5	0	127	0	0
£1,472 or over, but under	£1,471 .. ..	201	15	0	176	10	0	151	0	0	127	10	0
	£1,480 .. ..	202	0	0	176	10	0	151	0	0	127	10	0
	£1,480 .. ..	203	0	0	177	10	0	152	0	0	128	10	0
£1,482 or over, but under	£1,481 .. ..	204	0	0	178	10	0	152	15	0	129	0	0
	£1,490 .. ..	204	5	0	178	10	0	152	15	0	129	0	0
	£1,490 .. ..	205	5	0	179	10	0	153	15	0	130	0	0
£1,492 or over, but under	£1,491 .. ..	206	5	0	180	10	0	154	10	0	130	10	0
	£1,500 .. ..	206	10	0	180	10	0	154	10	0	130	10	0
	£1,500 .. ..	207	10	0	181	10	0	155	10	0	131	10	0
£1,502 or over, but under	£1,501 .. ..	208	10	0	182	10	0	156	5	0	132	0	0
	£1,510 .. ..	208	15	0	182	10	0	156	5	0	132	0	0
	£1,510 .. ..	209	15	0	183	10	0	157	5	0	133	0	0
£1,512 or over, but under	£1,511 .. ..	210	15	0	184	10	0	158	0	0	133	10	0
	£1,520 .. ..	211	0	0	184	10	0	158	0	0	133	10	0
	£1,520 .. ..	212	0	0	185	10	0	159	0	0	134	10	0
£1,522 or over, but under	£1,521 .. ..	213	0	0	186	10	0	159	15	0	135	0	0
	£1,530 .. ..	213	5	0	186	10	0	159	15	0	135	0	0
	£1,530 .. ..	214	5	0	187	10	0	160	15	0	136	0	0
£1,532 or over, but under	£1,531 .. ..	215	5	0	188	10	0	161	10	0	136	10	0
	£1,540 .. ..	215	10	0	188	10	0	161	10	0	136	10	0
	£1,540 .. ..	216	10	0	189	10	0	162	10	0	137	10	0
£1,542 or over, but under	£1,541 .. ..	217	10	0	190	10	0	163	5	0	138	0	0
	£1,550 .. ..	217	15	0	190	10	0	163	5	0	138	0	0
	£1,550 .. ..	218	15	0	191	10	0	164	5	0	139	0	0
£1,552 or over, but under	£1,551 .. ..	219	15	0	192	10	0	165	0	0	139	10	0
	£1,560 .. ..	220	0	0	192	10	0	165	0	0	139	10	0
	£1,560 .. ..	221	0	0	193	10	0	166	0	0	140	10	0
£1,562 or over, but under	£1,561 .. ..	222	0	0	194	10	0	166	15	0	141	0	0
	£1,570 .. ..	222	5	0	194	10	0	166	15	0	141	0	0
	£1,570 .. ..	223	5	0	195	10	0	167	15	0	142	0	0
£1,572 or over, but under	£1,571 .. ..	224	5	0	196	10	0	168	10	0	142	10	0
	£1,580 .. ..	224	10	0	196	10	0	168	10	0	142	10	0
	£1,580 .. ..	225	10	0	197	10	0	169	10	0	143	10	0
£1,582 or over, but under	£1,581 .. ..	226	10	0	198	10	0	170	5	0	144	0	0
	£1,590 .. ..	226	15	0	198	10	0	170	5	0	144	0	0
	£1,590 .. ..	227	15	0	199	10	0	171	5	0	145	0	0
	£1,591 .. ..	228	15	0	200	10	0	172	0	0	145	10	0



THE FIRST SCHEDULE — continued

		AMOUNT OF TAX											
		Single Persons			Married Persons with no Children			Married Persons with not more than 2 Children			Married Persons with 3 or more Children		
		£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
£1,592 or over, but under	£1,600 .. ..	229	0	0	200	10	0	172	0	0	145	10	0
	£1,600 .. ..	230	0	0	201	10	0	173	0	0	146	10	0
	£1,601 .. ..	231	0	0	202	10	0	173	15	0	147	0	0
£1,602 or over, but under	£1,610 .. ..	231	5	0	202	10	0	173	15	0	147	0	0
	£1,610 .. ..	232	5	0	203	10	0	174	15	0	148	0	0
	£1,611 .. ..	233	5	0	204	10	0	175	15	0	149	0	0
£1,612 or over, but under	£1,620 .. ..	234	5	0	205	3	4	176	1	8	149	0	0
	£1,620 .. ..	235	5	0	206	3	4	177	1	8	150	0	0
	£1,621 .. ..	236	5	0	207	3	4	178	1	8	151	0	0
£1,622 or over, but under	£1,630 .. ..	237	5	0	207	16	8	178	8	4	151	0	0
	£1,630 .. ..	238	5	0	208	16	8	179	8	4	152	0	0
	£1,631 .. ..	239	5	0	209	16	8	180	8	4	153	0	0
£1,632 or over, but under	£1,640 .. ..	240	5	0	210	10	0	180	15	0	153	0	0
	£1,640 .. ..	241	5	0	211	10	0	181	15	0	154	0	0
	£1,641 .. ..	242	5	0	212	10	0	182	15	0	155	0	0
£1,642 or over, but under	£1,650 .. ..	243	5	0	213	3	4	183	1	8	155	0	0
	£1,650 .. ..	244	5	0	214	3	4	184	1	8	156	0	0
	£1,651 .. ..	245	5	0	215	3	4	185	1	8	157	0	0
£1,652 or over, but under	£1,660 .. ..	246	5	0	215	16	8	185	8	4	157	0	0
	£1,660 .. ..	247	5	0	216	16	8	186	8	4	158	0	0
	£1,661 .. ..	248	5	0	217	16	8	187	8	4	159	0	0
£1,662 or over, but under	£1,670 .. ..	249	5	0	218	10	0	187	15	0	159	0	0
	£1,670 .. ..	250	5	0	219	10	0	188	15	0	160	0	0
	£1,671 .. ..	251	5	0	220	10	0	189	15	0	161	0	0
£1,672 or over, but under	£1,680 .. ..	252	5	0	221	3	4	190	1	8	161	0	0
	£1,680 .. ..	253	5	0	222	3	4	191	1	8	162	0	0
	£1,681 .. ..	254	5	0	223	3	4	192	1	8	163	0	0
£1,682 or over, but under	£1,690 .. ..	255	5	0	223	16	8	192	8	4	163	0	0
	£1,690 .. ..	256	5	0	224	16	8	193	8	4	164	0	0
	£1,691 .. ..	257	5	0	225	16	8	194	8	4	165	0	0
£1,692 or over, but under	£1,700 .. ..	258	5	0	226	10	0	194	15	0	165	0	0
	£1,700 .. ..	259	5	0	227	10	0	195	15	0	166	0	0
	£1,701 .. ..	260	5	0	228	10	0	196	15	0	167	0	0
£1,702 or over, but under	£1,710 .. ..	261	5	0	229	3	4	197	1	8	167	0	0
	£1,710 .. ..	262	5	0	230	3	4	198	1	8	168	0	0
	£1,711 .. ..	263	5	0	231	3	4	199	1	8	169	0	0
£1,712 or over, but under	£1,720 .. ..	264	5	0	231	16	8	199	8	4	169	0	0
	£1,720 .. ..	265	5	0	232	16	8	200	8	4	170	0	0
	£1,721 .. ..	266	5	0	233	16	8	201	8	4	171	0	0
£1,722 or over, but under	£1,730 .. ..	267	5	0	234	10	0	201	15	0	171	0	0
	£1,730 .. ..	268	5	0	235	10	0	202	15	0	172	0	0
	£1,731 .. ..	269	5	0	236	10	0	203	15	0	173	0	0
£1,732 or over, but under	£1,740 .. ..	270	5	0	237	3	4	204	1	8	173	0	0
	£1,740 .. ..	271	5	0	238	3	4	205	1	8	174	0	0
	£1,741 .. ..	272	5	0	239	3	4	206	1	8	175	0	0
£1,742 or over, but under	£1,750 .. ..	273	5	0	239	16	8	206	8	4	175	0	0
	£1,750 .. ..	274	5	0	240	16	8	207	8	4	176	0	0
	£1,751 .. ..	275	5	0	241	16	8	208	8	4	177	0	0
£1,752 or over, but under	£1,760 .. ..	276	5	0	242	10	0	208	15	0	177	0	0
	£1,760 .. ..	277	5	0	243	10	0	209	15	0	178	0	0
	£1,761 .. ..	278	5	0	244	10	0	210	15	0	179	0	0
£1,762 or over, but under	£1,770 .. ..	279	5	0	245	3	4	211	1	8	179	0	0
	£1,770 .. ..	280	5	0	246	3	4	212	1	8	180	0	0
	£1,771 .. ..	281	5	0	247	3	4	213	1	8	181	0	0
£1,772 or over, but under	£1,780 .. ..	282	5	0	247	16	8	213	8	4	181	0	0
	£1,780 .. ..	283	5	0	248	16	8	214	8	4	182	0	0
	£1,781 .. ..	284	5	0	249	16	8	215	8	4	183	0	0
£1,782 or over, but under	£1,790 .. ..	285	5	0	250	10	0	215	15	0	183	0	0
	£1,790 .. ..	286	5	0	251	10	0	216	15	0	184	0	0
	£1,791 .. ..	287	5	0	252	10	0	217	15	0	185	0	0



THE FIRST SCHEDULE — continued

		AMOUNT OF TAX											
		Single Persons			Married Persons with no Children			Married Persons with not more than 2 Children			Married Persons with 3 or more Children		
		£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
£1,792 or over, but under	£1,800 .. ..	288	5	0	253	3	4	218	1	8	185	0	0
	£1,800 .. ..	289	5	0	254	3	4	219	1	8	186	0	0
	£1,801 .. ..	290	5	0	255	3	4	220	1	8	187	0	0
£1,802 or over, but under	£1,810 .. ..	291	5	0	255	16	8	220	8	4	187	0	0
	£1,810 .. ..	292	5	0	256	16	8	221	8	4	188	0	0
	£1,811 .. ..	293	5	0	257	16	8	222	8	4	189	0	0
£1,812 or over, but under	£1,820 .. ..	294	5	0	258	10	0	222	15	0	189	0	0
	£1,820 .. ..	295	5	0	259	10	0	223	15	0	190	0	0
	£1,821 .. ..	296	5	0	260	10	0	224	15	0	191	0	0
£1,822 or over, but under	£1,830 .. ..	297	5	0	261	3	4	225	1	8	191	0	0
	£1,830 .. ..	298	5	0	262	3	4	226	1	8	192	0	0
	£1,831 .. ..	299	5	0	263	3	4	227	1	8	193	0	0
£1,832 or over, but under	£1,840 .. ..	300	5	0	263	16	8	227	8	4	193	0	0
	£1,840 .. ..	301	5	0	264	16	8	228	8	4	194	0	0
	£1,841 .. ..	302	5	0	265	16	8	229	8	4	195	0	0
£1,842 or over, but under	£1,850 .. ..	303	5	0	266	10	0	229	15	0	195	0	0
	£1,850 .. ..	304	5	0	267	10	0	230	15	0	196	0	0
	£1,851 .. ..	305	5	0	268	10	0	231	15	0	197	0	0
£1,852 or over, but under	£1,860 .. ..	306	5	0	269	3	4	232	1	8	197	0	0
	£1,860 .. ..	307	5	0	270	3	4	233	1	8	198	0	0
	£1,861 .. ..	308	5	0	271	3	4	234	1	8	199	0	0
£1,862 or over, but under	£1,870 .. ..	309	5	0	271	16	8	234	8	4	199	0	0
	£1,870 .. ..	310	5	0	272	16	8	235	8	4	200	0	0
	£1,871 .. ..	311	5	0	273	16	8	236	8	4	201	0	0
£1,872 or over, but under	£1,880 .. ..	312	5	0	274	10	0	236	15	0	201	0	0
	£1,880 .. ..	313	5	0	275	10	0	237	15	0	202	0	0
	£1,881 .. ..	314	5	0	276	10	0	238	15	0	203	0	0
£1,882 or over, but under	£1,890 .. ..	315	5	0	277	3	4	239	1	8	203	0	0
	£1,890 .. ..	316	5	0	278	3	4	240	1	8	204	0	0
	£1,891 .. ..	317	5	0	279	3	4	241	1	8	205	0	0
£1,892 or over, but under	£1,900 .. ..	318	5	0	279	16	8	241	8	4	205	0	0
	£1,900 .. ..	319	5	0	280	16	8	242	8	4	206	0	0
	£1,901 .. ..	320	5	0	281	16	8	243	8	4	207	0	0
£1,902 or over, but under	£1,910 .. ..	321	5	0	282	10	0	243	15	0	207	0	0
	£1,910 .. ..	322	5	0	283	10	0	244	15	0	208	0	0
	£1,911 .. ..	323	5	0	284	10	0	245	15	0	209	0	0
£1,912 or over, but under	£1,920 .. ..	324	5	0	285	3	4	246	1	8	209	0	0
	£1,920 .. ..	325	5	0	286	3	4	247	1	8	210	0	0
	£1,921 .. ..	326	5	0	287	3	4	248	1	8	211	0	0
£1,922 or over, but under	£1,930 .. ..	327	5	0	287	16	8	248	8	4	211	0	0
	£1,930 .. ..	328	5	0	288	16	8	249	8	4	212	0	0
	£1,931 .. ..	329	5	0	289	16	8	250	8	4	213	0	0
£1,932 or over, but under	£1,940 .. ..	330	5	0	290	10	0	250	15	0	213	0	0
	£1,940 .. ..	331	5	0	291	10	0	251	15	0	214	0	0
	£1,941 .. ..	332	5	0	292	10	0	252	15	0	215	0	0
£1,942 or over, but under	£1,950 .. ..	333	5	0	293	3	4	253	1	8	215	0	0
	£1,950 .. ..	334	5	0	294	3	4	254	1	8	216	0	0
	£1,951 .. ..	335	5	0	295	3	4	255	1	8	217	0	0
£1,952 or over, but under	£1,960 .. ..	336	5	0	295	16	8	255	8	4	217	0	0
	£1,960 .. ..	337	5	0	296	16	8	256	8	4	218	0	0
	£1,961 .. ..	338	5	0	297	16	8	257	8	4	219	0	0
£1,962 or over, but under	£1,970 .. ..	339	5	0	298	10	0	257	15	0	219	0	0
	£1,970 .. ..	340	5	0	299	10	0	258	15	0	220	0	0
	£1,971 .. ..	341	5	0	300	10	0	259	15	0	221	0	0
£1,972 or over, but under	£1,980 .. ..	342	5	0	301	3	4	260	1	8	221	0	0
	£1,980 .. ..	343	5	0	302	3	4	261	1	8	222	0	0
	£1,981 .. ..	344	5	0	303	3	4	262	1	8	223	0	0
£1,982 or over, but under	£1,990 .. ..	345	5	0	303	16	8	262	8	4	223	0	0
	£1,990 .. ..	346	5	0	304	16	8	263	8	4	224	0	0
	£1,991 .. ..	347	5	0	305	16	8	264	8	4	225	0	0



THE FIRST SCHEDULE — continued

		AMOUNT OF TAX											
		Single Persons			Married Persons with no Children			Married Persons with not more than 2 Children			Married Persons with 3 or more Children		
		£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
£1,992 or over, but under	£2,000 .. ..	348	5	0	306	10	0	264	15	0	225	0	0
	£2,000 .. ..	349	5	0	307	10	0	265	15	0	226	0	0
	£2,001 .. ..	350	5	0	308	10	0	266	15	0	227	0	0
£2,002 or over, but under	£2,010 .. ..	351	5	0	309	3	4	267	1	8	227	10	0
	£2,010 .. ..	352	5	0	310	3	4	268	1	8	228	10	0
	£2,011 .. ..	353	5	0	311	3	4	269	1	8	229	10	0
	£2,012 .. ..	354	5	0	312	3	4	270	0	0	230	0	0
£2,013 or over, but under	£2,020 .. ..	355	0	0	312	10	0	270	0	0	230	0	0
	£2,020 .. ..	356	0	0	313	10	0	271	0	0	231	0	0
	£2,021 .. ..	357	0	0	314	10	0	272	0	0	232	0	0
	£2,022 .. ..	358	0	0	315	10	0	272	18	4	232	10	0
£2,023 or over, but under	£2,030 .. ..	358	15	0	315	16	8	272	18	4	232	10	0
	£2,030 .. ..	359	15	0	316	16	8	273	18	4	233	10	0
	£2,031 .. ..	360	15	0	317	16	8	274	18	4	234	10	0
	£2,032 .. ..	361	15	0	318	16	8	275	16	8	235	0	0
£2,033 or over, but under	£2,040 .. ..	362	10	0	319	3	4	275	16	8	235	0	0
	£2,040 .. ..	363	10	0	320	3	4	276	16	8	236	0	0
	£2,041 .. ..	364	10	0	321	3	4	277	16	8	237	0	0
	£2,042 .. ..	365	10	0	322	3	4	278	15	0	237	10	0
£2,043 or over, but under	£2,050 .. ..	366	5	0	322	10	0	278	15	0	237	10	0
	£2,050 .. ..	367	5	0	323	10	0	279	15	0	238	10	0
	£2,051 .. ..	368	5	0	324	10	0	280	15	0	239	10	0
	£2,052 .. ..	369	5	0	325	10	0	281	13	4	240	0	0
£2,053 or over, but under	£2,060 .. ..	370	0	0	325	16	8	281	13	4	240	0	0
	£2,060 .. ..	371	0	0	326	16	8	282	13	4	241	0	0
	£2,061 .. ..	372	0	0	327	16	8	283	13	4	242	0	0
	£2,062 .. ..	373	0	0	328	16	8	284	11	8	242	10	0
£2,063 or over, but under	£2,070 .. ..	373	15	0	329	3	4	284	11	8	242	10	0
	£2,070 .. ..	374	15	0	330	3	4	285	11	8	243	10	0
	£2,071 .. ..	375	15	0	331	3	4	286	11	8	244	10	0
	£2,072 .. ..	376	15	0	332	3	4	287	10	0	245	0	0
£2,073 or over, but under	£2,080 .. ..	377	10	0	332	10	0	287	10	0	245	0	0
	£2,080 .. ..	378	10	0	333	10	0	288	10	0	246	0	0
	£2,081 .. ..	379	10	0	334	10	0	289	10	0	247	0	0
	£2,082 .. ..	380	10	0	335	10	0	290	8	4	247	10	0
£2,083 or over, but under	£2,090 .. ..	381	5	0	335	16	8	290	8	4	247	10	0
	£2,090 .. ..	382	5	0	336	16	8	291	8	4	248	10	0
	£2,091 .. ..	383	5	0	337	16	8	292	8	4	249	10	0
	£2,092 .. ..	384	5	0	338	16	8	293	6	8	250	0	0
£2,093 or over, but under	£2,100 .. ..	385	0	0	339	3	4	293	6	8	250	0	0
	£2,100 .. ..	386	0	0	340	3	4	294	6	8	251	0	0
	£2,101 .. ..	387	0	0	341	3	4	295	6	8	252	0	0
	£2,102 .. ..	388	0	0	342	3	4	296	5	0	252	10	0
£2,103 or over, but under	£2,110 .. ..	388	15	0	342	10	0	296	5	0	252	10	0
	£2,110 .. ..	389	15	0	343	10	0	297	5	0	253	10	0
	£2,111 .. ..	390	15	0	344	10	0	298	5	0	254	10	0
	£2,112 .. ..	391	15	0	345	10	0	299	3	4	255	0	0
£2,113 or over, but under	£2,120 .. ..	392	10	0	345	16	8	299	3	4	255	0	0
	£2,120 .. ..	393	10	0	346	16	8	300	3	4	256	0	0
	£2,121 .. ..	394	10	0	347	16	8	301	3	4	257	0	0
	£2,122 .. ..	395	10	0	348	16	8	302	1	8	257	10	0
£2,123 or over, but under	£2,130 .. ..	396	5	0	349	3	4	302	1	8	257	10	0
	£2,130 .. ..	397	5	0	350	3	4	303	1	8	258	10	0
	£2,131 .. ..	398	5	0	351	3	4	304	1	8	259	10	0
	£2,132 .. ..	399	5	0	352	3	4	305	0	0	260	0	0
£2,133 or over, but under	£2,140 .. ..	400	0	0	352	10	0	305	0	0	260	0	0
	£2,140 .. ..	401	0	0	353	10	0	306	0	0	261	0	0
	£2,141 .. ..	402	0	0	354	10	0	307	0	0	262	0	0
	£2,142 .. ..	403	0	0	355	10	0	307	18	4	262	10	0



THE FIRST SCHEDULE — continued

		AMOUNT OF TAX											
		Single Persons			Married Persons with no Children			Married Persons with not more than 2 Children			Married Persons with 3 or more Children		
		£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
£2,143 or over, but under	£2,150 .. ..	403	15	0	355	16	8	307	18	4	262	10	0
	£2,150 .. ..	404	15	0	356	16	8	308	18	4	263	10	0
	£2,151 .. ..	405	15	0	357	16	8	309	18	4	264	10	0
	£2,152 .. ..	406	15	0	358	16	8	310	16	8	265	0	0
£2,153 or over, but under	£2,160 .. ..	407	10	0	359	3	4	310	16	8	265	0	0
	£2,160 .. ..	408	10	0	360	3	4	311	16	8	266	0	0
	£2,161 .. ..	409	10	0	361	3	4	312	16	8	267	0	0
	£2,162 .. ..	410	10	0	362	3	4	313	15	0	267	10	0
£2,163 or over, but under	£2,170 .. ..	411	5	0	362	10	0	313	15	0	267	10	0
	£2,170 .. ..	412	5	0	363	10	0	314	15	0	268	10	0
	£2,171 .. ..	413	5	0	364	10	0	315	15	0	269	10	0
	£2,172 .. ..	414	5	0	365	10	0	316	13	4	270	0	0
£2,173 or over, but under	£2,180 .. ..	415	0	0	365	16	8	316	13	4	270	0	0
	£2,180 .. ..	416	0	0	366	16	8	317	13	4	271	0	0
	£2,181 .. ..	417	0	0	367	16	8	318	13	4	272	0	0
	£2,182 .. ..	418	0	0	368	16	8	319	11	8	272	10	0
£2,183 or over, but under	£2,190 .. ..	418	15	0	369	3	4	319	11	8	272	10	0
	£2,190 .. ..	419	15	0	370	3	4	320	11	8	273	10	0
	£2,191 .. ..	420	15	0	371	3	4	321	11	8	274	10	0
	£2,192 .. ..	421	15	0	372	3	4	322	10	0	275	0	0
£2,193 or over, but under	£2,200 .. ..	422	10	0	372	10	0	322	10	0	275	0	0
	£2,200 .. ..	423	10	0	373	10	0	323	10	0	276	0	0
	£2,201 .. ..	424	10	0	374	10	0	324	10	0	277	0	0
	£2,202 .. ..	425	10	0	375	10	0	325	8	4	277	10	0
£2,203 or over, but under	£2,210 .. ..	426	5	0	375	16	8	325	8	4	277	10	0
	£2,210 .. ..	427	5	0	376	16	8	326	8	4	278	10	0
	£2,211 .. ..	428	5	0	377	16	8	327	8	4	279	10	0
	£2,212 .. ..	429	5	0	378	16	8	328	6	8	280	0	0
£2,213 or over, but under	£2,220 .. ..	430	0	0	379	3	4	328	6	8	280	0	0
	£2,220 .. ..	431	0	0	380	3	4	329	6	8	281	0	0
	£2,221 .. ..	432	0	0	381	3	4	330	6	8	282	0	0
	£2,222 .. ..	433	0	0	382	3	4	331	5	0	282	10	0
£2,223 or over, but under	£2,230 .. ..	433	15	0	382	10	0	331	5	0	282	10	0
	£2,230 .. ..	434	15	0	383	10	0	332	5	0	283	10	0
	£2,231 .. ..	435	15	0	384	10	0	333	5	0	284	10	0
	£2,232 .. ..	436	15	0	385	10	0	334	3	4	285	0	0
£2,233 or over, but under	£2,240 .. ..	437	10	0	385	16	8	334	3	4	285	0	0
	£2,240 .. ..	438	10	0	386	16	8	335	3	4	286	0	0
	£2,241 .. ..	439	10	0	387	16	8	336	3	4	287	0	0
	£2,242 .. ..	440	10	0	388	16	8	337	1	8	287	10	0
£2,243 or over, but under	£2,250 .. ..	441	5	0	389	3	4	337	1	8	287	10	0
	£2,250 .. ..	442	5	0	390	3	4	338	1	8	288	10	0
	£2,251 .. ..	443	5	0	391	3	4	339	1	8	289	10	0
	£2,252 .. ..	444	5	0	392	3	4	340	0	0	290	0	0
£2,253 or over, but under	£2,260 .. ..	445	0	0	392	10	0	340	0	0	290	0	0
	£2,260 .. ..	446	0	0	393	10	0	341	0	0	291	0	0
	£2,261 .. ..	447	0	0	394	10	0	342	0	0	292	0	0
	£2,262 .. ..	448	0	0	395	10	0	342	18	4	292	10	0
£2,263 or over, but under	£2,270 .. ..	448	15	0	395	16	8	342	18	4	292	10	0
	£2,270 .. ..	449	15	0	396	16	8	343	18	4	293	10	0
	£2,271 .. ..	450	15	0	397	16	8	344	18	4	294	10	0
	£2,272 .. ..	451	15	0	398	16	8	345	16	8	295	0	0
£2,273 or over, but under	£2,280 .. ..	452	10	0	399	3	4	345	16	8	295	0	0
	£2,280 .. ..	453	10	0	400	3	4	346	16	8	296	0	0
	£2,281 .. ..	454	10	0	401	3	4	347	16	8	297	0	0
	£2,282 .. ..	455	10	0	402	3	4	348	15	0	297	10	0
£2,283 or over, but under	£2,290 .. ..	456	5	0	402	10	0	348	15	0	297	10	0
	£2,290 .. ..	457	5	0	403	10	0	349	15	0	298	10	0
	£2,291 .. ..	458	5	0	404	10	0	350	15	0	299	10	0
	£2,292 .. ..	459	5	0	405	10	0	351	13	4	300	0	0



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[Variations to Schedules

28 MARCH 1960

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THE FIRST SCHEDULE — continued

		AMOUNT OF TAX											
		Single Persons			Married Persons with no Children			Married Persons with not more than 2 Children			Married Persons with 3 or more Children		
		£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
£2,293 or over, but under	£2,300 .. ..	460	0	0	405	16	8	351	13	4	300	0	0
	£2,300 .. ..	461	0	0	406	16	8	352	13	4	301	0	0
	£2,301 .. ..	462	0	0	407	16	8	353	13	4	302	0	0
	£2,302 .. ..	463	0	0	408	16	8	354	11	8	302	10	0
£2,303 or over, but under	£2,310 .. ..	463	15	0	409	3	4	354	11	8	302	10	0
	£2,310 .. ..	464	15	0	410	3	4	355	11	8	303	10	0
	£2,311 .. ..	465	15	0	411	3	4	356	11	8	304	10	0
	£2,312 .. ..	466	15	0	412	3	4	357	10	0	305	0	0
£2,313 or over, but under	£2,320 .. ..	467	10	0	412	10	0	357	10	0	305	0	0
	£2,320 .. ..	468	10	0	413	10	0	358	10	0	306	0	0
	£2,321 .. ..	469	10	0	414	10	0	359	10	0	307	0	0
	£2,322 .. ..	470	10	0	415	10	0	360	8	4	307	10	0
£2,323 or over, but under	£2,330 .. ..	471	5	0	415	16	8	360	8	4	307	10	0
	£2,330 .. ..	472	5	0	416	16	8	361	8	4	308	10	0
	£2,331 .. ..	473	5	0	417	16	8	362	8	4	309	10	0
	£2,332 .. ..	474	5	0	418	16	8	363	6	8	310	0	0
£2,333 or over, but under	£2,340 .. ..	475	0	0	419	3	4	363	6	8	310	0	0
	£2,340 .. ..	476	0	0	420	3	4	364	6	8	311	0	0
	£2,341 .. ..	477	0	0	421	3	4	365	6	8	312	0	0
	£2,342 .. ..	478	0	0	422	3	4	366	5	0	312	10	0
£2,343 or over, but under	£2,350 .. ..	478	15	0	422	10	0	366	5	0	312	10	0
	£2,350 .. ..	479	15	0	423	10	0	367	5	0	313	10	0
	£2,351 .. ..	480	15	0	424	10	0	368	5	0	314	10	0
	£2,352 .. ..	481	15	0	425	10	0	369	3	4	315	0	0
£2,353 or over, but under	£2,360 .. ..	482	10	0	425	16	8	369	3	4	315	0	0
	£2,360 .. ..	483	10	0	426	16	8	370	3	4	316	0	0
	£2,361 .. ..	484	10	0	427	16	8	371	3	4	317	0	0
	£2,362 .. ..	485	10	0	428	16	8	372	1	8	317	10	0
£2,363 or over, but under	£2,370 .. ..	486	5	0	429	3	4	372	1	8	317	10	0
	£2,370 .. ..	487	5	0	430	3	4	373	1	8	318	10	0
	£2,371 .. ..	488	5	0	431	3	4	374	1	8	319	10	0
	£2,372 .. ..	489	5	0	432	3	4	375	0	0	320	0	0
£2,373 or over, but under	£2,380 .. ..	490	0	0	432	10	0	375	0	0	320	0	0
	£2,380 .. ..	491	0	0	433	10	0	376	0	0	321	0	0
	£2,381 .. ..	492	0	0	434	10	0	377	0	0	322	0	0
	£2,382 .. ..	493	0	0	435	10	0	377	18	4	322	10	0
£2,383 or over, but under	£2,390 .. ..	493	15	0	435	16	8	377	18	4	322	10	0
	£2,390 .. ..	494	15	0	436	16	8	378	18	4	323	10	0
	£2,391 .. ..	495	15	0	437	16	8	379	18	4	324	10	0
	£2,392 .. ..	496	15	0	438	16	8	380	16	8	325	0	0
£2,393 or over, but under	£2,400 .. ..	497	10	0	439	3	4	380	16	8	325	0	0
	£2,400 .. ..	498	10	0	440	3	4	381	16	8	326	0	0
	£2,401 .. ..	499	10	0	441	3	4	382	16	8	327	0	0
	£2,402 .. ..	500	10	0	442	3	4	383	15	0	327	10	0
£2,403 or over, but under	£2,410 .. ..	501	15	0	442	10	0	383	15	0	327	10	0
	£2,410 .. ..	502	15	0	443	10	0	384	15	0	328	10	0
	£2,411 .. ..	503	15	0	444	10	0	385	15	0	329	10	0
	£2,412 .. ..	504	15	0	445	10	0	386	13	4	330	0	0
£2,413 or over, but under	£2,420 .. ..	505	0	0	445	16	8	387	13	4	330	0	0
	£2,420 .. ..	506	0	0	446	16	8	388	13	4	331	0	0
	£2,421 .. ..	507	0	0	447	16	8	389	13	4	332	0	0
	£2,422 .. ..	508	0	0	448	16	8	389	11	8	332	10	0
£2,423 or over, but under	£2,430 .. ..	508	15	0	449	3	4	389	11	8	332	10	0
	£2,430 .. ..	509	15	0	450	3	4	390	11	8	333	10	0
	£2,431 .. ..	510	15	0	451	3	4	391	11	8	334	10	0
	£2,432 .. ..	511	15	0	452	3	4	392	10	0	335	0	0
£2,433 or over, but under	£2,440 .. ..	512	10	0	452	10	0	392	10	0	335	0	0
	£2,440 .. ..	513	10	0	453	10	0	393	10	0	336	0	0
	£2,441 .. ..	514	10	0	454	10	0	394	10	0	337	0	0
	£2,442 .. ..	515	10	0	454	10	0	395	8	4	337	10	0



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[Variations to Schedules

28 MARCH 1960

to Finance Law, 1956]

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THE FIRST SCHEDULE — continued

		AMOUNT OF TAX												
		Single Persons			Married Persons with no Children			Married Persons with not more than 2 Children			Married Persons with 3 or more Children			
		£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	
£2,443 or over, but under	£2,450 .. ..	516	5	0	455	16	8	395	8	4	337	10	0	
	£2,450 .. ..	517	5	0	456	16	8	396	8	4	338	10	0	
	£2,451 .. ..	518	5	0	457	16	8	397	8	4	339	10	0	
£2,452 .. ..	£2,452 .. ..	519	5	0	458	16	8	398	6	8	340	0	0	
	£2,453 or over, but under	£2,460 .. ..	520	0	0	459	3	4	398	6	8	340	0	0
	£2,460 .. ..	521	0	0	460	3	4	399	6	8	341	0	0	
£2,461 .. ..	£2,461 .. ..	522	0	0	461	3	4	400	6	8	342	0	0	
	£2,462 .. ..	523	0	0	462	3	4	401	5	0	342	10	0	
	£2,463 or over, but under	£2,470 .. ..	523	15	0	462	10	0	401	5	0	342	10	0
£2,470 .. ..	£2,470 .. ..	524	15	0	463	10	0	402	5	0	343	10	0	
	£2,471 .. ..	525	15	0	464	10	0	403	5	0	344	10	0	
	£2,472 .. ..	526	15	0	465	10	0	404	3	4	345	0	0	
£2,473 or over, but under	£2,480 .. ..	527	10	0	465	16	8	404	3	4	345	0	0	
	£2,480 .. ..	528	10	0	466	16	8	405	3	4	346	0	0	
	£2,481 .. ..	529	10	0	467	16	8	406	3	4	347	0	0	
£2,482 .. ..	£2,482 .. ..	530	10	0	468	16	8	407	1	8	347	10	0	
	£2,483 or over, but under	£2,490 .. ..	531	5	0	469	3	4	407	1	8	347	10	0
	£2,490 .. ..	532	5	0	470	3	4	408	1	8	348	10	0	
£2,491 .. ..	£2,491 .. ..	533	5	0	471	3	4	409	1	8	349	10	0	
	£2,492 .. ..	534	5	0	472	3	4	410	0	0	350	0	0	
	£2,493 or over, but under	£2,500 .. ..	535	0	0	472	10	0	410	0	0	350	0	0
£2,500 .. ..	£2,500 .. ..	536	0	0	473	10	0	411	0	0	351	0	0	
	£2,501 .. ..	537	0	0	474	10	0	412	0	0	352	0	0	
	£2,502 .. ..	538	0	0	475	10	0	412	18	4	352	10	0	
£2,503 or over, but under	£2,510 .. ..	538	15	0	475	16	8	412	18	4	352	10	0	
	£2,510 .. ..	539	15	0	476	16	8	413	18	4	353	10	0	
	£2,511 .. ..	540	15	0	477	16	8	414	18	4	354	10	0	
£2,512 .. ..	£2,512 .. ..	541	15	0	478	16	8	415	16	8	355	0	0	
	£2,513 or over, but under	£2,520 .. ..	542	10	0	479	3	4	415	16	8	355	0	0
	£2,520 .. ..	543	10	0	480	3	4	416	16	8	356	0	0	
£2,521 .. ..	£2,521 .. ..	544	10	0	481	3	4	417	16	8	357	0	0	
	£2,522 .. ..	545	10	0	482	3	4	418	15	0	357	10	0	
	£2,523 or over, but under	£2,530 .. ..	546	5	0	482	10	0	418	15	0	357	10	0
£2,530 .. ..	£2,530 .. ..	547	5	0	483	10	0	419	15	0	358	10	0	
	£2,531 .. ..	548	5	0	484	10	0	420	15	0	359	10	0	
	£2,532 .. ..	549	5	0	485	10	0	421	13	4	360	0	0	
£2,533 or over, but under	£2,540 .. ..	550	0	0	485	16	8	421	13	4	360	0	0	
	£2,540 .. ..	551	0	0	486	16	8	422	13	4	361	0	0	
	£2,541 .. ..	552	0	0	487	16	8	423	13	4	362	0	0	
£2,542 .. ..	£2,542 .. ..	553	0	0	488	16	8	424	11	8	362	10	0	
	£2,543 or over, but under	£2,550 .. ..	553	15	0	489	3	4	424	11	8	362	10	0
	£2,550 .. ..	554	15	0	490	3	4	425	11	8	363	10	0	
£2,551 .. ..	£2,551 .. ..	555	15	0	491	3	4	426	11	8	364	10	0	
	£2,552 .. ..	556	15	0	492	3	4	427	10	0	365	0	0	
	£2,553 or over, but under	£2,560 .. ..	557	10	0	492	10	0	427	10	0	365	0	0
£2,560 .. ..	£2,560 .. ..	558	10	0	493	10	0	428	10	0	366	0	0	
	£2,561 .. ..	559	10	0	494	10	0	429	10	0	367	0	0	
	£2,562 .. ..	560	10	0	495	10	0	430	8	4	367	10	0	
£2,563 or over, but under	£2,570 .. ..	561	5	0	495	16	8	430	8	4	367	10	0	
	£2,570 .. ..	562	5	0	496	16	8	431	8	4	368	10	0	
	£2,571 .. ..	563	5	0	497	16	8	432	8	4	369	10	0	
£2,572 .. ..	£2,572 .. ..	564	5	0	498	16	8	433	6	8	370	0	0	
	£2,573 or over, but under	£2,580 .. ..	565	0	0	499	3	4	433	6	8	370	0	0
	£2,580 .. ..	566	0	0	500	3	4	434	6	8	371	0	0	
£2,581 .. ..	£2,581 .. ..	567	0	0	501	3	4	435	6	8	372	0	0	
	£2,582 .. ..	568	0	0	502	3	4	436	5	0	372	10	0	
	£2,583 or over, but under	£2,590 .. ..	568	15	0	502	10	0	436	5	0	372	10	0
£2,590 .. ..	£2,590 .. ..	569	15	0	503	10	0	437	5	0	373	10	0	
	£2,591 .. ..	570	15	0	504	10	0	438	5	0	374	10	0	
	£2,592 .. ..	571	15	0	505	10	0	439	3	4	375	0	0	



THE FIRST SCHEDULE — continued

AMOUNT OF TAX

		Single Persons			Married Persons with no Children			Married Persons with not more than 2 Children			Married Persons with 3 or more Children		
		£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
£2,593 or over, but under	£2,600 .. ..	572	10	0	505	16	8	439	3	4	375	0	0
	£2,600 .. ..	573	10	0	506	16	8	440	3	4	376	0	0
	£2,601 .. ..	574	10	0	507	16	8	441	3	4	377	0	0
	£2,602 .. ..	575	10	0	508	16	8	442	1	8	377	10	0
£2,603 or over, but under	£2,610 .. ..	576	5	0	509	3	4	442	1	8	377	10	0
	£2,610 .. ..	577	5	0	510	3	4	443	1	8	378	10	0
	£2,611 .. ..	578	5	0	511	3	4	444	1	8	379	10	0
	£2,612 .. ..	579	5	0	512	3	4	445	0	0	380	0	0
£2,613 or over, but under	£2,620 .. ..	580	0	0	512	10	0	445	0	0	380	0	0
	£2,620 .. ..	581	0	0	513	10	0	446	0	0	381	0	0
	£2,621 .. ..	582	0	0	514	10	0	447	0	0	382	0	0
	£2,622 .. ..	583	0	0	515	10	0	447	18	4	382	10	0
£2,623 or over, but under	£2,630 .. ..	583	15	0	515	16	8	447	18	4	382	10	0
	£2,630 .. ..	584	15	0	516	16	8	448	18	4	383	10	0
	£2,631 .. ..	585	15	0	517	16	8	449	18	4	384	10	0
	£2,632 .. ..	586	15	0	518	16	8	450	16	8	385	0	0
£2,633 or over, but under	£2,640 .. ..	587	10	0	519	3	4	450	16	8	385	0	0
	£2,640 .. ..	588	10	0	520	3	4	451	16	8	386	0	0
	£2,641 .. ..	589	10	0	521	3	4	452	16	8	387	0	0
	£2,642 .. ..	590	10	0	522	3	4	453	15	0	387	10	0
£2,643 or over, but under	£2,650 .. ..	591	5	0	522	10	0	453	15	0	387	10	0
	£2,650 .. ..	592	5	0	523	10	0	454	15	0	388	10	0
	£2,651 .. ..	593	5	0	524	10	0	455	15	0	389	10	0
	£2,652 .. ..	594	5	0	525	10	0	456	13	4	390	0	0
£2,653 or over, but under	£2,660 .. ..	595	0	0	525	16	8	456	13	4	390	0	0
	£2,660 .. ..	596	0	0	526	16	8	457	13	4	391	0	0
	£2,661 .. ..	597	0	0	527	16	8	458	13	4	392	0	0
	£2,662 .. ..	598	0	0	528	16	8	459	11	8	392	10	0
£2,663 or over, but under	£2,670 .. ..	598	15	0	529	3	4	459	11	8	392	10	0
	£2,670 .. ..	599	15	0	530	3	4	460	11	8	393	10	0
	£2,671 .. ..	600	15	0	531	3	4	461	11	8	394	10	0
	£2,672 .. ..	601	15	0	532	3	4	462	10	0	395	0	0
£2,673 or over, but under	£2,680 .. ..	602	10	0	532	10	0	462	10	0	395	0	0
	£2,680 .. ..	603	10	0	533	10	0	463	10	0	396	0	0
	£2,681 .. ..	604	10	0	534	10	0	464	10	0	397	0	0
	£2,682 .. ..	605	10	0	535	10	0	465	8	4	397	10	0
£2,683 or over, but under	£2,690 .. ..	606	5	0	535	16	8	465	8	4	397	10	0
	£2,690 .. ..	607	5	0	536	16	8	466	8	4	398	10	0
	£2,691 .. ..	608	5	0	537	16	8	467	8	4	399	10	0
	£2,692 .. ..	609	5	0	538	16	8	468	6	8	400	0	0
£2,693 or over, but under	£2,700 .. ..	610	0	0	539	3	4	468	6	8	400	0	0
	£2,700 .. ..	611	0	0	540	3	4	469	6	8	401	0	0
	£2,701 .. ..	612	0	0	541	3	4	470	6	8	402	0	0
	£2,702 .. ..	613	0	0	542	3	4	471	5	0	402	10	0
£2,703 or over, but under	£2,710 .. ..	613	15	0	542	10	0	471	5	0	402	10	0
	£2,710 .. ..	614	15	0	543	10	0	472	5	0	403	10	0
	£2,711 .. ..	615	15	0	544	10	0	473	5	0	404	10	0
	£2,712 .. ..	616	15	0	545	10	0	474	3	4	405	0	0
£2,713 or over, but under	£2,720 .. ..	617	10	0	545	16	8	474	3	4	405	0	0
	£2,720 .. ..	618	10	0	546	16	8	475	3	4	406	0	0
	£2,721 .. ..	619	10	0	547	16	8	476	3	4	407	0	0
	£2,722 .. ..	620	10	0	548	16	8	477	1	8	407	10	0
£2,723 or over, but under	£2,730 .. ..	621	5	0	549	3	4	477	1	8	407	10	0
	£2,730 .. ..	622	5	0	550	3	4	478	1	8	408	10	0
	£2,731 .. ..	623	5	0	551	3	4	479	1	8	409	10	0
	£2,732 .. ..	624	5	0	552	3	4	480	0	0	410	0	0
£2,733 or over, but under	£2,740 .. ..	625	0	0	552	10	0	480	0	0	410	0	0
	£2,740 .. ..	626	0	0	553	10	0	481	0	0	411	0	0
	£2,741 .. ..	627	0	0	554	10	0	482	0	0	412	0	0
	£2,742 .. ..	628	0	0	555	10	0	482	18	4	412	10	0



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[Variations to Schedules

28 MARCH 1960

to Finance Law, 1956]

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THE FIRST SCHEDULE — continued

		AMOUNT OF TAX											
		Single Persons			Married Persons with no Children			Married Persons with not more than 2 Children			Married Persons with 3 or more Children		
		£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
£2,743 or over, but under	£2,750 .. ..	628	15	0	555	16	8	482	18	4	412	10	0
	£2,750 .. ..	629	15	0	556	16	8	483	18	4	413	10	0
	£2,751 .. ..	630	15	0	557	16	8	484	18	4	414	10	0
	£2,752 .. ..	631	15	0	558	16	8	485	16	8	415	0	0
£2,753 or over, but under	£2,760 .. ..	632	10	0	559	3	4	485	16	8	415	0	0
	£2,760 .. ..	633	10	0	560	3	4	486	16	8	416	0	0
	£2,761 .. ..	634	10	0	561	3	4	487	16	8	417	0	0
	£2,762 .. ..	635	10	0	562	3	4	488	15	0	417	10	0
£2,763 or over, but under	£2,770 .. ..	636	5	0	562	10	0	488	15	0	417	10	0
	£2,770 .. ..	637	5	0	563	10	0	489	15	0	418	10	0
	£2,771 .. ..	638	5	0	564	10	0	490	15	0	419	10	0
	£2,772 .. ..	639	5	0	565	10	0	491	13	4	420	0	0
£2,773 or over, but under	£2,780 .. ..	640	0	0	565	16	8	491	13	4	420	0	0
	£2,780 .. ..	641	0	0	566	16	8	492	13	4	421	0	0
	£2,781 .. ..	642	0	0	567	16	8	493	13	4	422	0	0
	£2,782 .. ..	643	0	0	568	16	8	494	11	8	422	10	0
£2,783 or over, but under	£2,790 .. ..	643	15	0	569	3	4	494	11	8	422	10	0
	£2,790 .. ..	644	15	0	570	3	4	495	11	8	423	10	0
	£2,791 .. ..	645	15	0	571	3	4	496	11	8	424	10	0
	£2,792 .. ..	646	15	0	572	3	4	497	10	0	425	0	0
£2,793 or over, but under	£2,800 .. ..	647	10	0	572	10	0	497	10	0	425	0	0
	£2,800 .. ..	648	10	0	573	10	0	498	10	0	426	0	0
	£2,801 .. ..	649	10	0	574	10	0	499	10	0	427	0	0
	£2,802 .. ..	650	10	0	575	10	0	500	8	4	427	10	0
£2,803 or over, but under	£2,810 .. ..	651	5	0	575	16	8	500	8	4	427	10	0
	£2,810 .. ..	652	5	0	576	16	8	501	8	4	428	10	0
	£2,811 .. ..	653	5	0	577	16	8	502	8	4	429	10	0
	£2,812 .. ..	654	5	0	578	16	8	503	6	8	430	0	0
£2,813 or over, but under	£2,820 .. ..	655	0	0	579	3	4	503	6	8	430	0	0
	£2,820 .. ..	656	0	0	580	3	4	504	6	8	431	0	0
	£2,821 .. ..	657	0	0	581	3	4	505	6	8	432	0	0
	£2,822 .. ..	658	0	0	582	3	4	506	5	0	432	10	0
£2,823 or over, but under	£2,830 .. ..	658	15	0	582	10	0	506	5	0	432	10	0
	£2,830 .. ..	659	15	0	583	10	0	507	5	0	433	10	0
	£2,831 .. ..	660	15	0	584	10	0	508	5	0	434	10	0
	£2,832 .. ..	661	15	0	585	10	0	509	3	4	435	0	0
£2,833 or over, but under	£2,840 .. ..	662	10	0	585	16	8	509	3	4	435	0	0
	£2,840 .. ..	663	10	0	586	16	8	510	3	4	436	0	0
	£2,841 .. ..	664	10	0	587	16	8	511	3	4	437	0	0
	£2,842 .. ..	665	10	0	588	16	8	512	1	8	437	10	0
£2,843 or over, but under	£2,850 .. ..	666	5	0	589	3	4	512	1	8	437	10	0
	£2,850 .. ..	667	5	0	590	3	4	513	1	8	438	10	0
	£2,851 .. ..	668	5	0	591	3	4	514	1	8	439	10	0
	£2,852 .. ..	669	5	0	592	3	4	515	0	0	440	0	0
£2,853 or over, but under	£2,860 .. ..	670	0	0	592	10	0	515	0	0	440	0	0
	£2,860 .. ..	671	0	0	593	10	0	516	0	0	441	0	0
	£2,861 .. ..	672	0	0	594	10	0	517	0	0	442	0	0
	£2,862 .. ..	673	0	0	595	10	0	517	18	4	442	10	0
£2,863 or over, but under	£2,870 .. ..	673	15	0	595	16	8	517	18	4	442	10	0
	£2,870 .. ..	674	15	0	596	16	8	518	18	4	443	10	0
	£2,871 .. ..	675	15	0	597	16	8	519	18	4	444	10	0
	£2,872 .. ..	676	15	0	598	16	8	520	16	8	445	0	0
£2,873 or over, but under	£2,880 .. ..	677	10	0	599	3	4	520	16	8	445	0	0
	£2,880 .. ..	678	10	0	600	3	4	521	16	8	446	0	0
	£2,881 .. ..	679	10	0	601	3	4	522	16	8	447	0	0
	£2,882 .. ..	680	10	0	602	3	4	523	15	0	447	10	0
£2,883 or over, but under	£2,890 .. ..	681	5	0	602	10	0	523	15	0	447	10	0
	£2,890 .. ..	682	5	0	603	10	0	524	15	0	448	10	0
	£2,891 .. ..	683	5	0	604	10	0	525	15	0	449	10	0
	£2,892 .. ..	684	5	0	605	10	0	526	13	4	450	0	0



THE FIRST SCHEDULE — continued

		AMOUNT OF TAX											
		Single Persons			Married Persons with no Children			Married Persons with not more than 2 Children			Married Persons with 3 or more Children		
		£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
£2,893 or over, but under	£2,900 .. ..	685	0	0	605	16	8	526	13	4	450	0	0
	£2,900 .. ..	686	0	0	606	16	8	527	13	4	451	0	0
	£2,901 .. ..	687	0	0	607	16	8	528	13	4	452	0	0
	£2,902 .. ..	688	0	0	608	16	8	529	11	8	452	10	0
£2,903 or over, but under	£2,910 .. ..	688	15	0	609	3	4	529	11	8	452	10	0
	£2,910 .. ..	689	15	0	610	3	4	530	11	8	453	10	0
	£2,911 .. ..	690	15	0	611	3	4	531	11	8	454	10	0
	£2,912 .. ..	691	15	0	612	3	4	532	10	0	455	0	0
£2,913 or over, but under	£2,920 .. ..	692	10	0	612	10	0	532	10	0	455	0	0
	£2,920 .. ..	693	10	0	613	10	0	533	10	0	456	0	0
	£2,921 .. ..	694	10	0	614	10	0	534	10	0	457	0	0
	£2,922 .. ..	695	10	0	615	10	0	535	8	4	457	10	0
£2,923 or over, but under	£2,930 .. ..	696	5	0	615	16	8	535	8	4	457	10	0
	£2,930 .. ..	697	5	0	616	16	8	536	8	4	458	10	0
	£2,931 .. ..	698	5	0	617	16	8	537	8	4	459	10	0
	£2,932 .. ..	699	5	0	618	16	8	538	6	8	460	0	0
£2,933 or over, but under	£2,940 .. ..	700	0	0	619	3	4	538	6	8	460	0	0
	£2,940 .. ..	701	0	0	620	3	4	539	6	8	461	0	0
	£2,941 .. ..	702	0	0	621	3	4	540	6	8	462	0	0
	£2,942 .. ..	703	0	0	622	3	4	541	5	0	462	10	0
£2,943 or over, but under	£2,950 .. ..	703	15	0	622	10	0	541	5	0	462	10	0
	£2,950 .. ..	704	15	0	623	10	0	542	5	0	463	10	0
	£2,951 .. ..	705	15	0	624	10	0	543	5	0	464	10	0
	£2,952 .. ..	706	15	0	625	10	0	544	3	4	465	0	0
£2,953 or over, but under	£2,960 .. ..	707	10	0	625	16	8	544	3	4	465	0	0
	£2,960 .. ..	708	10	0	626	16	8	545	3	4	466	0	0
	£2,961 .. ..	709	10	0	627	16	8	546	3	4	467	0	0
	£2,962 .. ..	710	10	0	628	16	8	547	1	8	467	10	0
£2,963 or over, but under	£2,970 .. ..	711	5	0	629	3	4	547	1	8	467	10	0
	£2,970 .. ..	712	5	0	630	3	4	548	1	8	468	10	0
	£2,971 .. ..	713	5	0	631	3	4	549	1	8	469	10	0
	£2,972 .. ..	714	5	0	632	3	4	550	0	0	470	0	0
£2,973 or over, but under	£2,980 .. ..	715	0	0	632	10	0	550	0	0	470	0	0
	£2,980 .. ..	716	0	0	633	10	0	551	0	0	471	0	0
	£2,981 .. ..	717	0	0	634	10	0	552	0	0	472	0	0
	£2,982 .. ..	718	0	0	635	10	0	552	18	4	472	10	0
£2,983 or over, but under	£2,990 .. ..	718	15	0	635	16	8	552	18	4	472	10	0
	£2,990 .. ..	719	15	0	636	16	8	553	18	4	473	10	0
	£2,991 .. ..	720	15	0	637	16	8	554	18	4	474	10	0
	£2,992 .. ..	721	15	0	638	16	8	555	16	8	475	0	0
£2,993 or over, but under	£3,000 .. ..	722	10	0	639	3	4	555	16	8	475	0	0
	£3,000 .. ..	723	10	0	640	3	4	556	16	8	476	0	0
PART IV													
£3,001 or over, but under	£10,000												
(a) On £3,000 .. ..	.. ..	723	10	0	640	3	4	556	16	8	476	0	0
(b) On each Pound of Income exceed-	ing £3,000 .. ..	0	9	0	0	8	0	0	7	0	0	6	0
£10,000 or over													
(a) On £3,000 .. ..	.. ..	723	10	0	640	3	4	556	16	8	476	0	0
(b) On each Pound of the next £7,000	of Income .. ..	0	9	0	0	8	0	0	7	0	0	6	0
(c) On each Pound of Income exceed-	ing £10,000 .. ..	0	11	3	0	10	0	0	8	9	0	7	6

With your permission, I do not intend to read out the figures in the voluminous Schedule which has been handed to all hon. Members of this Committee in a printed form.

There are various reasons for amending the Schedule: the first is to ensure that where there is an increase in income of only one pound the resultant increase in tax should not



[DR IMOKE]

be more than one pound. For example, under the present tax schedule a single person's tax on £809 is £61 5s; if his income increases by one pound to £810 his tax increases by £1 15s to £63.

This is not reasonable.

Secondly, the existing Schedule is based, *inter alia*, upon the assumption that it costs twice as much to maintain three or more children as it does to maintain one or two. In fact it is probable, if not certain, that there would be a slight proportionate reduction. On this basis, in the case of incomes of £100 and above, slight increases in the tax payable by married persons with three or more children have been proposed.

Thirdly, Government has decided that there must be some minor modification in our fiscal measures. Income tax is the main source of Regional revenue and is, apart from Sales and Purchase Taxes, the only means we have of imparting some degree of flexibility to our fiscal policy. In order to balance our Budget and provide some surplus I am proposing to modify the rates of tax in accordance with the Schedule now before hon. Members.

The change in tax at various levels of income is not easy to describe but the most important feature of my proposal is that I am modifying the tax on incomes below £100 by substituting for the differential rates charged in accordance with the domestic circumstances of the taxpayer a flat rate which will be the same whether or not a man is married and whether or not he has children. On incomes below £60 the rate of tax will be £1 7s 6d which represents an increase of 5s in the case of a married man with three or more children but a decrease of 2s 6d in the case of single man. On incomes between £60 and £100 the flat rate will vary from £1 10s in the £60 to £70 range to £2 5s in the £90 to £100 range. An important feature of the new tax rates on incomes below £100 is that the tax on the income of unmarried persons will now be reduced. This is in keeping with public opinion in this Region which considers that the married man is generally better off financially than the single and that the application of differential rates according to domestic circumstances in these lower income groups is contrary to our social structure. It is also subject to abuse. In any case, the reliefs which were fixed quite arbitrarily at rates ranging from

2s 6d to 7s 6d are so negligible that Government has decided to abolish them. This should not cause any real hardship. It will be noted that the only groups adversely affected are the married persons with not more than two children who have to pay only 2s 6d more and the married persons with three or more children who have to pay 5s more.

Hon. Members will have heard over the wireless quite recently that the Western Region has proposed a flat rate of tax in the lower income group of £1 17s 6d as against the proposal of £1 7s 6d for this Region. This means in effect that in the lower income groups, the burden of taxation in the Western Region is higher than it is in this Region. I think that hon. Members will agree that the proposed new Schedule represents a step forward towards the levelling up of tax rates and a fair distribution of tax burden on incomes.

On incomes above £100 the increases in tax will follow much the same progression as heretofore, but for these higher incomes the married man and the man with children will be accorded the usual reliefs. Hon. Members will be interested to learn that there are over one million tax-payers whose incomes do not exceed £100 but there are scarcely 100,000 who earn more than that.

The additional yield of these income tax proposals is estimated at £118,000.

I therefore hope that the Committee will wholeheartedly endorse the Schedule.

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

**Mr S. G. Ikoku (Enyong Division):** We are again faced with this high speed manoeuvre of the House to get us to pass the new Schedule. When the hon. Minister of Finance was introducing the Budget I knew at once that we would be called upon to carry more tax burden in the ensuing financial year and even though he has tried his best to keep the Schedule until the last moment we knew when he was speaking that the inevitable had happened. Nobody likes to pay a tax increase, but you can gather from the way some hon. Members of the House were beginning to react that they were expressing the natural aversion of citizens to pay tax. Unfortunately, the Minister of Finance missed a golden opportunity. What he should have told us is that increased services demand



increased sacrifice on the part of the citizens. Instead of that he amused himself with the talk of the Western Region. I would like to warn this Government that it should not try to hide its head by picking up unnecessary dusts in order to escape. The truth is that in the Western Region the new tax rate of £1 17 6d includes rates. (*Government Bench: No*). The hon. Minister of Commerce has been loudest in shouting "No". I wish he would stake his reputation that if it is true that the £1 17s 6d in the Western Region includes rates that he will resign his appointment. Does he accept that challenge?

**The Minister of Commerce (Mr J. U. Nwodo):** I would like the Leader of the Opposition to give the House the same guarantee that if the £1 17s 6d does not include rates he will also resign.

**The Chairman:** I am sure this House is not a barking House.

**Mr Ikoku:** Thank you. That is why we like you in this House because you have the genius of getting some of our officials out of difficulties. Let us get down to something serious.

The new rates suggest a general increase in taxation but the Government cleverly has introduced elements of reduction. I want this hon. House to get hold of that point. We have in this Schedule both increase and decrease. I am sure I know what Government is aiming at. They will quote the figures in column 2 and say that they have reduced taxes but I will draw your attention to figures in column 5 and that is where you see the trouble. For a person who earns under £60 there is an increase of 5s in taxation, that is a married man with three or more children. For the single man, i.e., an unmarried man, and I suppose it means an unmarried man without children, there is a reduction of 2s 6d. For income between £60 but under £70 a married man with three or more children is to pay 3s 9d more than was the case. The single man is to pay 7s 6d less. A married man with three or more children pays an increase of 5s. The single man pays 10s less. Between £80 and £90 a single man pays an increase of 6s 3d and between £90 and £100 a married man with three children pays an

increase of 7s 6d. The point I am making here is that whereas in column 2 where you have a single man there is a certain reduction but in column 5 where you have a married man with three or more children you have increases. For a single person between £0 and £100 who is married with three or more children there is an exemption from tax or he is to pay the same amount as he paid last year.

Every single person has to pay an increase and the Government has done that deliberately because they know that the bulk of the tax-payers within this income group—zero to a £100 belong to that category; those who are married with three or more children. These unmarried people are very few; they are an insignificant number and it is the good old trick of providing reductions for almost non-existent people.

Tomorrow, you will hear my hon. Friend, the Minister of Information, telling the Region that there have been considerable reduction in tax and he will confine himself to column 2. Then on column 5, he will be discretely silent. The hon. Minister of Finance has told us that about one million tax-payers in this country fall within the category, zero income to £100 per annum and there are only a few thousand tax-payers we have beyond that income group. In other words, a very large proportion of the tax-payers of the Region fall within this income group and therefore, the proposed changes mean an increase in taxation for the bulk of the tax-payers. There is no getting away from that and it means in effect that we are calling upon this man, whom the politician calls the common man, to pay more tax. If there are some Members who still doubt what I am trying to say and who want to preach the tax reduction which they see in column 2, I would remind them of one more figure from the hon. Minister of Finance. He says that I said, total receipt as a result of these changes in tax will bring something like £118,000 into the coffers of the Regional Government. I think Members who were in doubt as to whether there will be tax increase or tax reduction would be satisfied that we cannot have an increase in revenue from taxation of £118,000 where in effect there has been a reduction in taxation. They should think about that. An annoying aspect of these new rates is that whereas the bulk of tax-payers in



[MR IKOKU]

the lower income group are being called upon to pay something extra, some of us who are well placed are being called upon to pay a very small increase. For example, hon. Members on £800 by the old Schedule pay £35 tax and that is for a married man with three or more children; now he is called upon to pay £36 5s, an increase of £1 5s. I am submitting that an increase of £1 5s on an income of £800 is a lighter weight to carry than an increase of 7s 6d on an income of under £100. It is true that we are calling upon this man who earns less than £100 to pay an increase of 7s 6d and for people in our own income group to pay £1 5s. It is easy to argue that the hon. Member is paying more but the relative weight is heavier on the lower income man than on us. That is an aspect of these figures which I just do not like because to be true to my conscience, I can argue that the increases in social services have to be met by some form of increased sacrifice on the part of the citizen. We can all argue that but when the relative load becomes heavier on the lower income group, I think we have reached a place where we have to part company on this matter. In other words, I am not challenging the Government's right and I want to take this opportunity to make it clear that we cannot go on having increase in social services without finding the money somewhere. As far as that point goes, we are one with the Government. We must find some extra money and the possible way for the Minister of Finance is to call upon everybody to make a little bit more contribution to the common pool. But I think that the contribution should bear in mind the relative weight on the various income groups. I do not think that £1 5s increase in income tax for Members or citizens on £800 per annum is as heavy as an increase of 7s 6d for those who are on £100 income. Somebody has asked me now about the Ministers—a Friend of mine here. You will notice that it is even worse when it comes to the Ministers. The Ministers are going to pay only an increase of £1. They want to impress the general public that they are paying very heavy tax but, we are not talking about the volume of taxation; we are talking about increases. Hon. Members are being called upon to contribute £1 5s; the Ministers are being called upon to contribute only £1. It will be very difficult for the hon. Minister of Finance to effect any changes in the present Schedule just presented to the

House because I know that a good deal of work must have gone into preparing these figures. But I would suggest that the hon. Minister of Finance should give a second thought to this problem. From what I can see, he wants an extra £118,000 from tax-payers in the Region. That is his problem and so he is going round trying to add 5s to some places, 7s 6d in others and £1 5s in others but, I think that if he tries to get this amount of £118,000 largely from income groups above £100 per annum, he will be doing this Region a tremendous good and he will be setting a pattern for other Regions to follow. The Minister of Finance should bear in mind that these people who are being called upon (these people between zero and £100 income group) to pay this tax increase have in no way benefited from the recent Mbanefo Salary Award.

Cost of living has risen. The Trade Unions have raised a hue and cry; the political parties have tried to play up to the workers, and we have agreed to have increases for all our workers. But is it not a fact that the vast majority of those between zero and £100 income group in this Region have not had any help whatsoever from the State as regards salary increases? (*Government Bench: What of the Universal Primary Education, roads and water supply?*). It is a pity that we are being reminded of Universal Primary Education, roads and water supply, but I would like to know whether the sons of hon. Members, the sons of civil servants, do not take part in this your Universal Primary Education? Do not the Ministers ride their cars on the roads they tar? In fact, how many of these village dwellers use these roads? They talk of water supply. Do not they consume pipe-borne water? All these social services are provided for the whole community, including these village folks and the town dwellers. We cannot argue that the social services which are provided are their own share of the national cake. In addition, we share by way of the Mbanefo Awards. So, I would like us to give a serious thought to this problem. Once there is demand for salary increase, we think in terms of the civil servants but immediately we are faced with a sacrifice we share the load on everybody, including the village dwellers. Our technique has been to keep on milking these village folks. We raise the tax but we do not raise the price of the produce. The



worker is having a higher return for his labour. What about the village folk? He is not getting any return.

I repeat what I said earlier that it may not be possible for the Minister of Finance to make any changes to the Schedule now presented to us because a good deal of work has gone in preparing it, but I would like the Government to give a serious thought to this problem and see whether we cannot actually raise this £118,000 which the Minister of Finance wants without imposing an extra burden on the income group below £100 level. With the will on the part of the Minister of Finance, and the determination on the part of Government, it can be done. The trouble is that we seem to be more afraid of the higher income groups in this Region than we are of these lower income groups. We must not forget that it is the lower income groups who constitute the bed-rock in this Region.

**Mr M. N. Onwuma** (Aba Division): Being a representative of the people in the rural areas, I would like to say that I associate myself with the opinion which has been expressed by the Leader of the Opposition that tax should not be increased for people in the rural areas earning less than £60 per annum. As a matter of fact there is justifiable reason for increased tax for civil servants and those other people who are employed and whose incomes are defined but not for peasants for is it not true that the prices of produce—palm kernel and palm oil—have not increased in the last three or four years? If these be increased then I shall be very happy to tell the people at home that taxes have been increased, because of increased prices. I shall also be extremely happy to explain and to justify why that is necessary. You will realise that the people at home produce and take to the market yams, palm oil, palm kernel and various other rural products which have not in any way received any encouragement on the part of Government either directly or indirectly in the way of price increases. A tin of palm oil in the past used to cost one pound, but now it has gone down to 12s or 12 6d. (*Interruptions*). I would like certain Parliamentary Secretaries to listen. After all if the revenue of this Region is increased I will certainly get my own greater share of it, and I want the revenue to be increased in such a way as not to impose a great burden on the lower income groups. After all the

people whose income lies anywhere less than £60 per annum are by far greater in our community, and because of that if we are going to make any increases it would be reasonable to find out whether it will be very heavy or not heavy on these people, before tax can be imposed or decreased.

My primary argument is that if the increase is to be justified, surely, I think it is within the competence of the Government to compel the Marketing Board to increase by at least one shilling or two shillings the price of a tin of palm oil. In doing so, you are making the people to feel that they are part and parcel of the society. Then you can reasonably point to one and say—look at this and that, this is what has been done for you, and therefore you are entitled to make a sort of contribution in the way of tax payment. Otherwise increased tax is not justifiable.

The frequency with which the tax Schedule is revised does not seem to me to be very satisfactory. It was revised last year; it was revised the year before, and this year again it is revised; and apparently I do not know how soon it will be revised again—perhaps at the end of this year or early next.

I do not know how I am going to defend the increase for the lower income groups. (*The Minister of Commerce —Do not defend us*). I am not defending you. I want to defend myself. It is not just defending the Ministers, it is really to defend myself to say that the tax which used to be £1 2s 6d has now increased to £1 7s 6d for the simple reason that the civil servants have received salary increases and wages, whereas in actual fact the bulk of the citizens have not taken part or benefited. So I am inclined to think that there is still enough room to revise this Schedule to enable people in rural areas pay only £1 2s 6d as last year.

Now, I am suggesting that they will still try to revise this Schedule or alternatively accept my suggestion that the Marketing Board should be compelled to increase the prices of our produce, especially palm kernel and palm oil. When I refer to palm kernel and palm oil I also refer to primary products in other areas including fish. (*An hon. Member: To increase the price of fish?*) Yes, they can do that. Supposing a certain kind of fish costs so much per pound, it could be decided that so many pounds of fish will cost so much. The hon.



[MR ONWUMA]

Member does not know. Supposing a bundle of firewood which weighs, say, two pounds avoirdupoise costs so much, it could be decided that a known weight of wood should not cost less than a fixed sum of money. (*Interruptions*). You see, they do not know weights and measures, that is why they are heckling like that. Do they not know that palm wine is sold in gallons? If a gallon of palm wine costs eight pence, the price could be increased to say 9s or 10s accordingly. (*Interruptions*).

**Chief Morphy:** Point of Order: Standing Order 32 (5). They would not allow the hon. Member to speak.

**The Chairman:** I do not think there is anything wrong in making the House a pleasant place.

**Mr Onwuma:** It is quite good to make the House pleasant at this time but it should not be at the expense of someone who is developing an argument.

Now, quite frankly, the increases in taxes fall more heavily on the bulk of the people in the rural areas; in the townships a number of people can escape; they can evade the tax collectors but in the rural areas they cannot do that. They are not in any way benefited and in order to justify this increase, even if it is a shilling, I am suggesting that the prices of the primary products in all the sections of this Region, especially those of palm kernel and palm oil, are now overdue for increase.

**The Minister of Finance:** May I begin by saying that I was a bit disappointed that the Leader of the Opposition has again found it necessary to play politics with our financial measures. He did agree with us that it is very essential that with increased services and development we should look for some more money, and I made the point quite clearly in my speech that the essence of my Budget is to make sure that there is restraint in expenditure and increased development and that everybody is being called upon to contribute so that our Independence will be a reality. He referred to tax paid by Ministers and went to the fifth column of the Schedule, leaving out the first, second and third. Even when he was pressed by Members who were heckling to read out the amount that Ministers pay in tax he refused to do that. Now I want to give you

the figures. I do not want just to read the figures for those in the galleries but I want to make a comparison to show that those in the higher income group in this Region had in the past and up to the moment been very severely burdened by taxation. For the income group of £60 per annum we are now suggesting a flat rate of £1 7s 6d and that works out roughly to one-fortieth of the tax-payer's income. For a Minister who earns £3,000 and is single, that is, having no wife and children, he is called upon to pay £726 5s. This is one-quarter of his income. One-quarter compared with one-fortieth!

**Mr Ikoku:** Point of Information: May we know from the Minister how many Ministers pay according to Column One?

**The Minister of Finance:** The point I want to stress is that while a Minister pays one-quarter of his income in taxes, those in the lower income group up to £60 per annum pay only one-fortieth.

The other point I should like to refer to is in respect of the Western Region. (*Interruptions*).

**The Chairman:** I think we must hear the Minister in silence.

**The Minister of Finance:** The Leader of the Opposition also mentioned that the £1 17s 6d paid in the Western Region includes rates. I had listened to the broadcast and also seen publications in the press and it was definitely stated there that special rates will be allowed by the Government after consideration by Government, and you can understand that quite clearly. When it comes to the implementation of this Tax Law in the Western Region I can assure you that almost all the Local Government Councils will levy rates. I also like to express the fact that in spite of the fact that the Mbanefo Commission Report did not consider the Voluntary Agencies teachers and Local Government employees, this Government has accepted to allow them 12½ per cent increase. (*Mr Ikoku: Other Governments pay 15 per cent*). Other Governments have done nothing yet. This refers particularly to my hon. Friend from Aba, Mr Onwuma who happens to be a teacher. He has an increase of 12½ per cent on his salary and he is having also £40 increase on his salary as a Member of this House. I just



wonder how he expects this Government to find the money.

before this House to show that those in the higher income group are going to be taxed further in some other form by purchase tax on petrol.

Finally, I shall be bringing another Schedule

*Question put. Committee divided.*

Ayes 45. Noes 7.

**Division No. 1**

*Ayes*

**12 noon**

Mr C. A. Abangwu  
Mr O. U. Affiah  
Mr D. S. A. Agim  
Mr D. E. Akilo  
Mr H. U. Akpabio  
Mr I. U. Akpabio  
Mr D. O. Aligwekwe  
Mr S. N. Alo  
Mr P. U. Amaefunah  
Mr R. O. Anoke  
Mr N. L. P. Apreala  
Mr E. Chidolue  
Mr E. A. Chime  
Mr E. Emole  
Mr J. E. Eyo  
Mr M. A. Idoko  
Dr S. E. Imoke  
Mr R. O. Iwuagwu  
Mr S. E. K. Iwueke  
Mr S. O. Masi  
Mr D. A. Nnaji  
Mr D. O. Nnamani

Mr N. Nweze  
Mr J. U. Nwodo  
Mr P. O. Nwoga  
Mr J. H. E. Nwuke  
Mr M. U. Obayi  
Dr A. N. Obonna  
Mr C. A. Okafor  
Mr G. E. Okeke  
Mr P. N. Okeke  
Mr G. C. Okeya  
Mr E. P. Okoya  
Dr M. I. Okpara  
Mr B. C. Okwu  
Dr W. N. Onubogu  
Mr P. A. Onwe  
Mr M. N. Onwuma  
Chief A. N. Onyiuke  
Mr R. O. Ukuta, M.B.E.  
Mr J. O. Umolu  
Mr P. O. Ururuka  
Mr L. O. Uzoigwe

*Tellers for the Ayes:*

Mr K. Kiri  
Mr K. J. N. Okpokam.

*Noes*

Mr S. T. Akpan  
Mr S. G. Ikoku  
Mr O. O. Ita

Chief I. I. Morphy  
Mr M. N. Yowika

*Tellers for the Noes:*

Mr A. J. Ekpe  
Mr S. O. Achara.

*Sitting suspended at 12.13 p.m.*

*Sitting resumed at 12.45 p.m.*

with, the following Schedule with effect from the first day of April, 1960":—

THE FOURTH SCHEDULE

THE FOURTH SCHEDULE

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):**  
I beg to move:—

"That this Committee resolve that the Fourth Schedule to the Finance Law, 1956, be replaced by, and varied in accordance

<i>Item</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Rate of Tax</i>
		s d
Petrol ...	Gallon ...	0 3
Auto Gas Oil	Gallon ...	0 4



[DR IMOKE]

Hon. Members will recall that until the Finance (Amendment) Law, 1959 (E.R. No. 9 of 1959) was enacted, the Finance Law contained a Schedule specifying purchase tax payable on petrol and auto gas oil. With effect from the 31st day of January, 1959, however, the Fourth Schedule to the principal Law was revoked consequent upon the agreement of this Government to allow the Federal Government to make corresponding increases in Import Duty on the same commodities.

It is within the competence of the Federal Government to so increase import duties. It is also within the competence of Regional Governments to impose a sales tax on petrol and auto gas oil; the term "sales tax" being for all practical purposes synonymous with "purchase tax".

Sections 52 and 58 of the Report of the Fiscal Commission published in July 1958 and adopted by the different Governments of the Federation at the Constitutional Conference stipulate that Regional Governments have jurisdiction to reimpose sales taxes on petrol and auto gas oil irrespective of any action taken by the Federal Government to increase import duty on these commodities.

My Friends of the Opposition may claim that the reimposition of these taxes is burdensome in so far as the Region is already deriving financial benefit from the yield of increased import duty on petrol and auto gas oil imposed by the Federal Government. On that score, I wish to say that when there was a purchase tax on petrol and auto gas oil in this Region the rates were:—

Petrol ... ..	6d per gallon.
Auto Gas Oil ... ..	4d per gallon.

It is now proposed that, having regard to the increased Federal duty on these articles, and also existing prices of petrol and diesel oil at Onitsha and Asaba, the new rates should be:—

Petrol ... ..	3d per gallon.
Auto Gas Oil ... ..	4d per gallon.

I expect that the yield of this duty during the coming year will amount to £203,000.

The Region is forging ahead with its Development Programme especially in the field of road construction and it is necessary that we should also increase our revenue in order to sustain these new achievements. I feel certain that no one who has the economic progress of this Region at heart will quarrel with the need for these fiscal measures which are the means whereby every Government ensures the continued progress of its Development Programme.

**The Minister of Education (Mr G. E. Okeke):** I beg to second.

**Mr Ikoku:** I am sure the Minister of Finance will like to hear that this is the type of tax increase with which I do agree. If increases in tax are necessary, then these indirect taxes are much better than the direct taxes on income.

To begin with, the public does not quite regard these as increases in taxation. It is much better to use this method in raising the extra money required than the method suggested in the First Schedule. The hon. Minister of Finance did anticipate us when he drew attention to what I might call the double imposition of tax on petrol and auto gas. The Federal Government has already imposed a rate of, I think, 6d on every gallon of petrol and 9d on every gallon of auto gas on behalf of the whole Federation. Now what we are called upon to do here is to impose, over and above what has already been done, that is, to impose 3d on a gallon of petrol and 4d on a gallon of auto gas in the Eastern Region, bringing the total now to 9d on a gallon of petrol and 1s 1d on a gallon of auto gas. I do not want Members to get frightened when we add the rates together because in some countries of the world, the tax on petrol is as high as 3s on a gallon, and car users must be prepared to make this sacrifice. A very important thing is that we cannot have all these social services without finding the money for them; that is the lesson which this hon. House should take home. We are not so irresponsible to the extent of saying: "give us more schools, give us more hospitals, we are not ready to pay a penny". We are prepared to pay towards the maintenance of all these social services, and, on this point, the



Government and the Opposition are one. The only point of difference between us is the *modus operandi*: how do we extract this extra money which we all agree we need? That is the difference between us.

The hon. Minister of Finance said that this Eastern Regional levy of purchase tax on petrol and auto gas will yield us £203,000 in the ensuing financial year. I am very happy indeed with that and I wish he will take every step to make sure that that figure is really achieved. The loophole has always been the River Niger, and I hope steps have been taken to seal it up. I am glad to hear the hon. Premier saying that he has sealed it up. If this is the case, I am further strengthened in my case that we should rely more on this indirect form of taxation than on the direct one. You will agree that if 3d on a gallon of petrol and 4d on a gallon of auto gas will yield us £203,000 then the extra £118,000 we want by way of direct taxation could have been realised merely by adding 1½d on a gallon of petrol and 2d on a gallon of diesel oil, so that if we had a petrol tax of 4½d a gallon and auto-gas tax of 11d per gallon we could have raised all the money we require by this tax on petrol plus the money we require by way of increases in income tax and it would have gone down much better with the people of this Region. I would not like the hon. Premier to regard these things as impossible. He is behaving like the typical Permanent Secretary. Immediately you make a suggestion to a Permanent Secretary, his first answer is that he does not think it will work. But from their own experience you will agree that if only the Minister keeps insisting that this thing could be done, by-and-by the Permanent Secretary arrives with a beautiful Memorandum showing how it will be worked out. I will still end up by saying that we need money for this programme, and we have to support this extra tax on petrol and auto gas and to tell the Government that it is this form of indirect taxation which should be more relied upon for raising the funds. Let the people feel and believe that they are not paying any increases in income tax and let those who provide these services—the car owners and the lorry owners—pay this extra money. We know that they managed to patch the thing up, but it is useless to exclude themselves from the charge of having increased direct taxation.

This problem of the Niger is a serious one, and I would suggest that the Government in the next few months will look for more effective method of sealing up the Niger loophole because immediately we succeed in sealing up that traffic of petrol and diesel oil across the Niger they will have a free hand in increasing the tax on petrol and auto gas. In other words, the limiting factor on how much money we can collect from this Region from tax on petrol and auto gas is this leakage across the Niger. We should concentrate on really sealing up that leakage in order to make sure that we can get all the money we require. I appeal to my hon. Friend the Minister of Finance to think again of getting more money out of this petrol and auto gas tax and thereby lightening the burden on income tax.

I beg to support.

**The Minister of Finance:** I rise to congratulate the Leader of the Opposition for the constructive criticism he has made and to assure him that with these very low rates of tax on petrol and diesel oil there is no fear of leakage from Asaba to Onitsha and that is why we have kept it so low; if we had gone higher as he is suggesting—something like 6d which we had before or 9d, then probably the leakage could have taken place. There is no other way by which we can stop it because the Constitution does not allow us and nobody here would like to have a custom barrier set up at Asaba or Onitsha which would amount to having two or three different countries instead of one Nigeria.

I think this is the only important point raised by the Leader of the Opposition. Probably if this Government finds itself in difficulty, instead of raising taxes perhaps we may think of purchase tax on petrol.

*Question put and agreed to.*

#### THE FIFTH SCHEDULE

**The Minister of Finance:** I beg to move: That this Committee resolve that the



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415 [Variations to Schedules 28 MARCH 1960 to Finance Law, 1956] 416

Fifth Schedule to the Finance Law, 1956, following Schedule with effect from the  
 be revoked and that it be replaced by the 1st day of April, 1960:—

THE FIFTH SCHEDULE

INCOME RANGE	AMOUNT OF TAX			
	Single Persons £ s d	Married Persons with no Children £ s d	Married Persons with not more than 2 Children £ s d	Married Persons with 3 or more Children £ s d
PART I: WEEKLY EMOLUMENTS				
Under £1 3s 1d	0 0 7	0 0 7	0 0 7	0 0 7
PART II: WEEKLY EMOLUMENTS				
£ s d	£ s d	£ s d	£ s d	£ s d
1 3 1 or over, but under	1 6 11	0 0 7	0 0 7	0 0 7
1 6 11 or over, but under	1 10 9	0 0 9	0 0 9	0 0 9
1 10 9 or over, but under	1 14 7	0 0 10	0 0 10	0 0 10
1 14 7 or over, but under	1 18 5	0 0 11	0 0 11	0 0 11
PART III: WEEKLY EMOLUMENTS				
£ s d	£ s d	£ s d	£ s d	£ s d
1 18 5 or over, but under	2 2 3	0 1 2	0 1 1	0 1 0
2 2 3 or over, but under	2 6 1	0 1 5	0 1 3	0 1 1
2 6 1 or over, but under	2 10 0	0 1 8	0 1 6	0 1 3
2 10 0 or over, but under	2 13 10	0 1 11	0 1 8	0 1 5
2 13 10 or over, but under	2 17 8	0 2 2	0 1 11	0 1 7
2 17 8 or over, but under	3 1 6	0 2 5	0 2 1	0 1 9
3 1 6 or over, but under	3 5 4	0 2 8	0 2 4	0 1 11
3 5 4 or over, but under	3 9 2	0 3 0	0 2 7	0 2 1
3 9 2 or over, but under	3 13 1	0 3 3	0 2 9	0 2 4
3 13 1 or over, but under	3 16 11	0 3 7	0 3 0	0 2 6
PART I: MONTHLY EMOLUMENTS				
Under £5	0 2 4	0 2 4	0 2 4	0 2 4
PART II: MONTHLY EMOLUMENTS				
£ s d	£ s d	£ s d	£ s d	£ s d
5 0 0 or over, but under	5 16 8	0 2 6	0 2 6	0 2 6
5 16 8 or over, but under	6 13 4	0 2 11	0 2 11	0 2 11
6 13 4 or over, but under	7 10 0	0 3 4	0 3 4	0 3 4
7 10 0 or over, but under	8 6 8	0 3 9	0 3 9	0 3 9
PART III: MONTHLY EMOLUMENTS				
£ s d	£ s d	£ s d	£ s d	£ s d
8 6 8 or over, but under	9 3 4	0 5 0	0 4 7	0 4 2
9 3 4 or over, but under	10 0 0	0 6 1	0 5 5	0 4 10
10 0 0 or over, but under	10 16 8	0 7 1	0 6 3	0 5 5
10 16 8 or over, but under	11 13 4	0 8 2	0 7 1	0 6 1
11 13 4 or over, but under	12 10 0	0 9 2	0 7 11	0 6 8
12 10 0 or over, but under	13 6 8	0 10 3	0 8 9	0 7 4
13 6 8 or over, but under	14 3 0	0 11 6	0 9 10	0 8 2
14 3 4 or over, but under	15 0 0	0 12 9	0 10 10	0 9 0
15 0 0 or over, but under	15 16 8	0 14 0	0 11 0	0 9 10
15 16 8 or over, but under	16 13 4	0 15 3	0 12 11	0 10 8

This Motion derives from the first resolution dealing with variations in the First Schedule. The First Schedule specifies the amount of tax payable for the whole year. The Fifth Schedule, on the other hand, specifies the amounts of tax which are payable by daily-rated employees for each week and also for each month of the year.



The figures in the Fifth Schedule are in each case one-fifty-second or one-twelfth, as the case may be, of the figures for a full year's tax. The Schedule is therefore an arithmetical convenience.

The Schedule as calculated covers wages amounting to under £200 per annum since experience has shown that daily-rated staff do not get the equivalent of more than £200 a year.

As I said before, this Schedule is a necessary complement to the First Schedule and should therefore receive the support of the Committee.

**The Minister of Agriculture (Mr P. N. Okeke):** I beg to second.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolutions to be reported.*

(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)

**The Minister of Finance:** I beg to report that a Committee of the Whole House has passed the following Resolutions:—

That the First Schedule to the Finance Law, 1956, be revoked and that it be replaced by the new First Schedule with effect from 1st April, 1960;

That the Fourth Schedule to the Finance Law, 1956, be replaced by and varied in accordance with the new Fourth Schedule with effect from 1st April, 1960; and

That the Fifth Schedule to the Finance Law, 1956, be revoked and that it be replaced by the new Fifth Schedule with effect from 1st April, 1960.

*Question: That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolutions, put and agreed to.*

## ORDER OF THE DAY

### Local Government Bill—Second Reading

*Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question (25th March)—That the Bill be now read a Second time.*

*Question again proposed.*

**Mr Onwuma:** I do not know exactly what it looks like to consider this Bill now as a large number of hon. Members are not present. There are a few remarks which I would like to make, not in the spirit of making an attack, but in order to understand clearly what purpose the provisions are out to serve. Clause 26 (1) states that "The Minister may, by Instrument, appoint a person by name, by title or by office, to be the President of a Council". I do not know exactly what this implies, whether the Minister of Local Government will appoint a President from outside the Council or whether he will appoint a President from traditional members who may be injected into the Council. I do not know whether he will select some responsible people from the community. As it is, it is not quite clear and I would like to know if the Minister would clarify the position so as to leave no ambiguity in the minds of people and also not to allow too much flexibility.

There is also the part dealing with "adoptive bye-laws"—that is Clause 90. "The Minister may, by order, published in the *Regional Gazette*—(a) make 'adoptive' bye-laws in respect of a function which is or may be imposed on a Council under this or another Law, and (b) specify the extent to which those bye-laws may be adopted by a Council". Mr Speaker, by one other clause the Minister of Local Government empowers councillors to make bye-laws and in the clause under reference he has also the power to make what he has called the "adoptive bye-laws". I do not know whether it is not likely that these two situations may come into collision. The Minister has not specified what special matters he has in mind, where he can prepare an adoptive bye-law. That is just what I am disputing so that I may be better enlightened. I think that the essence of local government is to enable people in particular areas to make bye-laws which suit them. It is not quite clear what matter the Minister of Local Government wants to leave for himself, whereby he can make these adoptive bye-laws. That is why I want to know if that happens whether the councillors will merely come in and take a resolution accepting the adoptive bye-laws and that ends it.

Furthermore, the Minister can amend the adoptive bye-laws and I cannot find anywhere in the Bill where the councillors, after going through the adoptive bye-laws, can suggest or



[MR ONWUMA]

effect amendments. I should think that it would be desirable for an adoptive law or a Bill to be adopted to be in such a pliable position that the District Councils can amend it; because if that happens it will give the councillors a reasonable opportunity of exercising their rights as councillors. So, Mr Speaker, I would like the Minister of Local Government to make this point clear when he replies because, as far as I am concerned, I have not been a local councillor, but it is not as clear as I would like it to be. Secondly, I would like to suggest to the Minister that the time has come when some functions of the County Councils should be handed over to the Local Councils, because there is a lot of hue and cry in the Local Councils that they are not doing anything. So I am suggesting to the Minister to find a *modus operandi* or a compromise or a formula whereby some functions of a supervisory nature are ascribed to the Local Government Councils. In doing that, it will let them have some useful functions to perform.

Finally, the law authorising the Minister of Local Government to make Council bye-laws to impound animals in the rural areas has become extremely difficult to people in the areas concerned. It is quite good to impound animals in the townships but in the rural areas it is very difficult. Even here in Enugu I see sheep and goats running about the compounds of certain Parliamentary Secretaries.

Even in Enugu it has been found extremely difficult to operate. So I am suggesting that the law should be completely revoked especially as it concerns the rural areas.

**Mr S. T. Akpan** (Eket Division): I wish to congratulate the Minister for producing this excellent work. We have agreed on the floor of this House that all the amendments made after the passage of the 1955 Bill should be gathered up and bound to produce one law, and I think this is the fulfilment of that wish.

I have, however, one or two points to make on this Bill. Clause 27 (2) provides that unless the Chairman of the Council resigns or ceases to be qualified or becomes disqualified, the Chairman shall continue in office until his successor becomes entitled to act as Chairman. From my experience, this provision which was

lifted from the old Law has robbed the Council of the democratic element which should have been envisaged in a democratic system of government. There has been a case where the majority of the councillors in a District Council happen to pass a vote of no confidence in the Chairman on very strong grounds and with the consent of the entire community, but the Chairman refused to resign because he felt that he did not cease to qualify by that vote and that he could continue in office, thus flouting the majority opinion of the councillors. I do not think this is good enough. If the Councils must have that real democratic touch a provision should be made under this paragraph in such a way that when a Chairman of a Council loses the confidence of the Council he should be made to resign. If he does not want to resign he should be forced out of office, otherwise the element of democracy does not seem to exist in Local Government Councils. I do not think it is politically sound for the Chairman of a Council to challenge the majority decision of the councillors. While speaking on this point, I take cognisance of the fact that there may be some Councils where the councillors may join together to conspire against the Chairman in order to remove him, but my point is that the vote of no confidence should be substantiated. The resolution should be worded and when once the Chairman of the Council loses the confidence of the councillors he should resign. That is my view and on that particular point I hope the Minister will agree with me that my opinion is sound. It is not expedient to allow such a Chairman to continue in office and create a sort of political crisis. If a Chairman refuses to resign and he cannot be removed from office the only course of action open for the Council is to impede the work of the Council for three months and this is reported to the Minister, who will appoint a Commission of Inquiry. Here is a single man who cannot be removed from office even if the majority of councillors advocate for it and then he is allowed to remain in office and probably cause a dissolution of the Council. Then all the councillors are thrown back to face election. I feel that the element of democracy in such a circumstance does not seem to exist and I am appealing to the Minister to consider this point and introduce in a way he thinks fit an amendment that will reflect this important observation.

**Mr S. E. K. Iwueke** (Okigwi Division): I rise to support this Bill. Those of us who



have been connected with local government for some time regard this Bill as a very important one. The Bill is really a big amendment to the existing law and the time of its arrival in this House is most welcome. It is my opinion that if we fail to run our Local Government Councils in the Region then we can hardly be justified for our claim for independence. Since we are on the eve of our independence it is all the more necessary that everything possible should be done to ensure that all the abuses that exist in Local Government Councils are eradicated and opportunities for such nipped in the bud.

There are three major elements in our Local Government structure; First, the citizens or the rate-payers, second, the councillor or the local representative of the people; thirdly, the Council officials or employees. Let us look more closely at these three different set of bodies. The citizen may or may not take great interest in the Council. It might mean, sometimes, the Council is running well and people do not get themselves worried. In most cases, there are a lot of irregularities and the only chance for the people to express their feelings is by way of complaint. The councillor himself is the voice of the people on local matters. The idea should have been for the people to elect those on whom the public repose confidence. One of the main factors of corrupt practices in our Councils is the mass injection of some people with unscrupulous conscience in the Council. Some councillors go into the Council with the main object of getting rich quickly with the result that they can go to any length. The Local Government officer or officers who carry out the policy decided by the Council themselves have part to play. My six years experience as a councillor has enabled me to speak on this matter. The position of executive staff in the Council has much to do. The fact that the Secretaries or the Executives have the record and they are considered the experts of the Council have much influence to add to the Council's functions. In many cases, these officials make the Council to do the wrong things. I feel very strongly that the Minister should take drastic measures to see that some of these Secretaries who are corrupt (of course not all the Secretaries or Executive officers in the Council are corrupt but those of them who have corrupt influence on the Council) are either removed from office or transferred to another District

Council. I endorse strongly, the Minister's recent measure in trying to transfer some Local Government workers who have been known as sons of the soil. Their influence in our Councils has done a great harm.

On Chairmen's allowance, there has always been a conflict of opinion as to what are the entitlements of the Chairmen. In many cases, the Local Government Commissioners have taken some Councils to task with the result that sometimes there are conflicts of opinions in their circulars. I wish this matter to be dealt with. Under Clause 31, it states:

“(1) The Minister may, by order, fix the maximum amount or the rate of an allowance or out-of-pocket expenses payable by a Council to a Chairman”.

“(2) Subject to an order made under subsection (1), a Council may, by resolution, provide for the payment to the Chairman of reasonable allowance or out-of-pocket expenses”.

I would like the Minister to make it definite and also, I would like whatever might be the Chairman's allowance or out-of-pocket expenses to be determined by the Minister in order not to allow Councils the excesses of going to pass resolution asking for £600, £400 as Chairman's allowance as the case may be.

On purchase of drugs by Councils, I am suggesting that it will be an economy measure for the Medical Officers in the Divisions to be given the chance of buying drugs for the District Councils rather than District Councils making their own separate arrangements through the Crown Agents. If Medical Officers are given the opportunity of buying these drugs and distributing them to the District Councils, the method of getting drugs in the Councils will be improved. Much more, most of our Dispensaries and Maternity Homes run by District Councils are not inspected by Medical Officers. In my own Council, for example, we are very grateful to the Doctors from Oji and Uzuakoli Leper Settlement for the trouble they take to come and inspect all our health services. In the past that has not been the case. I think arrangements should be made for Doctors to be inspecting these health services. Most of the people do not go to our Maternities because they do not get adequate service from Medical experts.



[MR IWUEKE]

There is a clause in the regulation—Eastern Region Local Staff Regulation, 1956 which reads thus, i.e.:

“518: If an unmarried woman, a member of the staff becomes pregnant, she may with the approval of the Minister be called upon by the Council to retire or resign after her maternity leave”.

This has brought a lot of headache and lots of scandal in Council areas. I cannot imagine how we advocate for high moral standards in schools and then on the other hand make provision for unmarried women teachers to go the way they like without terminating their appointments. A school is a place where we train the future citizens. It will be highly immoral for us to expect unmarried teachers in the school to behave in the way they like. Such has not been obtaining before and it is because of this kind of high standard of moral training that we are able to boast of good characters in this Region today. I very much wish the Minister to consider this regulation because there has been abuse of this. Most of our unmarried women teachers have taken advantage of this loophole. Immediately they take-in and, according to this bye-law, there is nothing you can do to discipline them.

Since Local Government is also a means whereby people learn to assume civic responsibilities, I feel that everything being equal it is, justifiable that a measure of autonomy in certain matters should be extended to some Councils which merit it. I do not mean all the Councils. When some Councils live up to expectation a little measure of autonomy in determining certain things should be extended to them. I have in mind the award of contracts. I would not like the Councils to be given the responsibility of employing teachers, because that is the main channel by which councillors go the other way. I very much wish that the employment of teachers be entrusted in the hands of either selected local school supervisors of the Voluntary Agencies in the area since Education Officers often complain of lack of time.

What makes the world interesting is adventure. It may be an adventure into unexplored

forests or against fierce animals. There is always the chance of new and unknown things, perhaps of new marvels in adventure and experiment. By this I mean that when we are free to try we are free to succeed; but when everything is certain there is little or no adventure, and often the atmosphere is dull. When we grow up and manage our affairs we must also take the risk of mismanaging them. If men or nations blunder they must bear their own blunder and learn by them. Sometimes this is the only way to learn not to blunder. I am saying this in support of my request that Local Government Councils, wherever they are found fit, should be given a measure of autonomy.

I have to support the hon. Member for Aba Division on his point about the appointment of Presidents of Councils. We wish the Minister to be definite about this. We wish to know whose responsibility it is to appoint the President of a Council—whether it is that of the Council or the Minister on the recommendation of the Council.

I support the Bill.

**The Minister of Local Government (Mr P. O. Nwoga):** As I said during the Second Reading, this is no new Bill. It is nothing but all the amendments that have been passed already by the House. It needs no further elaboration except to answer a few points that have been raised by hon. Members. Firstly, hon. Onwuma was wondering what Clause 26 means—whether it means that the Minister should appoint the President from Enugu. All I have got to say is that councillors are either appointed or elected. The Minister can appoint the President but normally he does not do this from Enugu. The Councils concerned make recommendations on which the Minister acts.

Then he also spoke about adoptive bye-laws, and I think he understood that after making an adoptive bye-law here in Enugu we make it compulsory on all Councils to adopt it. Adoptive bye-laws are nothing but models. You have Councils making bye-laws about markets, dispensaries or maternity homes, and each Council has got to submit its own bye-laws. They are much alike in their



essentials, but there are slight differences. Instead of each Council coming at its own time to have a separate publication in the *Gazette*, wasting the time of the Ministry and wasting Government paper, why not give them a model which they can copy, if they want to, by resolution of the Council. We do not force them to adopt it. If they feel that local conditions do require it they can modify it.

Hon. Akpan is complaining about the position of the Chairmen in the various Councils and he said that Clause 27, as it stands, does not contain democratic element in that once a Chairman has been elected by his Council he does not go out of office even if the Council has lost confidence in him. All that I can say is that a Chairman can be removed by a Minister declaring his seat vacant after holding an enquiry, in which case he can be disqualified for five years. A Chairman cannot lose the confidence of his Council except he has done something wrong, either he is taking bribe or infringing on the Local Government Law. That is one way. Another way is, after holding the enquiry the Council can be dissolved and the Minister revoking the Instrument issues a fresh one appointing members. So it is not a difficult problem to remove an unpopular Chairman. It is true that the Chairman may be wrong at one time or the other, but you will agree with me that removal of Chairmen by vote of no confidence is a dangerous weapon because somebody who would like to be Chairman tomorrow could conspire to get the others to pass a vote of no confidence in the Chairman so as to take his place. Therefore, you will agree with me that this method may not work satisfactorily.

Hon. Iwueke did speak about councillors allowance. This is a complaint that reaches me everywhere I go. But the fact is that the Minister has made it definite. There is a regulation which lays down that the maximum allowance to be paid to councillors is graduated by the Council's turnover. It is laid down by the regulation and the Minister cannot change that regulation, except there is something found wrong.

Hon. Iwueke also spoke about the buying of drugs. I do not know whether he realises that Councils can now buy drugs up to the

value of £100 on the advice and instruction of the Medical Officer in charge of the institution. If you want a bulk order costing above this sum it will be necessary to advertise it and allow the Tenders Board to award the contract.

I think these are the points already raised by Members. If there is any other thing, I shall answer it during the Budget.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill accordingly read a Second time and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.*

*Bill immediately considered in Committee.*

(In the Committee)

**The Chairman:** Hon. Members will find that this Bill contains so many Clauses. With your permission, therefore, I shall call them out in groups (I suppose in groups of ten) and if any hon. Member has anything to say in connection with a particular Clause he can always call my attention when I call out the group.

*Clauses 1-81 agreed to.*

*Clause 82.*

**The Minister of Local Government (Mr P. O. Nwoga):** I rise to move that the word "protection" in the marginal note be deleted and the word "publication" substituted therefor.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Clause 82 as amended agreed to.*

*Clause 83 agreed to.*

*Clause 84.*

**Mr Onwuma:** I want to refer to Clause 84 sub-section 86—prohibiting the practice of nudity. I do not know whether the Minister of Local Government will give this particular subsection some reconsideration in the future because it is being assumed that the practice of nudity is essentially an evil thing. I do not consider that the practice of nudity is always an evil, and in any case the condition under which it is an evil should be ascertained. Even in modern times people go out specially to practice nudity. If in the law it is being



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assumed that the County Council is likely to provide people with clothing apparel, they haven't got the money to do that and in any case the people may, either on religious grounds or some conscientious feeling, consider that it is necessary to practice nudity. So I should have thought that it is one of those things which should be left flexible and the County Council should not be given power to make laws prohibiting nudity.

*Clause 84 agreed to.*

*Clauses 85–118 agreed to.*

*Clause 119:*

**The Minister of Local Government:** Clause 119, subsection 4 (b)—the word “preceding” has two “e”s. I beg to move that one of the “e”s be deleted.

**The Chairman:** That really is not an amendment.

*Clause 119 agreed to.*

*Clause 120:*

**The Chairman:** There is an error in the word “writing”, where the word is spelt “wirting” instead of “writing”. Again, that is really not an amendment. The word should not be written in italics.

*Clause 120 agreed to.*

*Clauses 121–228 agreed to.*

*First to Sixth Schedules agreed to.*

*Bill to be reported.*

(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)

*Bill reported with an amendment; as amended read the Third time and passed.*

**ADJOURNMENT**

Resolved: That this House do now adjourn  
(*The Minister of Finance, Dr S. E. Imoke*).

*Adjourned accordingly at eight minutes past two o'clock p.m.*



EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 31st March, 1960

The House met at Ten o'clock a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

BILL PRESENTED

Finance

Bill to amend the Finance Law, 1956, presented by the Minister of Finance, Dr S. E. Imoke; read the First time, to be read a Second time Now.

Motion immediately made as follows:—

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** I beg to move that the Bill be now read a Second time.

On Monday the 28th of March, when I made Motions varying the First, the Fourth and the Fifth Schedules to the Finance Law, I explained the reasons for the proposals contained in those Schedules and said that the Finance (Amendment) Bill would be introduced subsequently.

Section 66 of the principal Law provides that the Resolutions taken on the 28th instant will cease to have effect if the present Bill is not read a Second time by the 6th of April, which is ten days from the date of my first Motion on the variations on the tax Schedules. It is also necessary to re-emphasise the need for the fiscal measures which Government has already introduced at this Session.

Clause 3 of the Bill sets out in detail how the assessable income of a tax-payer will be determined.

Clause 4 deals with the alterations made to the First and Fifth Schedules. These Schedules were fully discussed three days ago.

Purely fiscal needs have made it necessary to propose a flat rate of tax of £1 7s 6d for

persons whose incomes do not exceed £60 per annum. For incomes ranging from £60 to £70 a flat rate of tax of £1 10s is now to be levied. For incomes ranging between £70 and £80 a flat rate of tax of £1 15s is to be levied. For incomes ranging from £80 to £90 a flat rate of tax of £2 is to be levied, and for incomes ranging from £90 to £100 a flat rate of tax of £2 5s is to be levied. These proposals are already included in the First Schedule which has been circulated to hon. Members.

A significant feature of the new tax rates on incomes below £100 is that tax on incomes of unmarried persons will now be reduced. As I said before, this is in keeping with public opinion in this Region which considers that the married man is generally better-off financially than the single man, and that the application of differential rates according to domestic circumstances in these lower income groups is contrary to our social structure.

Clause 5 of the Bill ensures that all emoluments of a person will be aggregated for the purpose of arriving at his assessable income.

Clause 6 seeks to exempt from taxation dividends accruing from "pioneer" companies which themselves are exempted from Federal tax.

Clause 7 limits the scope of exemption from Entertainments Tax.

Clause 8 reintroduces Purchase Tax on petrol and auto gas oil about which this House deliberated on the 28th instant.

Clause 9 makes minor drafting alterations to the principal Law and empowers the Commissioner of Internal Revenue to recover any penalties imposed by him by court action.

Clauses 10 and 11 propose minor drafting amendments and Clauses 12 to 14 introduce revised First, Fourth and Fifth Schedules.

I do not intend to belabour this Bill the objects and reasons of which are clear and have been partly debated. I have no doubt in my mind that the House will give it its warm support.



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

**Mr Speaker:** Hon. Members, I do not know what is your intention or what is your will, but according to Standing Order 46, that portion says:

“At the conclusion of the proceedings on the first reading or on any subsequent stage of a Bill, a day to be named by the Member in charge of the Bill shall be appointed for the next stage: provided that with the general consent of the House all the stages of a Bill may be taken the same day, and provided further that the day named for the Second reading of a Bill introduced by a Private Member shall not be less than seven days after that on which the Bill has been read the First time”.

Is it the general consent of the House therefore that we proceed with all stages of the Bill today?

**Hon. Members:** Yes.

*Question put and agreed.*

*Bill accordingly read a Second time and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.*

*Bill immediately considered in Committee.*

(In the Committee)

*Clauses 1 to 12 agreed to.*

#### SCHEDULE

**The Chairman:** The Minister of Finance was saying that the Schedules were those which came before the House and were approved by the House in Committee. Hon. Members, that explanation is necessary because the Schedules are not there in the Bill and it becomes necessary that it should be explained. Hon. Members have already debated the First, Fourth and Fifth Schedules in Committee, quite recently.

**Several Opposition Members:** Where are the Schedules? They are not in the Bill. We are being called upon to pass an incomplete Bill!

**The Chairman:** Well, I think hon. Members will know that that was why it was decided to deal with the Schedules in Committee before the actual Bill was presented or debated in the House, so that no Member will say that he has no idea of the Schedules.

**Chief I. I. Morphy (Ogoja Division):** The Schedules should have been attached to the Bill.

**The Chairman:** I do not think that is very necessary, even from the point of view of very slight economy. It will be a waste of Government money to reproduce the Schedules.

**Several Opposition Members:** What are the Government printers doing?

*Clauses 13 to 15 agreed to.*

*Bill to be reported.*

(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)

*Bill reported without amendment, read the Third time and passed.*

#### ORDER OF THE DAY

#### The 1960-61 Eastern Region Appropriation Bill

(FIRST ALLOTTED DAY)

*Order read for resuming adjourned Debate on Question (28th March): That the Bill be now read a Second Time.*

*Question again proposed.*

**Mr S. G. Ikoku (Enyong Division):** I rise to indicate the general agreement of the Opposition with the principles and propositions underlying the Region's Budget for the 1960-61 financial year. I wish to make it clear, however, that this general agreement in principle does not mean that the Opposition is happy with every feature of the Budget.

Permit me, right away, to congratulate the hon. the Minister of Finance for his very lucid presentation of a matter generally accepted as dry and involved. I think one can fairly describe the budget as lucid and realistic. It



is lucid because no attempt has been made cleverly to hide away the ugly facts. It is realistic because in the given circumstances—economic and financial—in which this Region finds itself today, it would be unfair to expect a budget much better than what is here presented to us.

As I waded through the Draft Estimates and re-read the Minister's budget speech, a distinct mental image of the Eastern Region impressed itself on me. And what is this image? I likened the Region to a determined young man. He is beset by great handicaps and tormented by trying circumstances. But the young man is determined to battle on valiantly to overcome his handicaps and to triumph over his circumstances. No one coming across such a young man will fail to wish him well. Even more, no one coming across such a young man will grudge him any help which might propel him more rapidly towards success.

The budget has bright spots as well as dark spots. The Minister of Finance, to his great credit, meticulously drew attention to the dark clouds hanging over our finances without failing to point to the silver lining. He also affirmed his belief—and here he was certainly speaking the mind of this Region—that we cannot sustain a truly buoyant revenue until a real expansion takes place in this Region's economy. Accordingly, I intend to make my contribution to the budget debate under three headings:—

1. The bright spots in our finances.
2. The dark spots in our finances and
3. The development of the Region's economy.

*The bright spots.*—There are two principal bright spots in the budget. They both relate to the operation of the financial year that comes to a close today. The first is that our estimated budget surplus for the 1959–60 financial year, has in fact been surpassed. Whereas we budgeted for the modest surplus of £221,000 our actual position is a surplus of £420,000—a figure almost double what the Minister of Finance forecast a year ago. This is a good thing because in the way of thinking of the Western world in which the classical economic concepts still hold sway a budget surplus has a magic touch about itself. It gives the

impression of financial solvency and re-assures private investors who were in two minds about taking part in economic projects of the given government. In this regard it must be openly admitted that the Minister of Finance has made a mighty contribution towards the speeding up of the economic development of the Region.

The second bright spot is that our Consolidated Revenue Fund at the end of the 1959–60 financial year stands at a figure much higher than originally anticipated. What are the figures? Consolidated Revenue Fund on 1st of April, 1959 was estimated at £5,250,000. The actual position turned out to be £5,887,000—an increase of £637,000. Again the Consolidated Revenue Fund on 31st March, 1960, that is at the close of the financial year, was estimated at £5,471,000. The actual position turns out to be something like £6,310,000—an increase of £839,000.

These enhanced budget surplus and enlarged Consolidated Revenue Fund, as a result of the operation of 1959–60 financial year, are even more deserving of praise when it is borne in mind that heavy extra expenditure had to be met out of Regional revenue—one of these being quite unforeseen. I refer to the cost of abolishing fees in Standard II primary and to the largely unexpected payments of the 10% Mbanefo Award to the Public Service, to Local Government and Voluntary Agency staffs and workers. During the same year the tidy sum of £850,000 was transferred from the Consolidated Revenue Fund to the Capital Development Fund.

It will be wrong, however, to give the impression that only astute financial management on the part of the Minister of Finance was responsible for this success in the current financial year. This Region was most lucky in that a set of fortuitous factors worked together to its advantage. Our statutory share of Federal revenue was £121,000 above the estimated figure; interests on Government investments yielded £150,000 more than was expected and we gained £203,000 by way of refunds on education grants. There was also considerable under-spending to the tune of nearly £602,000.

Nevertheless, we are ending the difficult 1959–60 financial year in a position much



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brighter than was expected, and this is a feather in the cap of the Minister of Finance.

*The Dark Spots:* May I then turn to the dark spots in our finances as indicated in the Minister of Finance's budget speech. Firstly, expenditure is running at a higher rate than revenue is increasing. At page 3 of his speech the Minister of Finance states: "... I see in the current trend of revenue and expenditure certain dangers for the future". Revenue for the 1960-61 financial year is £2,567,710 higher than in the 1959-60 financial year. (This information is at page E 16 of the Draft Estimates). But expenditure in the 1960-61 year is £3,024,460 above the 1959-60 level. (I refer Members to page E 20 of the Draft Estimates). This is indeed a danger worth taking seriously, for the figures show clearly that we are spending some £ $\frac{1}{2}$  million a year more than we are earning. Such a trend must be reversed at once. For, if it is not halted and reversed, it means we must every year either increase taxation (direct or indirect or both) or dip our hands into our reserves. The first line of action will meet with stiff opposition from the populace of this Region. The second line of action is a self-defeating remedy for our reserves are not limitless. It is also detrimental to any projected economic development programme.

The second dark spot is the heavy drain imposed on our finances by social services and the cost of keeping the wheels of administration turning. Social services (education and health) including grants to Local Government bodies will cost us £7,958,000—i.e., 50 per cent of our entire budget. Personal emoluments and ancillary charges (i.e., cost of keeping the wheels of administration turning) take £4,228,660. This represents another 26 per cent of our revenue. Thus the figure stares us in the face—76 per cent of our total revenue is spent on social services and maintaining our Public Service!

Can we continue at this rate? I wonder! In the so-called advanced countries of the world barely 16 per cent-20 per cent of the revenue is spent on these services. The position is even now foreboding for an under-developed country like ours. For in under-developed countries, private investment capital

is so scarce that the State must of necessity become a main source for the supply of capital for economic development. And how can we perform that vital function when we spend some 76 per cent of our revenue on social services, on the public service and related services?

I know our Governments would wish to reverse this ruinous trend. But they fear two things. They fear the pressure of the populace for social services. They fear also being caught in a position where the Opposition will exploit the non-provision of social services to discredit and turn out the Government. This is a real and live problem. And it just cannot be solved without both Government and Opposition agreeing on fundamentals and following an agreed course of action. It is yet another case to buttress my plea for a closing of ranks among the nationalist politicians of the country.

A third dark spot in our budget is that for the 1960-61 financial year, we have not been able to balance our budget without resorting to extra taxation. In other words, we would have a budget deficit if the Government had not increased both the tax on incomes and the purchase tax on motor fuel. Our gross estimated receipts as a result of these increased taxes are £321,000. Our estimated budget surplus is only £114,000. Thus, if we had not imposed these taxes, we would have faced a budget deficit of £207,000 in the 1960-61 financial year. This is not a healthy sign at all. On the other hand, we must not brood over it. Not only is occasional (I emphasise occasional) budget deficit unavoidable, but in this case we need not regard it as a sign of financial weakness. For there is the very important fact that we are transferring out of current revenue the sum of £500,000 into the Capital Development Fund. Our position, in this case, is analogous to that of a man who invests £10 but borrows £5. It is not a good thing to be a borrower; but such a man cannot rightly be described as bankrupt.

A fourth dark spot in our finances is the growing difficulty we are facing in finding money for our Development Programmes. If you read pages 10 to 19 of the Budget Speech, you cannot escape the feeling that the Government is engaged in a ding-dong battle



in scrapping capital for our four-year Development Programme. It is even admitted at page 17 that we shall not be able to find the whole of the £2 million originally estimated to be forthcoming from the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the Capital Development Fund. We shall be short of this target by as much as £150,000. This is indeed a serious position to be in. All I can say at this point is that upon the solution of this capital for development problem hangs the whole future of this Region. It has become the critical and crucial sector in our economy. I shall touch on this point later on.

The fifth and last dark spot in our finances is the drop in the yield of Purchase Tax on Produce. (See page 5 of the Budget Speech). This drop in produce purchase tax is not due to a decrease in the rate of tax on produce. Therefore it can only be taken to mean that the export tonnages of palm oil and palm kernels are expected to be less than last year's. Why should this be the case? Could it be that our palm trees are producing less? I doubt it. The truth seems to be that the continually falling prices of palm oil and palm kernels since 1954 is now appreciably affecting production. Government should take this as the red signal and warn the Region's Marketing Board of the necessity of increasing purchase prices or at least holding these prices steady and not allowing any further decline in produce prices.

Before I go on to the third part of my speech—The Development of the Region's Economy—I propose to treat just three points which I consider important to any serious and practical approach to the problem of economic planning.

At page 7 of the Budget Speech we read the following:—

“Government takes the view that there is too large a gulf between the higher and the lower salaries paid in Government service and it has felt impelled to implement the Mbanefo award in such a way as to reduce this disparity.”

The reference here is to the grant of 15 per cent award to civil servants not on the super-scale posts and of only 10 per cent award to those on super-scale posts. I think the Government has miscalculated this. The gulf between these salaries has not been narrowed. Instead

it has been widened. (*Government Bench: No! no increase at all. Correct that portion, please!*) So they had no increase at all? The Government makes the point that the super-scale people did not get a penny, but I do not believe it. The Supplementary Appropriation which was considered by this House about a month or so ago definitely contained the increases as a result of the 10 per cent award for these super-scale posts. (*Government Bench: No!*) Certainly. Mr Speaker, may we suspend proceedings and I get a copy of that Appropriation Bill.

**Mr Speaker:** I hope that hon. Members must have observed what is happening now. My experience in Westminster is that interruption takes this form: A Member rises to interrupt another's speech and the other man sits down. He says a few things and sits down himself while the other Member resumes his speech.

**Mr Ikoku:** I think what is included here is the adjustment in the salaries of these senior servants—the Permanent Secretaries—because I see an extra £240 for the Chief Secretary. In any case, let us take the Government view that super-scale posts are not going to have a penny addition. This Region will very much like that to be a firm policy. We do not want to come back here for any Supplementary Budget Session to learn that so much pressure had been brought to bear on the Government and they were compelled to give in and to pay arrears. We do not want to hear that. We want to go away this morning quite satisfied that for good these super-scale posts are not going to get a penny, because giving them 10 per cent increase when the junior servants and other scales get only 15 per cent increase does not in any way narrow the gap between the two sets of service. I would like to give the Government an illustration. If you take the Permanent Secretary on £2,640... Alright before I come to the Permanent Secretary let me take the people at the bottom, that is the new entrant into the Public Service on £150 before Mbanefo awards and the lowest man in the super-scale post on Group 8, which is £1,500. Give this man on £1,500 a 10 per cent increase and it brings him to £1,650. Give the young man on £150 a 15 per cent increase and it brings him to £172 10s. The gap between the two salaries before the Mbanefo awards saw £1,350 and the gap between the two scales after the awards will



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be £1,477 10s. So I do not want us to hold the view that simply because the super-scale people are given 10 per cent and the rest are given 15 per cent, therefore the gap is being narrowed. There is no such thing, and I would like to assure the Government that the Opposition believes that the gap should be narrowed.

I consider the views of the Mbanefo Commission embarrassing in another respect—embarrassing that is to a Government committed to large scale economic planning like our own. The Commission holds the view that Government should give (here I quote, Sir):

“Smaller and more frequent increase (that is of salaries) when the cost of living is rising as it has done in the last five years.”

This view is contained in paragraph 15, page 3 of the Report by the Mbanefo Commission. I consider such a view dangerous to economic planning. For under economic planning wages should, as far as possible, remain stable for considerable periods of time. Frequent revision of wages is certainly not helpful and I hope that Government will not commit itself to this part of the Mbanefo Report.

At page E 59 of the Draft Estimates we find the provision for the Ministry of Economic Planning. I regard this provision as simply inadequate and I would prefer to believe that Government is only making token provisions at this stage and will allow the Ministry to expand when it really gets going. I am not quite happy about the provision for the Economic Adviser. I think about a year ago provision was made for an Economic Adviser on £1,000. I laughed it off in this very House and said they were not going to find an Economic Adviser on that salary. Now they have made a very attractive provision but I wonder why this officer, who is more or less a Permanent Head of the Ministry of Economic Planning, is on a scale higher than that of Permanent Secretaries in other Ministries and at par with the Chief Secretary to the Government. I can appreciate the argument that it is not easy to get a really good man at a lower scale. But the final solution to the problem should not upset the Civil Service structure. If an Economic

Adviser can only be got on Group 3 scale then let him be an Economic Adviser to the Government, a sort of Commissioner on special duty, like Sir Sydney Phillipson was to the Central Government. He should then not hold any established post in the Ministry. My point is that whereas Government is free to engage experts to advise it on any scale of salary, holders of Civil Service posts should conform with the structure of salaries laid down for the Civil Service.

*Development of Region's Economy.*—I turn now to the last part of my contribution to this debate. It is the all-important matter of developing the Region's economy. May I draw attention to the key sentence in the Minister of Finance's Budget Speech. It is at page 4 and with your permission, Mr Speaker, I read:

“The most careful forecasts which I can make suggest that a truly buoyant revenue cannot be sustained until a real expansion takes place in the Region's economy”.

I cannot agree more. This is hitting the nail right on the head and I hope that Government, having at last set its course accurately, will have the determination to proceed rapidly along this right course.

The Government must boldly enter the field of industrialisation. Our circumstances in the East compel us to pay more attention to what might be termed basic industries. And here I must warn that the imperialist countries are certainly not keen on developing basic industries out here for fear that these will constitute a serious challenge to their own home-based industries. Therefore, it is unwise to expect these same vested interests to provide you with the capital for launching these basic industries.

This Region could concentrate on building an iron and steel industry, a gas industry and a lead and zinc industry. Upon these industries could be built an engineering industry, a tin plate and chemical industries to the benefit of the Region. Perhaps a few figures will bring home to members how an iron and steel industry could revolutionise things in this Region.

Let us suppose that we build only *one* medium sized blast furnace for producing pig



iron. Such a plant can produce some 600 tons of pig iron a day. And to work such a plant for one year, one requires the following:—

1. 277,400 tons of coal.
2. 423,400 tons of iron ore.
3. 105,850 tons of limestone.

To produce the above tonnages of coal, iron ore and limestone, you will need a mining labour force about three times the size of the mining force employed by the Coal Corporation before the recent retrenchments began. Many thousands more will work in the blast furnace and in industries using pig iron as raw material. Again 277,400 tons of coal used in this plant will yield in addition to the coke used in the blast furnace, the following by-products:—

- (a) 46,654 barrels of coal tar,
- (b) 804,460 gallons of benzol,
- (c) 6,935,000 lb. ammonia sulphate,
- (d) 3,051,400 cu.ft. of gas.

Thus out of this single medium sized blast furnace the basis is created for a chemical industry producing coal tar and benzol, for a fertiliser industry producing ammonia sulphate and a gas industry supplying gas for both domestic and industrial uses.

It is the establishment of such industries that will save this Region and this country. I do not think that a brewery or a bicycle assembly plant is what this Region specially needs now.

But before we can really get going with our own development projects of the type I have envisaged, the Government has a few preparatory jobs to carry through. It has to put its house in order before launching the planned industrialisation of the Region. Some of the things that must be done in order to set the stage and create the necessary atmosphere for successful economic planning are as follows:—

1. The immediate correction of all anomalies that exist in the civil service as regards salary scales, e.g., (in Printing) I suggest the setting up of a small departmental committee to examine all salary grades with a view to regrading where necessary. The objective here is to remove every possible cause of discontent among the public servants on whose devotion to duty and sense of mission will greatly depend

the success of economic planning in this Region.

2. We should set up a machinery for observing and measuring the cost of living. The same machinery could conduct a survey of unemployment—both quantitatively and qualitatively. You will notice incidentally that the Mbanefo Report at page 66 recommended the setting up of “small committees” to advise the Governments “every six months what movements of the price indices there have been”. I think, however, that such machinery should work continuously.
3. Steps should be taken to bring the Trade unions into the picture. Machinery should be set up for frequent consultation between Government and accredited labour leaders with a view to securing the co-operation of organised labour in carrying through the Economic Plans.
4. The relation between the Ministry of Commerce and the new Ministry of Economic Planning should be carefully defined. I suggest that the Ministry of Commerce should confine itself with pilot projects and the attraction of private investments, while big public project and joint projects (i.e., public and private capital in partnership) should be left to the Ministry of Economic Planning. Similarly the relation between the current four-year Development Programme and a new Economic Plan must be carefully worked out. I think it will be more practical to let the economic plan commence as the current development programme comes to an end by March, 1962. I think the twenty months between now and March, 1962, could be well utilised in framing the new economic plan.
5. The Government should take a policy decision freezing the syphoning of Marketing Board reserves into all these multifarious Corporations in the Region. Such reserves should be used principally in financing the new Economic Plan.

Lastly, let us briefly consider the matter of financing the Economic Plan. The Minister



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of Finance, at page 18 of his Speech, has confessed that he cannot get foreign capital without strings attached. I maintain that he has merely told us his experience in the so-called Western democracies. Has he tried other sources? Is he aware of the fact that Eastern European countries are prepared to undertake contracts for building and equipping factories and foundaries at low rate of interest?

Secondly, the Government should take up the whole matter of a Stock Market in Nigeria with the Federal Government. It has just been announced that the Federal Government is starting a money market in Treasury Bills. This is a welcome move. But capital investments are not financed by a Money Market for the simple reason that only very short-term (3 months) Treasury Bills are traded in. Let the Governments themselves explore the possibility of creating a Stock Market in the country with no further delay. I must here sound a note of warning about this newly created Money Market. It will tend to give a Colonial imprint to our economy. It is dominated by foreign Money Houses for its operators are not only the well-known foreign banks—The Bank of West Africa, Barclay's Bank D.C. & O. and the French Bank—but also recently floated finance Houses like The Nigeria Lombard Limited and the United Dominions Trust. These Institutions prefer the Money Market to a Stock Market because this keeps their money liquid and enables them to move their money freely and swiftly out of the country. And the policy of these Expatriate Money Houses is concerned primarily with commerce and pay little attention to long-term investment. They are merely interested in commerce. Thus, if we just operate the new Money Market without scrutinising it, we shall make our Governments almost wholly dependent on foreign firms for their short-term capital, raise little or no long-term capital and perpetuate the Colonial character of our capital.

A third source of capital is new indirect taxes on certain commodities like beer, spirits and tobacco. The limiting factor here is the possibility of smuggling across the River Niger and that is something for the Government to work on.

Fourthly, the Government should consider launching a big savings campaign in the Region.

The people of this Region could be called upon to buy Freedom Savings Certificates of denominations as low as £1 or even 5s. The rate of interest could be 3 per cent just like the Post Office Savings. The amount invested in the purchase of these Freedom Savings Certificate could be exempted from income tax. I believe that a well-directed campaign along these lines will succeed bearing in mind the type of people we have in this Region.

I agree with the Minister of Finance that the emphasis now is on development. It has to be. Our people are thirsting for development. And the Government, in all its plans, must recognise and work for this all-round, top pace development which is the mood of the times. In the pursuit of this generally accepted objective, the Government can confidently count on the goodwill and co-operation of all well-meaning people both inside and outside this Region.

Sir, I support the Bill.

**Mr M. N. Onwuma** (Aba Division): I am extremely very happy that the Government Bench has been compelled to support the Leader of the Opposition this morning. I think, perhaps, I should say that I am very happy that the Government Bench and the Opposition have agreed this morning without any division. Last Monday, when I said I agreed with the Leader of the Opposition, a number of people on the Treasury Bench cried down on me. At least, since I can point to something this morning, I can take courage. Subject to a few remarks which I am going to make, it is impossible for anybody to withhold praise to the Minister of Finance because, the Speech, the Memorandum on the Estimates and everything about it show that as the years pass, the Minister of Finance matures in everything pertaining to public finance of the Eastern Region. One cannot help being extremely very grateful to him, and knowing fully well that he does not claim to be an expert on economic matters generally we are reasonably satisfied that throughout the length and breadth of this country we cannot find a Minister of Finance more capable. I do not intend to spoil the brilliant speech which has been made this morning but I would not be representing my people effectively (I do not assume I am a statesman; we leave statesmanship to the people



of the Treasury Bench; but at the moment, I represent some people and I think for the time being, it is safer to continue to represent them), if I fail to make the following observations.

(1) Increase of taxes for people in rural areas cannot be justified.

(2) Our revenue appears to depend primarily on three main sources—namely, Statutory Share of Federal Revenue, Tax on motor fuels, and what comes under Indirect Taxes and then Income Tax.

Now, which of these sources offers the best chance of increasing our revenue with least resistance and without exaggerated bitterness from the citizens? Clearly the best possible sources are: statutory shares of Federal revenue and Indirect Taxes.

The Federal Government is in the strongest possible position to increase customs and excise duties on various commodities, especially the luxury class of commodities. The increases in Revenue thus obtained could reasonably increase the statutory share due to this Government. Without the duties which I have mentioned our share is estimated to amount to £1,375,000 more than in 1959–60. I guess from experience that it is likely to be more in 1961–62 and thereabout. And therefore further increases on the duties would give extra revenue to the tune of £2,000,000 plus. All the other Governments will also derive proportionate increases as authorised in the Fiscal Report. Experience in this country is that the more tax imposed on beer, whisky, schnapps, wine, cigarettes and such other commodities in that class, the more the quantity consumed by the population. This offers a wonderful opportunity for increasing our revenue generally. People will be quite prepared to pay, I am sure, at least, in Enugu and Aba, 40s for a bottle of Whisky, Vat 69 or Cognac more readily than pay even 1s increase on earned income.

Any resistance to such Duties easily droop into the past after about a month or two, or at most three months. Indeed at this time—Mbanefo Salary Awards—more than at any other time, could this indirect tax increase have been better done without bitterness and rancour; and in any case the payment of such taxes would be optional. I am convinced that the Federal Government, through discussions and pressure by the Regional Governments, via

the Economic Council, would be quite prepared to adopt these measures, more so now that it is advocating measures on economy by Government Departments.

The next source of increasing our revenue is the Regional indirect taxes. I am persuaded to think that the tax on motor fuels we have just imposed is not the limit that we can go. We can do with at least 1d or 2d on petrol or auto gas oil. It is preferable to pass on tax to people who can pay it and who are prepared to pay it. As a matter of fact there are far too many cars here in Enugu and all over the country, so that when we add one or two pence more on motor fuel, we are likely to double the estimated revenue. And even here without the goodness—know-to-what-extent competition between the Regional Governments, there is no reason why these Governments should not agree. I know that I may be offending some people, but it is better to offend such people than to offend a larger number of people in the rural area. I would like to suggest that motor driving licence fees should be increased from 20s to 40s. Motor and other vehicle licences could be conveniently increased, because those who can afford to buy cars, I believe, can afford to pay this tax. If there is a way by which the difference between the lower income groups and the super-scale income groups can be closed, I think this is one, especially as Government is desirous of narrowing the gap between them and those who have received 20 per cent increase in their salaries.

One other source of income is the one mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition, that is savings. Government should urge the people to do more saving. There is far more money being wasted in this Region which could have been properly saved and ploughed back into the Regional revenue, in the way of investment and it cannot be over-emphasised that the necessity is much more urgent now to encourage people to do a lot of saving than at any other time.

Other sources of revenue besides those I have just mentioned can be found; you notice I have not agreed that direct tax is absolutely necessary now and much less have I agreed that people earning less than £60 per annum should ever be included under the present circumstance. It is better at this time to increase indirect taxes than to increase taxes directly, especially to those whose incomes are less than £60 per annum.



[MR ONWUMA]

I intend to table a Motion at a later stage that the salary of Members of the Houses be decreased from £840 as proposed in the Estimates to £800. It is the feeling of my fellow back-benchers that the salary of Members of the Houses need not be increased from £800 to £840. We are all agreed upon that for the simple reason that we do not want to give the impression that as soon as civil servants receive increase in pay legislators just turn round and increase their salary. That is not the correct procedure. It is not the opportune moment. (*Interruptions*). When somebody is telling the truth and making his point it is necessary for some of these Provincial Commissioners who cannot develop an argument to listen so that they can learn! I am so sorry, I do not mean every Provincial Commissioner, especially the Commissioner for Annang Province—he is a well behaved gentleman. If the salary of Members, including the House of Chiefs is decreased to £800, it will save the Government about £5,000 which will go to augment our revenue.

Apart from the taxes mentioned, there are other sources—certain expenditure heads—that we can avoid and thereby also save money and increase our revenue: a selection section has been added to the Commissioner's Office in the United Kingdom. It will therefore be absolutely unnecessary for the Public Service Commission to spend £6,270 for selection of officers as shown on head 426, sub-head 7. I beg to submit to the Government to reconsider this expenditure of £6,270. When provision has been made for the office in the United Kingdom there is no need to make provision for travelling overseas by Public Service Commissioners to go and recruit. If we do that we shall pay £6,270. Continuing to search for items of expenditure which could be excised from the Estimates, I find that the Government has made provision for a block of flats for Eastern Regional Ministers to be built in Lagos to the tune of £30,000. I do not know why we want to build flats for Eastern Regional Ministers in Lagos. (*Government Bench: That is a mistake: the flats are for the Eastern Region*). Even then I still cannot see why. Furthermore, in the Capital Development programme also it is earmarked to build a new Government House at £160,000. You will remember that during the Governor's Speech I mentioned that

I do not know whether it is really necessary, considering our finances or our economic standing, to build a new Government House to the tune of £160,000. Again, in the Estimates for 1959-60 a new Premier's residence was estimated at £30,000; this year it is being estimated at £95,000. I do not think that our Premier will really want to live in a house built with £95,000. When we consider the finances of this Region you will agree that it is reasonable to save as much as we can so that we can invest. We can deprive ourselves of certain amenities at the moment and in a few years to come even if we are not living those who will live at that time will have something to look forward to and for which to be grateful to their predecessors.

What prevents this Region from introducing lottery, horse racing and betting? After all we are wanting to get enough money and in Ireland there is the Dublin Hospital Trust. The primary purpose is to get enough money to support the Hospitals and I do not see why we cannot do such a thing in this Region, even on a minor scale or in an exploratory scale, to increase the revenue of this Region.

I would also require the Minister of Agriculture to look into the question of the item of Agricultural Sales which I think can be generally increased.

It is fair enough to tax those who can afford to pay without feeling the nightmare of taxation as hunting them day and night. The under-employed men in the rural areas of this Region would be extremely grateful to a generous Government conscious of its financial difficulties and limitations but still sympathetic to the plight of these people in the rural areas. When all the points I have raised have been collated it will be realised that it is still possible to spare the increase for the humblest (economically) in our society. And if it is still necessary as a last resort to increase the tax, a flat rate of half a crown should be the maximum.

I beg to support.

**Mr A. J. Ekpe** (Opobo Division): When the Minister of Finance in his usual able, suave and courteous manner presented the Budget a few days ago, and nicknamed it "Independence Budget", he was discharging a painful duty with a pleasantry characteristic of an Advocate



with a trying case in his hands; for the Budget is not Independent but Dependent. At page 3 of his Speech, the Minister in a forthright manner intimated . . .

**Mr G. C. Okeya** (Owerri Division): Point of Order—Standing Order No. 3 (2).

**Mr Speaker:** Hon. Members, this Standing Order says:

“A Member may speak only from the seat allocated to him.”

I think reference had been made in this House to that and I think I said I came here to observe that it is a convention in this House that Members of the Opposition Front Bench could speak from anywhere other than their seats. I think it is a good convention and I maintain it.

**Mr Ekpe:** At page 3 of the printed Budget Speech the Minister had stated in a forthright manner—I quote:

“I see in the current trend of revenue and expenditure certain dangers for the future . . . The most careful forecasts which I can make suggest that a truly buoyant revenue cannot be sustained until a real expansion takes place in this Region’s economy.”

And he further emphasised this state of affairs in the last but one paragraph of page 4 where he climbed down his buoyancy tower to the stark and naked realisation that—

“The danger of which I have spoken is that the cost will increase faster than the increase in our revenue, a situation which cannot continue indefinitely.”

The first defect of the quality of the Budget is that 64 per cent of the Estimates is derived from statutory share of Federal Revenue and only 36 per cent is derived from Regional sources. Experience of the previous year has shown that we may not expect much from the statutory Federal Revenue because, as the Minister himself has stated, in the last twelve months there has been a shortfall of £270,000 in the import and excise duties on tobacco, and what guarantee is there that the position is likely to improve, especially now that we have been informed by Federal Statisticians that there is a slight decrease in the consumption

of tobacco due to the fact that tobacco is indicated as a source of lung cancer. Lung cancer, we are informed, is a very terrible disease and the fact that it emanates from tobacco is enough to discourage people from the consumption of it. Also there is bound to be some slight decrease in our own share from the Distributable Pool, as has been indicated by the Minister of Finance in his speech. Now, if these indications are true then we can expect that one avenue of our revenue flow from the Federal source has therefore staggered.

Another source of revenue which cannot be very dependable is the yield from rents and royalties from mineral oil mined within the Region. As the Minister himself has stated, whatever he hoped to get from that source is a forecast, and forecasts as we know, are full of uncertainties.

Government has also intimated that it is not budgeting for any royalty from coal. This step is taken in sympathy with the fate of miners in the coal crisis. How wise is the step taken, is a matter for further consideration. I had thought that the £200,000 coal royalty can go a long way to resettle some of the retrenched miners in the land. So I would like Government to reconsider this matter and see whether by foregoing this £200,000 we are not doing the miners more harm than helping their cause. While on the question of revenue I would like to place on record my strong disagreement with the new increase in tax rates, especially for the low income group. If we accept the popular benefit theory of taxation, which lays down that a Government confers numerous benefits on the citizens and the tax burden should be so distributed that each citizen pays in proportion to the benefit the individual receives, then my constituency should in fairness and justice be exempt from the new rates of increase, because there are no measurable advantages or tangible benefits for the tax burden they have borne all these years. The inability to pay is also another problem for the Minister of Finance. When he visited my Division a few weeks ago, he saw for himself and heard the groans of the cross-section of the people on the low ebb of their economic potential.

If this Government has adopted a progressive tax system and not a regressive tax system I would have had nothing to quarrel about. But



[MR EKPE]

in the present increased rates the generality of the peasants who are poor are most hit and are called upon to pay higher rates in proportion to their income. A poor man, and for that purpose, a low income group, spends most of his income on food, clothing, rents and on other necessities of life. But the bulk of the rich man's income is spent on luxuries, or is added to his savings. I do not think that it is the intention of this Region to create a class of privileged people who are able to send their children to universities and to higher institutions of learning and thereby secure their earning capacity in the future whilst the masses of the people who are living in poverty can hardly be properly fed with nourishing food. I am appealing to Government to review at the earliest opportunity the present regressive tax system. There has been an increase too in the rates for petrol and auto gas oil. I would like to remind Government that the incidence of this taxation is going to be passed on to the low income group and the peasant generally by way of increases in the prices of vehicular-borne goods and vehicular services, because if you increase the price of petrol, certainly the prices of goods that are borne by lorries should rise. And I also like to suggest that in order that Government may find money to meet the increased cost of services, the higher income group should be able to make more sacrifices towards the public revenue, and this Government can do this by introducing a graduated scale of rates, larger income being taxed higher rates than smaller ones. This is very significant, because from the study of the Fiscal System in the United Kingdom, we find that the rich have to pay more tax for the maintenance of the poor; but in this Region, it is the opposite way. We find that the burden of taxation weighs too heavily on the poor while the rich man can go with a very slight increase. For instance, an ordinary peasant is going to pay 5s more for earning upwards of £60 while a Minister with three children who earns £3,000 will only pay an increase of £1. If you weigh the loss suffered by these two people, you will find that that of the ordinary citizen is more—is heavier. I am glad to hear that there is continued growth in efficiency in the machinery of tax collection. It is hoped that more and more under-taxed, and tax evaders especially in the urban areas would be brought into the net of the Internal Revenue Division.

I think that Government should be congratulated for accepting the recommendations of the Mbanefo Report with certain modifications, especially as regards the exclusion of the super-scale grades. This, I feel, is a bold step to reduce the prevalence of inequality in the distribution of income. It is not the intention of this Government as I have said, to build up a society in which there is a striking contrast between the rich and the poor, a society where a handful of privileged people whose vast wealth enables them to live in incredible luxury and extravagance, with numerous American automobiles, palatial residences and costly furnishings (those who have these things are getting tickled), while their fellow men in hundreds of thousands are in grinding poverty, housed in flimsy homes, poorly clad, unable to pay for adequate medical attention and nourishing food. This does not lead to economic welfare, and it does not even lead to contentment. Now you will not be surprised that a lot of trouble can arise, when for instance, I find that I am a tax-payer and I am not being assisted by Government to increase my earning power, while some people go about in big Ministry cars and they do not care for my welfare. I should become so upset that I do not know the way to go. Furthermore, a bolder step should be taken to bridge the yawning economic chasm between the junior and senior civil servants. The presence of real poverty amongst the peasantry in spite of the progress we claim is going on as one of the paradoxes of the Region and our much vaunted civilisation. This brings me to the urgent matter of improvement in our agricultural economy. It is time indeed that the Regional Government should encourage the peasant farmers in their bid to improve the quality and output of their crops both for export and for local consumption by grant-aided farm settlements. Here, I think they can borrow a leaf from the Western Region because from what we have read in the newspapers and from what we have actually seen it appears that the Western Regional Government is introducing a plan for the resettlement of young school leavers and thereby cutting down the rate of unemployment in that Region. This is a great economic potential in itself because it helps to build up a population that will stand on its feet and be able to contribute more to the revenue of the Region. Loans or gift of money or advance of money should be made available



to the peasants of this Region. That in itself will help him to improve and be more useful to the Region and to the Government.

The result of various research establishments should be made available chiefly to the farmers. There is no point having established an institution, they produce through their scientific research certain materials which are to be used but these materials are so expensive that the ordinary farmer cannot afford them. I feel that Government should subsidise results of research and experiment so that such results as are obtained could be made available very cheaply to the ordinary farmer.

There is one curious thing I have observed in this Region. It appears that our prosperity can only be measured by the number of sky-scrapers that have sprung up in the Headquarters and in most urban areas. I think the real yardstick to measure prosperity in any community is to go to the rural area and see whether the people live in comparable leisure with some comparable comfort and wealth—good houses put up to live in. That should be the yardstick to judge our prosperity and not because a few people in the township have been able to put up some fine buildings you conclude that the Region is progressing or wealthy.

I will now draw your attention to the various expenditure proposals in the Estimates. The provision for Ceremonial Officer is an expensive luxury which we cannot afford at the present moment. Since this Region came into being, we have been receiving many august visitors, including royalties. There was never any need to have a special Ceremonial Officer to make arrangements for this Region. There is a tendency for this Government to concentrate on pomp and pageantry. I do not think we can afford this. Now, a sum exceeding £1,500 is made available for this post and I appeal to Government to freeze this post.

**Mr Okeya:** Point of Order! Standing Order 77 (3):

“... Individual Heads in the Estimates may not be debated on second reading...”

**Mr Speaker:** I agree with the Government Chief Whip but I think it is technically tied. I think he is criticising some sort of policy.

**Mr Ekpe:** Now, I come to the Regional Legislature. Except that as the hon. Member from Aba has already said, we are not impressed by the increase of £40 in the salaries of hon. Members. This will undoubtedly invite trouble for Members in their constituencies and entail criticism from the civil servants. Government know what to do but they do not want to do it. They are receiving upwards of £58 for their consolidated running allowances, why do they not add this pittance to the consolidated running costs to help Members maintain their cars, pay off their vehicle advances and work as parliamentarians in their various constituencies? Besides, this money—£40—is going to attract legislators into the clutch of the internal revenue man. We are trying to avoid such things as much as we can. By this increase of £40, they are going to take every month—as tax—£5 5s from Members. This is dangerous politically and economically. I am urging the House to press the Minister of Finance to remove this amount and add it to the transport running costs.

I now come to Capital Expenditure. As that master of economic science has really pointed out, the content of Capital Development is very important indeed. There are two aims of Capital Expenditure. These aims are:

- (i) that Capital Expenditure should be devoted to purposes which make direct contribution to economic welfare;
- (ii) that Public Expenditure should be directed to increase the productive power in the long run.

If we examine the content of our Capital Budget, we will find that most of the money has gone for pomp and pageantry and self-aggrandisement. Examine the figure—£1,958,910 is to go in for buildings. The House of Commons which contains 657 people has not been rebuilt for many centuries. In fact, there are not enough seats in the House of Commons to contain Members and some Members even stand behind the Speaker. Why can we not use this House for the time being. Why is it necessary to build a magnificent edifice to accommodate the legislators. Why not use this money for the development of capital project in the Region—something that will bring money to the Region. Can we conveniently afford it? I feel this is not



[MR EKPE]

in conformity with the policy of any truly socialist party and as the Government caters for the well-being of the society, I am seriously appealing to Government to tone down this expenditure on building.

I agree that road and bridge construction is very vital to the economic development of a country. I have nothing to quarrel with the £1,464,850 voted for road project. The provision this year for industrial and commercial development is only £679,680. This is not adequate if you consider that the mainstay of the future economic welfare of this Region depends on how much money we spend on capital project that will in the end bring in more money. The Leader of the Opposition . . .

*Sitting suspended at 12 noon.*

*Sitting resumed at 12.30 p.m.*

**Mr Ekpe:** As I was saying, I would have loved to see a lot of capital development funds expended on the purchase of capital goods in the nature of factors of production. I am also consoled by what the Minister of Finance said—that within a short time he would review both the contents of the capital development programme and also provide more funds. I have a few points which I want to suggest to him to take into consideration when reviewing the capital development programme. I would like some investigation to be made into the suitability of the soil in Opobo Division for the development of this new cocoa specie. It is a fact that unless we begin to plan now to have additional cash crops in the Region, we shall be faced with problems of unemployment when the newly-found oil from wells and various other sources will come to replace our palm oil; but we can forestall this by developing cocoa and other cash crops, so that in due course, we can still maintain the balance of the economy of the Region.

I would also like some investigations to be made into the Andoni flats for the purposes of growing swamp rice. We have been informed that in India and in Burma swamp rice has been developed to the extent that it contributes a great deal to the favourable balance of trade and of payments in those countries.

We have opportunity in the swamps and in the flats of this Region and we should make some very serious investigation into these swamps to see if we could use them for the development of Rice Industry.

Also I feel that the research that is being made into the methods of curing fish in this Region is not enough. It is realised that fish is a very important commodity which if properly developed in this Region could help to increase employment for the fishermen. The plant being installed at Opobo for refrigeration and curing of fish is a very small one. I had thought that along with this plant also should be developed deep sea fishing because Opobo happens to present a very useful and very wide area for the development of this industry.

We have a lot of timber and I think lumbering as an industry could be developed in the Region especially in the old Calabar Province and in certain parts of Owerri and Rivers Provinces. These are some of the steps which, if taken, could help to stem the tide of unemployment in the Region and to create a balanced economy and welfare state which I know is the ambition of all nationalists in this country.

I would like also to refer to animal health. It is a pity that in the whole of Calabar Province you hardly have Veterinary Officers who can look into the animal health of the stocks of cattle in that area. I know that in my own village hundreds of cattle have died because of the new type of disease which is prevalent in the area. The people do not know how to treat these diseases. When a goat is ill they rush it to the market for selling. This is a very bad practice indeed because these sick goats can affect the health of the people who eat them. Veterinary service should be extended in the Region to cover Opobo area and also sections of Owerri Province because as I was passing through Owerri the other day, I saw some of their goats really sick, and the owners complaining that many of them have been dying.

I would like to say one or two things about the reorganisation of the Civil Service. We know that there are still vestiges of colonialism in our Civil Service in that on bureaucracy is based the old colonial system of the Civil Service. We want a Civil



Service that is efficient and that will co-operate with the Government of the day. We also want a Civil Service that is economical to run. We do not want most of the revenue of the Region as it has been indicated to be spent on Personal Emoluments. There are more vital issues and more important economic matters to be solved in the Region than the payment of some redundant Civil Servants. I will appeal to the hon. Premier and those in whose portfolio is the whole matter of the Civil Service to cause reorganisation to take place. As the Leader of the Opposition has said, there should be a rigorous campaign for savings in the Region. You will notice that in this Region people spend so much money on luxuries and on drinks. It is true we do get some money from liquor but liquor should only be restricted to those who can conveniently afford to drink. I would suggest a small increase of tax on liquor and also on tobacco to dissuade people because quite apart from the economic part of it there is the social aspect of it. These things ruin the moral part of a society—if people continue to take more of these drinks.

Then finally, is the question of expansion of Co-operative Societies to help in bolstering rural economy. In the rural areas there are no banks; there are no financial houses but almost in every village now we have Co-operative Societies, and if our people can be helped to save and to invest in these Co-operative Societies it will help the local community to do a lot more for themselves. I would like to see an increase in the national income and also the income *per capita* because these are the things that help us to know how far we are growing as a nation economically and how far our individual members in the community are faring. It can also help us to plan. I do not think that the newly created Ministry of Economic Planning can work efficiently unless we have the full data that can help the new Ministry to function. For instance, we shall require population figures which are up-to-date and we shall also require the income *per capita* of the people in the Region. These are two factors that can help us to plan economically for the development of a welfare state.

**Mr V. A. Nwankwo** (Abakaliki Division): I rise to support the Bill and to congratulate the Minister of Finance for the able way he has presented the Estimates of this year.

When one looks carefully through the speech, it is not merely a matter of exaggeration, but a matter of fact, that the speech covers all that we require about the development of this Region. It is the best of all the speeches that have ever been made in this hon. House. I must also say that of all the Ministers of Finance in the whole country, I think the Minister of Finance of this Region is the most brilliant and we should praise him. The most satisfactory thing is that there has been a surplus more than what was estimated during the last Budget Speech and that shows that revenue was collected more than had been expected. But there is one thing I would like to mention and that is the question of what the Minister states at page 4 of his Speech:

“The 36 per cent that we raise through Regional taxes may well expand as we press ahead with our own Development Programme. But the contribution which that expansion can make to the growth of our total revenues must be proportionately small in the early years of our development. We must never forget this when we make plans for the future.

“I mention this now because it has a close bearing on the speed with which we can hope to expand our social services during the next few years. I shall show in a moment how rapidly the cost of these is rising. The danger of which I have spoken is that the cost will increase faster than the increase in our revenue, a situation which obviously cannot continue indefinitely.”

In this case he was pointing out the danger that was probably awaiting us in the future, and I would ask that the Government should tighten our future expenditure in the same line the Federal Government has proposed to do—to stop the granting of car advances and Basic allowances to Members of Parliament and to Civil Servants of all grades. We should find other means such as creating a Co-operative Body whose function shall be mainly to give out loans for purchase of cars to Members of Parliament and Civil Servants, other than the Government giving out advances day in, day out to hon. Members and Civil Servants so that we will have a very good revenue with which to carry out our requirements. I am suggesting that the Government should consider



[MR NWANKWO]  
the step that the Federal Government has now taken.

Another point I would like to make is on the Internal Revenue Division and its method of collecting taxes. I do not agree with the Minister when he said that the Internal Revenue Division is doing very well and that the staff has been increased by obtaining more promising candidates with university and professional qualifications. If this Department had been well organised as the Minister would have us to believe, then there would have been much hope of collecting tax in a much quicker and efficient way. Looking into daily publications and other means of advertisement or announcements, it appears that the people of this Region have not been wide awake or are not keen on paying their taxes. We have just heard that in a Division in the rural areas over 500 persons were arrested and tried for failing to pay their taxes. In fact, these persons were arrested for not paying their arrears of tax. There are other Divisions where people are in two to three years arrears of tax. I think the method of giving certain powers to some District Councils to collect taxes should be properly investigated so as to secure the best method of ensuring that taxes are collected quickly and at the proper time. What is happening at the moment is that either the tax agents or the tax collectors are not given adequate commission on their collections or they are not properly punished for failing to carry out their duty as required by Law. That has caused confusion and delay in collecting tax in the rural areas where I have got some experience of the method of collecting tax. Therefore, a method should be devised whereby tax collection is reorganised, especially as the Internal Revenue Division is increasing in strength with the number of staff being employed. A tax collector himself should be a man of substance. I consider that it is unthinkable to appoint a pauper a tax collector and make him in charge of £200 to £400 or the whole money collected in the area. This is a danger, and often the man appointed is not influential, and the worst of it is that nobody knows him in the community. I have heard a District Officer telling people that the oldest man in the family should be in charge of tax collection. I should think that that idea is wrong. The oldest man in the community is even not physically fit to stand on his legs. In some cases

where he has children they have all travelled out to get their livelihood and this old man relies on some other people to collect the tax for him. Not infrequently the oldest man does not know how to keep the money he has collected in a safe place. What is the need of looking for the oldest man in the family? That is a very bad idea and should be stopped. Tax collection should be done by a man who is well-to-do; a man who is afraid that if he fails to collect his tax at the proper time he will be punished or his property sold. Going to court causes no fear to a pauper and if you tell him that he will be fined, he says "well, you can fine me but you cannot get anything out of me". And perhaps he may use the money he collected for his own needs. What are you going to do? I have seen many cases where a man did not care to be charged to prison. So something should be done to reorganise this state of affairs.

I do not quite agree with one hon. Friend who spoke and suggested an increase in the amount payable on driving licence. I have some amendments to make to that proposal. First of all, the world will look at it that we have two kinds of driving licences, one for private cars and the other for commercial lorries. Now, some drivers receive from £10 to £12 a month as pay—some £14, according to the type of motor vehicle they drive, quite apart from their subsistence allowance. The driving licence for this type of commercial driver should be increased to £5 and private ones increased to £2 10s annually. It would be seen that the private car driver makes nothing out of his car while the commercial driver makes a lot of money. And again, a legislation should be made in this House to check infiltration. As a matter of fact, many people in this Region run to other Regions to get their driving licences. I have seen people going to Makurdi or Asaba to get their licences; so legislation should be made in this House to the effect that anybody bearing a driving licence not issued in this Region should be penalised or he pays something in addition to make up what revenue is being lost as a result.

Another is that vehicle licence fees should be increased. Transport owners are making lots of money. From my experience any lorry owner of five-ton capacity gets £150 net



monthly. It is my experience that when people go to buy five-ton lorries on hire purchase they sign agreement to pay whatever they owe within six months. I have seen where a driver paid the total cost of the lorry at £1,500 in a period of six months. The owner made a lot of profit within these six months. That is why I say that vehicle licence fees should be raised to a higher rate.

One other point I would like to raise again is the proposal to establish Customary Courts throughout the Region in the next financial year. I do not know why Government is slow about the establishment of these Customary Courts.

In January there was an announcement that the Government would establish customary courts by the middle of February, but up till now nothing has happened. Government is now saying that the customary courts will be established between now and the end of the next financial year, i.e., between 1st April, 1960 and 31st March, 1961.

**Mr Speaker:** How does the hon. Member connect the establishment of the customary courts with the financial policy of the Government?

**Mr Nwankwo:** What I have just said is an introduction to what I really want to say. I would like to advise the Government to establish what is called a registry in each province when establishing customary courts. Each registry should consist of the senior staff and the man to be appointed as the Registrar should be a man with some legal experience so that he will be the medium of advice and control between the Legal Adviser and the customary courts.

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Justice (Mr D. A. Nnaji):** Point of Order, Sir. Standing Order 30 (2).

**Mr Speaker:** Standing Order 30 (2) reads as follows:—

“A Member must confine his observations to the subject under discussion and may not introduce matter irrelevant thereto”.

I wish to call the attention of the hon. Member to that.

**Mr Nwankwo:** I will take note of that.

Some time ago an hon. Member said something about the increase of £40 in the salaries of hon. Members. If £40 is added to £800 then it makes the tax to be paid by each Member to be £40 5s instead of the original £36 5s. In other words, the present increase makes each hon. Member to receive less than he was receiving before the increase. But the feeling of the man in the street is that hon. Members are receiving 15 per cent salary increase. I would therefore suggest that Government should merge this £40 with the Consolidated Travelling Allowance instead of putting this increase on the £800 per annum received by Members of the House.

I am very pleased to read from a periodical about the reply made by His Excellency at Port Harcourt that it has been decided to build an oil refinery at Port Harcourt, although I was disappointed by a subsequent statement made by an official of the Shell-BP that there was no decision of that kind. I would, therefore, suggest to Government to seize this opportunity to check up from the Federal Government whether the Governor-General's statement at Port Harcourt is correct.

With these few remarks, I support the Bill.

**Mr O. O. Ita (Eket Division):** I have just very few remarks to make. First of all, I have to congratulate my Friend, the Minister of Finance, for being able at last to see what I had all the time been asking him to see, that there is something wrong with the finances of the Region. He has now agreed that the finances of the Region are not as buoyant as they should be.

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** The last speaker has said that the Minister of Finance has admitted that the finances of the Region are not buoyant. What I did say was that “The most careful forecasts which I can make suggest that a truly buoyant revenue cannot be sustained until a real expansion takes place in this Region's economy”.



**Mr O. O. Ita:** I do not think I was reading the hon. Gentleman's speech up-side-down. All that the Minister has said is that the buoyancy of the Region's finances cannot be sustained. Last year I understood him to say that the revenue of the Region was buoyant but now the buoyancy cannot be sustained. I was saying last year that the Minister of Finance was building all his economy on windfall. That was my argument. If he has come back now to say that he has come to the conclusion that the buoyancy of the Region's finances cannot be sustained, it means that he has agreed with what I was saying last year.

Another thing is that he will also agree with me that there was a time in this House that two of us were struggling to create the Department of Internal Revenue and I think then I used to call it "Inland Revenue" and he used to call it "Internal Revenue", and at that time, the internal revenue we got from our taxes in the Region was not more than £36,000 a year, if I am not mistaken, about four years ago. He went into work and today he has come up triumphant with not less than over £2,000,000 from our taxes. I believe that with the new proposal he is making, he can still make more revenue from that source.

Hon. Nwankwo from Abakaliki was talking about these tax collectors. I think I agree with him in very many respects about people appointed to collect tax. As the hon. Gentleman suggested, Revenue Inspectors will need to be trained, otherwise, it will be very difficult to tract certain people who will never pay their taxes in the most admirable way. The Tax Inspectors must befriend the local heads and the people in the villages to know precisely those who are there and who are really grown up to pay tax so that some people would not escape without declaring that they are old enough to pay tax and it is always so difficult for an outsider who is not a local man to tract these people. I have to warn my Friend that when appointing Revenue Inspectors he should also instruct them to work with local men. (*Interruptions*). It is no use at all. I have seen this sort of teams being appointed by Local Government Bodies. They do not just help to increase the revenue at all; they help to increase what they put into their pockets.

I have seen so many of them being taken to Court, being fined. Whoever is able to pay 5s, that one is released to go and pay tax but who ever is unable to pay that, that one is taken to the Native Court to pay a fine. That is just what I have been seeing in my area and I do not know whether that obtains in other places.

The most novel thing about the Budget this year is the Ministry of Economic Planning. That I think has been suggested previously by the Leader of Opposition and I think there has been a promise made that that Ministry will be created and I am very happy to know this year, being the last year under colonial status, that going into our new independent status, we are now going to take upon ourselves to plan our economy. I would like to make just a little suggestion. While I agree with the appointment of an Economic Adviser, I will also like to point out that nowadays it is so difficult to have one who is an all-round person in one particular subject. It is just not good enough to appoint one man to do one work. Today, I say I am a Lawyer. You may say that I should go and do International Law. I probably have never done that in my life even though I am a Lawyer. And you will probably say: go and do Criminal Law. I may probably be deficient there. And you may say: go and do this or that part of law. What the Government should do is to appoint a team of experts. I would suggest that to get a proper economic advice in the Region we should have a team consisting of Statisticians, men qualified in analytical and theoretical parts of Economics, men who are very much interested in heavy industries—that is just part of Economics too; men who are interested in light industries and trade and International Relations and men who are also very much interested in Agricultural Economics. If we have a team like that, say about five experts who work together, the men would be able to produce a coherent sort of advice which will help the Government to be able to read between the lines and know what projects to support. Otherwise, if we take only one person, he will probably go all out thinking that his own field is the best and he will continue planning all along his own field and probably that will just leave the field which would have been easier for the Government to embark upon because we have no other person and there, of course, it will then be necessary to go back to



what the Leader of Opposition said that they be incorporated into the Administrative system of the Region. They could be left there as experts, working as research people, to help the Region just as we can set up a research field either in science or other subjects to help the Region. It may be a sort of political appointment so that they could have their own rates of salaries quite different from what the civil servants receive because they will receive the salaries of what experts receive and will continue to work in that way. On the other hand, of course, if they prefer to be incorporated into the civil service, there is no harm in selecting some people in the civil service and keeping them together to work, provided they have the essential qualifications in different fields in order to work together.

Another thing I would like to mention is what happened in 1952. When we first came, some of us visited Abakaliki where we have lead-zinc deposits. We were shown round. One grand old chief asked us: "You young men, you are educated; can you tell us whether they have discovered anything inside the ground?" We replied: "We do not know". I just want to ask the Government whether that scheme has been abandoned?—I mean the lead-zinc scheme where the people in this Region could have been employed, particularly the coal miners who lost their jobs during the coal crisis. But it seems to me that Government has not made any definite statement about this lead-zinc business—whether it has abandoned or suspended the scheme, whether it will be taken up in the future or whether the lead-zinc itself has not been discovered, most of us do not know.

Another way of helping the revenue of the Region is to tighten up all the different Ministries of the Region. There is a great deal of waste of money in the Ministry of Local Government. If the Minister does not like to hear this, it is a pity I cannot help it. He may think I am going to attack him. What happens in this Ministry is this: Sometimes the Government will make a law that a certain amount of work should be given out on contract but it is not very often that they stick to the

law made by the Government. They will pretend to be doing development services by themselves and exceed even the limit given to them. Now take for instance Okobo-Oron Rural District Council. We obtained a loan of £14,000 to build a market and you will be surprised to hear that since 1955 the market has not yet been opened and has not yet been properly built and there is no question of investigation into it. Now there is also this question of surcharge which the Government is not taking up. All these waste Government revenue. As we continue to waste this money so do we continue asking the Government to give more money and it is this money which would have been diverted to some other useful purposes that is sent back to the Local Government bodies and that means a great deal of waste of money because there is no real co-operation between one Ministry and the other. I notice in my area that the Ministry of Education would examine students and pass them as those who are qualified to be appointed as teachers and then the Ministry of Local Government will just appoint other people without informing the Ministry of Education so that I do not precisely know what is happening. It is for the Ministers themselves to sort out these things. They entail a waste and a loss of prestige, and when such a situation arises people themselves have no confidence in the Government and can hardly work for the Government.

Another place where there is a great deal of loss of revenue is the Ministry of Justice. The wages or salaries paid to some of these Native Court Judges are so low that they can hardly collect anything into the coffers of the Government—a great deal goes into their pockets, and I do not blame them for that. Take for instance in Calabar, some Native Court members receive only 15s a month. How much do you think, when sitting for a whole month, these people can make for the Government either by fines or otherwise? They will even advise the litigants to come to their houses for their cases to be settled. So all we have to talk about the finances of the Region is that we have got to tidy up everything and replan. We are moving from colonial status to independent status; all responsibility now lies on us;



[MR O. O. ITA]

we cannot go now to any godfather to assist us; we have to assist ourselves. Therefore, we require every intelligent person in the Region to contribute in the building up of the Region.

**Mr A. O. Chikwendu** (Bende Division): I have to congratulate the Minister of Finance for the masterly rendition of the Budget Speech and for his ability to produce a balanced Budget. The estimated revenue of a little over £15 million for the ensuing year is encouraging. It is significant, however, to note that about two-thirds, to the tune of £10,719,000 comes from outside the Region. I know it is our money, but the amount which comes from this Region is a little over £5 million, and it is roughly little more than one-third of the total revenue of the Region. This is indeed quite a healthy condition. The total expenditure of nearly £16 million will still leave us a surplus of £114,000 against the next financial year. The position, I think, is quite healthy and should not cause any alarm whatsoever.

The Minister, after giving details of the various financial adjustments and various schemes and proposals for development projects, proceeded to tell us what I consider to be the most important thing in the Budget. I should rather read his words on pages 3 and 4 if you would permit me:

“The most careful forecasts which I can make suggest that a truly buoyant revenue cannot be sustained until a real expansion takes place in this Region’s economy”.

It is to this portion of the Minister’s Speech that I wish to address myself. In short, the Minister would wish us to make suggestions as to how the economy of the Region will be improved and expanded. I have to start firstly by congratulating Government for evolving a vigorous road development. Those of you who are motorists will already know that most of the roads in the Region have been tarred, and this makes for quick evacuation of produce. (*Interruptions: How many of them have been tarred?*) It is a step in the right

direction and Government should continue and complete the road programme.

I think there are two ways by which real expansion of the economy of the Region can be achieved. Firstly, by making use of what already exists. There should be agricultural expansion in the Region. There are people who would wish the research institutes and experimental farms to be closed, but I think that their existence is very essential. Government should make a new approach to the problem of agriculture. Instead of giving small loans or large loans to individual farmers, who never repay these loans, Government should encourage the establishment of co-operative farms so that farmers can borrow money from the co-operative banks which they can repay. I am asking that Government should stop giving large loans to individual farmers; rather than do that Government should go out and acquire large land. (*Interruptions: From where?*) Government should come to Bende; we have enough land. Government should pursue an effective soil analysis, and after having analysed various soils in the Region and found out what particular crops could grow in them, Government should establish such farms as will yield quick crops. Government should go to Ogoja and produce sufficient rice which could be sold within the year and secure ready money. Similarly, Government should produce yams, benniseed, cassava. (*Interruptions*). They may not attach importance to what I am saying but what I am saying will produce ready money. It will give employment to most of those boys who pass Standard VI and are roaming about. It is a means of producing ready money that I am suggesting and Members from both sides should give me chance to develop my views. Besides this, Government should continue establishing large cocoa plantations, palm tree plantations; what the U.A.C. does at Indian Estate or a thing like the Cameroon Development Corporation should be established in the Eastern Region. As a matter of fact there should be banana plantations. The E.R.D.C. can provide a means of achieving this objective, just as we have Cashew plantations. Similar plantations should be established because they will give employment to many people and will increase our produce and boost up the economy of the Region. I would suggest that the Minister of



Agriculture should see to it that not only the cashew nuts are extracted but Government should import machinery to extract the oil from cashew.

The next point which is worth considering, and on this point I agree with the Leader of the Opposition, is that industries should be given serious consideration; and to that end I will say that it seems to me as if God has created the Eastern Region to be the richest part of Nigeria because three important minerals are found in this Region, namely, oil (and already we are beginning to reap full benefits from oil), coal and iron. Of all the various industrial projects mentioned I do not think that any will be as useful as the smelting of iron in this Region. We have the coal here and we have iron ore here; I do not see any reason why we should not establish coal and iron industry in this Region, and to that end I am appealing to the Minister of Commerce to tour Europe, particularly Germany, and invite financiers who are interested in Coal and Iron industries. If they come over here and establish iron smelting industry, I think it will yield good dividends. It will be done on share basis and I am suggesting that the Minister should offer them 60 per cent of the shares and . . . (*Some hon. Members: No! No!*). That is my view; it is my view. Government should offer them 60 per cent of the shares and retain 40 per cent because if such industry is established and we are able to produce one million tons of iron ore in one year, at the present cost of £60 per ton if we receive four hundred thousand tons of iron ore it will give us £24,000,000, and if we can get £24,000,000 from one source in one year I am sure it will be a rich venture indeed. (*An hon. Member: But they will be richer*). It does not matter; let them be richer, but if we can make £15 or £20 million in a year I think it is something we should be happy about. Besides that, it will give employment to many people. Many more people will be required to go into the mines and produce the coal. It will give employment to the people who will be working in the quarries and in the furnaces and it will produce secondary industries. Here in Enugu we have a lot of sand in the Ekulu River and we have plenty of timber, so that we can produce secondary industries like moulding, pot-making, etc. I do not see the reason why the Minister of Commerce should not overlook

every other item and attach particular importance to the question of iron smelting in this Region.

I do not believe that the frequent increases of pay to civil servants is as good as providing a social security measure for workers. I remember last year I suggested to Government that they should initiate some social security measure and I suggested at that time that they should collect 3s per pound per month from every worker in this Region and then pay a similar amount for each worker and this money will go into our Treasury. I am sure that if we receive 6s, that is 3s from the worker and 3s from Government and pay it back into Government fund, it will leave us with a lot of money for quite a lot of purposes. I suggested it last year and I do not know whether or not Government is considering it. I think that the future security of workers and their dependants is more important than whatever little advantage we may give them by offering them an increase of £1 or 10s for that matter.

I would ask, now that the quality of palm oil produced in this Region is of a very high standard indeed, the Minister of Commerce should ensure that they secure a better price for our palm oil in the world market.

I have to congratulate the Minister of Finance for the improvement effected in the machinery for tax collection and to this end I would suggest that instead of only increasing the indirect tax on one or two commodities the increase should be spread to all commodities, and I am suggesting that it should range from ½d, 1d, 2d and it should not be more than 3d on any commodity. But it should be spread to all commodities including salt, soft drinks, hard drinks . . . (*Interruptions*). I am making a suggestion. I am saying that we spread that to all commodities but it should not be high; it should be small. If we can pay 3½d to go to the cinema every night I do not see why we cannot pay 1d or ½d or 2d for the commodities we enjoy.

I wish to conclude this speech with a note of warning. The Governments of the Federation should be very cautious and careful with regard to any repressive economic measures they want to introduce directed to civil servants or to Members of the various Parliaments



[MR CHIKWENDU]

during this year. They should be careful and cautious in introducing such measures. Discretion they say is the better part of valour.

**Mr Speaker:** I think this is a question to be put to the Federal Government.

**Mr Chikwendu:** In conclusion, I have also to suggest that whether we are going to be Communistic or socialistic or whatever it is, those who are introducing these "istics" or "isms" should be very careful and cautious: they should not do anything which should stand between us and the object of our mission; they should allow us to achieve our objective before they do whatever they want to do.

I beg to support.

**Dr W. Onubogu** (Onitsha Division): Thank you very much indeed for recognising me. Excepting for a few remarks that I would like to make I think that the Speech by the hon. Minister of Finance was an excellent one. It was very encouraging and I choose to call it Confidence Budget. Confidence in that even the Members of the Opposition have very little to say against it. Confidence in that I am sure that it has already engendered more confidence in the Government. Three days ago we were called upon to step up a little bit the tax of the people of this Region.

As a matter of fact I was not very happy that that was done, but the fact remains that with the increased amenities as the former speakers have said, money must be found to meet them up. I feel that Government has not exhausted other avenues of indirect taxation. I do not want to bother myself with the Estimates which I think are quite in order. They can easily be read and understood and there is adequate explanation in the memoranda that makes it quite easy. Well, I am going to suggest to Government that rather than forcing direct taxation on people of this country, they should consider the introduction of lottery. It has been working very efficiently in the Western Region. I do not like this attitude of 'holier than thou' that we are playing here. When it was to be introduced some years ago, we said it was immoral. What is immoral about it?—Nothing! Even if they

think it is immoral, what do they think about this question of our money, thousands of pounds, leaving this country every week-end to U.K.? A lot of it goes to Malta, and to Ireland. That money could have been spent here. I am saying that we should stop this 'holier than thou' attitude and help to get money here by introducing this lottery system. If they introduce it in the Eastern Region it will make more people collect money and invest in it. Another point is that the Federal Government is very rich, but even then a few days ago, I happened to know through newspapers that they are now thinking of stopping overseas leave for civil servants. This was introduced many years ago when Europeans were at the head of affairs. That enabled them to have family re-unions and have free trips. The argument then was that it enhanced a man's efficiency. I do not see how it does. I am suggesting very seriously to this Government now that we have decided to come out to the open and tell the people the truth about our financial position. Some hon. Members were playing politics a few months ago when one of the hon. Members for Eket Division was speaking. But I thought what he said was correct in that the Government has now come out to show that even though things seem very rosy at the moment it may not continue for a long time. We never heard such a thing before. I am suggesting that the Government should think very seriously.

Another point is about the entertainment tax. This works well because people do not know when they pay. More cinema houses are springing up. Whether it was forgotten or not, I hope this point will be seriously borne in mind now. Our trouble is not really that the money collected is not enough. It is because the machinery is still faulty. I know that Government is trying very hard. The Eastern Region is very difficult to govern. Government should put in more efforts to detect tax evaders particularly now that we will soon be independent. I am telling you, Mr Speaker, that during assessment period a lot of people continue to hide in corners. You find that these tax evaders keep on running round the country until assessment is finished and so are not assessed. How can we get payment from a person who was not assessed? *An hon. Member: As in Onitsha.* Yes, Onitsha. There is everything in Onitsha.



You know that in the Onitsha market you can get anything. So I am quite sure that a lot of tax evaders are there; but they are not only in Onitsha. They are in Aba, Port Harcourt and in other places, even in Enugu. Hon. Members in this House do not evade tax; they pay. I am saying that this question of tax is not as difficult as it is, if the machinery of collection will be looked into again, and more attention paid to make it work correctly.

Some hon. Members have made suggestion to the Minister of Commerce, or whoever is responsible for getting industries established in the Region. I do not want to add more to what has been said. I just want to say that I disagree with the suggestion that other people should take 60 per cent and we take 40 per cent of the shares. We are charging Government to get money from anywhere. Let them go to Russia; money is money, but the ratio should be 51 per cent: 49 per cent, because they have to provide managerial skill. But I do not support this question of 60 per cent and I hope that hon. Members who made the suggestion will drop the idea.

We got the Standard VI results a few days ago. I am suggesting to the Minister of Education, if he will pay attention, that next time (*Interruptions*). I am saying that efforts should be made to get these results out in time. We all know that many girls are admitted into Secondary Schools only on the understanding that when the results of the Standard VI examination came out they would retain their positions if they passed.

If the results come out and some of them fail, they are asked out. Those who go to teach are asked to go when the results come out and they fail. There is no reason why the Standard VI results which should have come out in December should be delayed till March.

I have already congratulated the Minister of Finance for the fine Budget Speech which I call "Confidence Budget".

I just want to deal with this question of addition of £40 to Members' pay. We have tried to reason out how the £40 came in, but

we could not see whether it was a question of "let us give them £40" or it is our share of the 15 per cent Award. If it is to make up as is done elsewhere in other Houses, then we shall have arrears; otherwise I cannot see how the £40 came about. An hon. Member has already said that with the increase of the £40, that tax of hon. Members increased with £4 5s whereas that of the Ministers will increase only by £1. That being so, I still suggest to the Government that we be left where we are now or it should go to the consolidated allowance; otherwise let us be left at £800. If it is the system as in other places, then it should be retrospective and I wonder where the money will come from. This addition cannot be defined—the Ministers cannot do it even—it is not 15 per cent; it is only 5 per cent. The Government should please reconsider this and when the approved Estimates are out, let this disappear.

**Mr D. E. Akilo** (Udi Division): I rise to support the Appropriation Bill and to thank the Minister of Finance for his excellent Budget Speech which is indeed a masterpiece. I have made several observations and I am glad to say that the system of collecting our Regional income tax has greatly improved and I must seize this opportunity to congratulate the Commissioner of Internal Revenue and the Minister of Finance. It seems that the clerks working in that Division are pulling their weight there but I must sound a note of warning to those junior staff who are sent out to revise the nominal roll to desist from the present corrupt practices of demanding money from those unabled people who cannot afford to pay tax before they are given a certificate of exemption for that financial year. The result is that when these people have no money to pay, these clerks will include their names into the assessment list for the financial year with the result that at the end of the year those tax tickets for the people are returned to the office as unsold and that has upset the proper assessment of the tickets issued already which has entered into the revenue of the Government. So, I should say that there should be a better understanding between the junior staff and the tax collectors and human sympathy upon those people who cannot pay this amount within a year. If this is done, I hope that the assessment will be fair and just.



[MR AKILO]

The next point is that the rebate paid to Collectors should be increased. The Local Government Councillors who are the eyes of the Government as far as law and order are concerned should be given reasonable compensation.

I want to say that tax collectors should be given reasonable rebate and they should be given a time limit within which to collect their taxes and failing which they should forfeit their rebates. I hope that if this is done, the collection of tax will be done within the shortest possible time. Tax drive should not only be limited to the market squares but should be extended to the farms where people are known to be farming in remote areas. At present, more than 40 per cent of the people of Udi are farming in some areas around the Municipality of Enugu and these people hide every year as tax defaulters thereby forming a sort of menace. They go about telling people that they have paid their rates in the township while they have not done so. People on tax drive should round these people up so that they may pay arrears of their taxes. As soon as they start to sell their yams in the market around Enugu they borrow tax tickets from their relatives with which to come to the township to evade tax payment. This is a very bad practice which the Government should stop.

The next point is on agriculture and general resources of the Region. We, the Easterners, believe that the mineral resources of the country lie in our soil. Agricultural and mineral resources are two important resources which will make our Region to be rich in the near future. I am glad the Government has harkened to my suggestion on the floor of this House when I said that the soil around the Do River is excellent for the cultivation of sugar-cane and rice. Our hope therefore lies on both agriculture and oil industry.

It is very gratifying to note what the hon. the Minister of Finance said in his Budget Speech. He said that 50 per cent share which the Region receives in respect of oil mined within its borders yielded rents and royalties totalling £344,000 during the current year. This is very encouraging and when the Westerners boast of their cocoa, we, the

Easterners, could also boast of our mineral oil. I have to remind the company prospecting for oil in this Region that our oil should be refined in the Region and not outside it. We shall oppose vehemently any attempt to refine our oil outside this Region.

With regard to agriculture, I should like to emphasise that every encouragement should be given to our interested farmers by giving loans with which to raise both food and cash crops. I should seize this opportunity to suggest a few points to the Minister of Agriculture with due reference to cashew industry at Ajali in Udi Division. The then Manager, Mr Harrison, who opened the plantation in 1952 assured the farmers that the full scale processing should be carried out at Ajali cashew plantation when the trees started to bear. Now that the cashew trees are in full production the present hand processing method is rather too slow and wasteful and cannot compete economically in the world market. The essential part of the nuts is wasted and that is the very costly phenol oil. From the pulpy apples we can extract wine. Those two important bye-products of cashew are wasted and thousands of pounds are lost thereby. I would suggest to the Minister that a large sum of money from the Capital Development Fund should be voted mainly for training overseas some of the E.R.D.C. staff to study the real method of extracting oil and wine from the cashew shells and fruits respectively. Extraction of oil from the cashew shells is the main purpose of establishing cashew plantations and not so much about the roasted kernels which we eat. This alone cannot even pay for the labour.

Now that we are on the verge of independence we should learn to do things by ourselves and that is the necessity of sending some people overseas. The Indians are the experts on cashew processing and as such our Government should write to the Government of India through its ambassador in Nigeria requesting the people to make chance for our trainees who would come over to India to study the method of extracting oil from the cashew shells. When these people return with the type of machines for the job then the farmers will be rest assured that their cashew plantations will not be a waste any more. At present



the farmers do not know their stand as far as this industry is concerned. There is no doubt that the mill when established will be kept fully busy all the year round with cashew nuts from the plantation and the supplies from the farmers throughout the Region.

I should warn the Minister of Agriculture never to negotiate with any firm in Nigeria for any hand-operated machine which will not be able to extract oil. This type of machine can never do better than what the women are now doing at Ajali. Our Government should encourage this industry on a large scale because cashew trees are quick growing plants which start to bear at the age of three or four years. The plantation is the cheapest to maintain and the only fear is the bush fire which if controlled the plantation will begin to pay within three years of its existence.

Another suggestion I would like to bring to the Government is that our Government and Voluntary Agencies should begin to think about the welfare of our 44,000 and odd teachers in this Region, by establishing a compulsory superannuation scheme for the teachers. This compulsory contribution should be designed to make the teacher contribute about £3 of his salary every year so that on retirement the teacher will have in hand handsome amount with which to begin the new lease of life. But at present teachers have got nothing. The money contributed by these teachers could be used by the Government in doing some other things in future and this is how to raise our economy.

Another suggestion I want to make is on Community Development. The easiest way of spreading amenities in our localities is through Community Development. The people of this Region have now understood its value and the policy of our Government is to help those who help themselves. The only points I have to raise are the increase of votes, equipment and staff because people have responded more by now to the encouragement which the Government seeks to give them through community development projects. The amount of money, equipment and staff are not enough to answer the needs of the village communities. It is rather very discouraging to tell the people who have the desire to do certain

community development projects that the Government vote is finished and that they should hold on. By then the interest of the people is killed.

I have seen that more interest of the village communities is centred on the road and bridge construction. The Centre at Awgu should be well equipped with such road constructing materials like heavy rollers and caterpillars to enable the people to construct good and permanent roads.

Another thing is that one Inspector of Works for the whole Region is quite inadequate and therefore I suggest that at least two should be employed in order to provide sufficient supervision.

Now I come to the Judiciary. The speed with which our cases are tried in this Region is very slow and discouraging.

**Mr Speaker:** Does not the hon. Member think the appropriate time for it is when we get to that Head in the Committee of Supply?

**Mr Akilo:** There are so many cases pending now . . . (*Interruptions*).

**Mr Speaker:** Mr Akilo, go on.

**Mr Akilo:** At present we have not enough Magistrates and there are so many cases pending and untried for some two to three years. Four Chief Magistrates are not enough for the whole Region. There are many thousands of cases requiring their attention. Many people who have cases have been suffering as a result of constant adjournment of their cases. Our big towns like Enugu, Onitsha, Port Harcourt, Aba, Umuahia, Abakaliki, Owerri, Ikot Ekpene and Ikom should have resident Chief Magistrates of their own.

Our Magistrate's Court in Udi Division is under a mango tree with an adjacent club hall where the Magistrate and his clerk plus a few others could be accommodated and the rest of the people who have cases are outside under rain and sun. It is a pure disgrace to the people of my constituency and I call upon the Minister of Justice to see to it and vote money



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[MR AKILO]

to put up a decent building worthy of its name and save the people from inconveniences.

*And it being 2.15 p.m. Mr Speaker interrupted the business and the Debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed Tomorrow.*

**ADJOURNMENT**

Resolved: That this House do now adjourn  
(*The Minister of Finance, Dr S. E. Imoke*).

*Adjourned accordingly at sixteen minutes past two o'clock p.m.*



## EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Friday, 1st April, 1960

*The House met at Nine o'clock a.m.*

## PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

## ORDER OF THE DAY

## The 1960-61 Eastern Region Appropriation Bill

(SECOND ALLOTTED DAY)

*Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question—(28th March):—**That the Bill be now read a Second time.**Question again proposed.*

**Mr J. A. Agba** (Ogoja Division): I have to congratulate the Minister of Finance, the Commissioner of Internal Revenue and all others who have, in a way, contributed their share in making the financial position of the Region what it is as has been presented to us. I congratulate the Minister of Finance particularly because he has explored all avenues to improve and increase the finances of the Region. But he is not alone in doing this and that is why I have also mentioned all those who helped him. The Budget has shown that the Region has financial potentialities which, if the Government will look into, and devise better means of increasing the revenue, will place the Region on a sound financial basis. I call this Budget a promising and hopeful Budget because the Minister of Finance himself has told us in his Budget Speech that the continued buoyancy of the revenue of the Region depends essentially on our new mineral oil industry.

I will say that much as I have spoken about this oil industry I would tell the Minister that the finances of the Region would still do well in spite of this, if only the avenues so far explored were properly looked into and developed under proper scale and proper scheme. By this I mean that the Minister if he takes into consideration the collection of tax for instance—one of the chief means by which the Region derives its finances—and explores all possible nooks and corners of collecting the taxes more money will still come in.

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** Point of information—I do not think the hon. Member quotes me properly by saying that I said that the finances of this Region depend essentially on the revenue from oil. I cannot remember in any part of my Speech where this statement was made. I would like to be quoted correctly.

**Mr Agba:** I will read out to you, with your permission, the Minister's Budget Speech:

"At the opening of the year, therefore, I forecast a surplus of £221,000" ... (*The Government Bench: What page? Where is he reading from?*)

These fellows ought to have read the Speech and understood it so as to know exactly where they will find any little thing. I am not here to teach them. I am addressing the Speaker.

"...and stated that the Consolidated Revenue Fund, which I estimated to stand at £5,250,000 that is, after splitting off the careful forecasts which I can make suggest that a truly buoyant revenue cannot be sustained until a real expansion takes place..."

**The Minister of Finance:** I just do not follow where the hon. Member is quoting from. He started off by reading a paragraph—"At the opening of the year, therefore, I forecast..."—and then jumped on to another paragraph without finishing the first one.

**Mr Speaker:** Mr Agba, the Minister wants you to be consistent.

**Mr Agba:** I hope the hon. Minister understands and knows that I am occupying the floor and it is my pleasure, with your permission, to read out the relevant portions from his Speech and to say what I think is my own opinion.

**Mr Speaker:** The Minister wishes you to read exactly what is there.

**Mr Agba:** That is the thing; well, if he spotted it out I think he ought not to have argued with me.

"... In saying this I am keeping fully in mind the hopeful prospects of our new mineral oil industry."



[MR AGBA]

If the Minister is a philosopher let him philosophise this sentence. This is my reason for calling this Budget a hopeful and prospective Budget. I was saying that it does not pay the Region to try to explore a multiplicity of ways by which the revenue can be increased. If the Minister continues with the present scheme—the present attempt as I would call it (what so far the Minister is doing to bring more and more money into the Region)—I think that will help us. Take for instance the tax. I find that in his Budget Speech he has made some amendments to the tax schedule; but if in every Division the Administrative Officer in charge co-operates with the Commissioner here to select suitable Tax Assessment Committee, and the members trained on the method of collecting the tax (which tax I presume according to the schedule is reasonably low and I think everybody will be in a position to pay), more money will come into the Region, and what a Member said yesterday, that during the assessment you find people flying from one part of the Region into the other in order to avoid being assessed, will really be avoided; provided this Committee—this Tax Assessment Committee—is vigilant, careful and fully knows what it is about. I think more money will come in through that way. That is, I am trying to emphasise the need to improve the existing machinery for revenue collection, instead of looking for more and more ways of getting money.

Again take the Loan business. I think loans should be given only to people who are able to pay back. I notice that a few weeks ago some of the Members of the House were taken to task with regard to the settlement of Rest House bills. Well, the insistence should not end only there; it should go beyond that, particularly with regard to people who have borrowed huge sums of money from the Government. If they are made to pay the monthly instalment and the monthly interest thereto to the Government there is no doubt that the revenue of the Region will continue to grow from year to year. We have also the forestry industry and I think the Government is doing well in that; but the only thing that is necessary is what to do in order to over-step the foreigners who are also in for the very same

thing and depriving us of the money. That is not a new thing and it is something that the Government will think about in order to see exactly what to do to improve the old system instead of building up a new one.

Somebody suggested the slashing of salaries of super-scale officers. You will notice that every year, nearly every time, there is always a demand for increase of salaries. If the Government thinks that it can improve its revenue by slashing the salaries of super-scale civil servants including Members of the House, I do not think that will really help us because as soon as that is done, after a couple of months, the people will begin again to ask for an increase in salaries and the Government will be obliged to increase their salaries. But if you look through the salary scales you will find that there is a big disparity between the salaries of junior civil servants and those of the super-scale civil servants. In view of this, I am suggesting to Government to stop increasing the salaries of the super-scale men. As long as the Government continues to increase these super-scale officers' salaries there will be no end to the disparity. After all, one hon. Member gave a lecture yesterday night and he showed that Nigeria has the lowest standard of living, compared with other countries outside, and I cannot understand for one moment, while we are looking for money for the services of the Region the civil servants, particularly those people who are already in the super-scale, continue, to demand for increases of salary. I do not understand it. Are they in sympathy with the Government? The slashing of salaries, I think, is not the proper thing to do in order to increase the revenue of the Region. At the same time that will be killing interest, efficiency and so on. I want to point out to the Minister that if it is necessary for him to increase the revenue of the Region he must improve the methods he is already using instead of looking for new ones.

Another point I have to stress is the question of the use of the money already got. While we are trying to see that the revenue of the Region increases by bringing several avenues into operation, what happens to the money collected? It is quite possible that a man can get a lot of money and misuse it. I think one of the ways I have just mentioned now (this



question of continuous increase in salaries and so on particularly of people in higher scale) is a way of misusing money. I think prudent use of money, no matter how small, will really be a wise step. After all, if the Minister budgets for millions of pounds and during the financial year that money is not properly used it is really no use to the Region and it does not help us coming here to talk, to praise the Minister, to blame him or to say any amount of things. Formerly, we complained that when we had expatriates in the civil service there was quite a good deal of wastage of money in meeting such expenses like "duty allowance", "bush house allowance"; (and, understand what this bush house is—a bush house which a man has not got in his own country. In the place he is working a decent house is built and he calls it a bush house and he is paid for living in it). Then you have "duty allowance". He has his salary for working and yet he is paid another allowance for doing the work for which he is already paid a salary. We were complaining about these things and we were all up against imperialism as we called it but quite a lot of these things have passed to ourselves. Where are we now, and what are we doing? A Minister gets 1s 3d a mile for driving from here to there; he gets special allowance for decorating his house; he is provided with furniture and then he is given entertainment allowance—a thing that junior servants have not got, senior servants haven't either; how do we differ now from the expatriates? I am talking of the prudent use of money if we are really in sympathy with the Region as far as finances are concerned. Let us cut down these spendthrifts. It will help the Government; it will help to solve the problems that are now facing the Region. Look at the Provincial Commissioners. I would like you to understand that I am not attacking individuals. I am not even interested in what they are given. I am only interested in the finances of the Region; so that when I mention a class of people I hope I will not be misunderstood. Perhaps somebody may begin to think that Agba is jealous of him. I am not. I really say, and I think it is the principle of any man in charge of a Department, that the reward for a worker should be in conformity with his output. What are these Commissioners doing to warrant all these heavy salaries? The Provincial Secretaries are there to run about the place and make all possible arrange-

ments. What are they doing? So in all candidness, let us face the facts. We do not want the Government to be in a mess. We want them to forget the old things. Let us descend to realities. I am making an appeal to the Government to think twice. There is no point in the Minister of Finance coming to tell us that he hopes for the expansion of our revenue because of the oil industry that is coming up. Suppose that industry fails. (*Interruptions*).

**Chief I. I. Morphy** (Ogoja Division): Point of Order. Standing Order 32 (5). Mr Okafor has never spoken in this House, and he will never let people speak.

**Mr Agba:** Another point is that when the Europeans were doing the greater part of our work in this Region, after a period of three years or so, they were given leave to go home—their home town. We Nigerians in Nigeria are working in our own home where we were born and bred. I do not see the point or reason for our people going overseas to spend their leave. Why not spend the leave here. Some of them have been overseas for their studies and still would like to go overseas to spend their leave. It is a costly thing to do; it wastes the money of the Region and should be curtailed. These people can well spend their leave in the country.

My last point is an appeal to the Government to stop this sort of thing and think of the people they are serving and not themselves. We should remember that the aim of Government is the welfare of the governed and unless Government has this in mind, it will not content itself and perhaps when it has ended its career, will not claim to have served the people satisfactorily. Unless we think of the conditions of the people we are only coming here to waste our time.

Over Ogoja area there is good clay for making pots and in Yalla there is salt. Government will not go to see the mass of potentialities. I am appealing to Government to try to do something, and take advantage of these potentialities.

**Mr M. U. Etuk** (Uyo Division): I rise to congratulate the Minister of Finance on his excellent Budget Speech which the Leader of Opposition has described as lucid and realistic.



[MR ETUK]

There are one or two points I would like to add in connection with the economic policy.

I do not think we have gone far enough in the way of increasing this tax; not merely income tax but it will be extended to certain things that really do not matter such as liquor, tobacco and wine. If we put tax on these things, I do not think the public will complain much, but if we go on taxing the income we are surely treading on dangerous ground. Furthermore, tax on income is placed on everybody but increase for salary goes to those people only in Government and Voluntary Agencies. But Government is for the people and the people should be benefited. All buy from the same market. Most of them are farmers and while we are increasing salaries of civil servants and Voluntary Agency workers, we should consider by what means to increase the earnings of the public not employed. I think one of the things to be done to help is to control prices of commodities—for instance, palm oil. There is a lot of profiteering going on even in our foodstuffs. If this step is taken then we can hope to improve the standard of living of everybody and not one class alone.

My second point is that we sometime hear in our native language of the statement which reads as follows: "before you marry be sure of a house to tarry in". It appears that many a time we do not apply the rules that will make us rich. You can never be rich in this world unless you have to remember two points. First, careful management and secondly, anxious thrift. Anything you have you must try to manage very carefully. Even if you are paid £2,000,000 and you do not apply these rules you will never be rich. Therefore, Government should continue in the trend of managing carefully what we have. The Minister stated that the building of these houses will be in conformity with our status as a self-governing Region, but I do not think that all these magnificent buildings we are contemplating upon are necessary. If we actually insist on these things that are not necessary we shall run short of money and more essential services will have to be shelved. But if we invest more in providing industries that will bring more money and provide more work for more people, we shall have enough money in a short time to be able to go back and start all these unnecessary programmes.

I made a suggestion a few days ago, about a cement industry. One hon. Member mentioned about salt in Ogoja. These are things which we get here in Nigeria.

**Hon. Members:** Where?

**Mr Etuk:** You appealed to us a week before last, that the standard of our debate here is growing low. I think it is still growing lower. Most hon. Members are just interested in heckling and talking what they like instead of thinking and trying to reply to speeches which will ultimately help the Government.

I would like to emphasise this aspect of price control in foodstuff. Government should think of ways and means of controlling prices of foodstuffs otherwise the increases we give to civil servants do not mean anything because the moment you give them the increases, a bottle of oil that used to be 4d before will suddenly rise to 6d. Then you consider the firms and factories. Something that costs 6d before will suddenly rise to 2s 6d. So that actually the increases do not mean anything. One Member suggested a few weeks ago that we should help the workers not by periodical increases in wages alone but in addition the price index of goods and foodstuff should be controlled. Two big items in the civil servant's expenditure which eat up his income considerably are rent and food. If on the other hand instead of increasing salaries, the Government could assist them to own their own houses, I think it would not only help them during the time they are in the service, but also after they might have left the service. There was something like Provident Fund before in some Departments like the Railways and others, for certain grades of civil servants. Is the resuscitation of such saving devices not possible now so that civil servants may make contributions every month, and Government by adding 50 per cent of that contribution enable them to own their own buildings and be able to refund what the Government would want them to refund before they leave the service? A bulk sum of £2 million could be devoted to that assistance and it could be made a permanent measure. It will not be the sort of increase in salaries which we give today and is spent tomorrow and that is the end of it.



I have said, that I have only just few points to make in helping the Government in formulating its policy and with these few remarks I beg to take my seat.

**Mr G. I. Oko M.B.E.** (Awgu Division): I rise to comment on the following points which I think have been left out by Members who have spoken. The first is the security of individuals and their property against the present menace of night marauders who go about armed against the honest people of this Region in several ways. Some of these groups live in hotels in the towns. Some of them are rich and notable persons; others are lorry owners. This evil practice has gone so far that unless Government takes strong measures against it, the independence and security of honest people and their belongings will ever be in danger. I call on the Police authorities to come to the aid of weak and unarmed honest individuals who suffer untold hardships from these men. Some of these people are well armed in swords, matchets and even have lorries at certain times with which they carry out these evil practices.

**An hon. Member:** Talk on economic development; the Speaker will soon rule you out of order.

**Mr Oko:** I am coming, that is part of the speech.

If we talk on the economy of the Region, we should also talk on the security of the people who will enjoy the economy, bright or dull. Many pretty girls go about in hotels here and there, pretending to be sweet-hearts but future destroyers of families.

**Mr G. C. Okeya** (Owerri Division): Point of Order. Standing Order 77 (3):

**Mr Speaker:**

"...Individual Heads in the Estimates may not be debated on second reading. Three days shall be allotted for the 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 Standing Order."

Will the hon. Member please confine himself to the subject and not to introduce matters irrelevant. If he has nothing to speak on the financial policy of the Government, I think it will be better for him to take his seat.

**Mr Oko:** Thank you. I am speaking of the effect of these evil practices on the economy of the Region because I think it is necessary for the Government to put a check to them. Some taxi drivers suffer loss of their lives in the hands of those men who go about seeking wealth without taking troubles to acquire it.

**Road security.**—Too many accidents occur in this Region and two things appear to be responsible for them. One is the bad condition of our roads and the other is the recklessness of many drivers.

**Mr Speaker:** One moment. I think I certainly would like the hon. Member to debate the financial policy of Government. I do not think I shall be allowing his going entirely out of the way; it will be wrong of me to allow that. Will the hon. Member please confine himself to the debate on the financial policy of Government. Those other things have their own time.

**Mr Oko:** I am speaking on the economic policy of the Ministry of Works.

I remember having asked that Enugu-Ozala-Awgu road should be considered for tarring, I was told that Government would tar this road. On going through the roads earmarked for tarring I discovered that this road is not included. So I am appealing to the Minister...

**Mr Okeya:** Point of Order. That speech should be made during the Committee Stage of the Bill. I refer to Standing Order 77 (9).



**Mr Speaker:** I quite agree with the hon. Chief Whip but I think I am in sympathy with the hon. Member and I am craving the indulgence of the House to allow him to continue.

**Mr Oko:** Another point I am making is about giving contract work for the tarring of roads to Firms of Contractors that have no tools. You will agree with me that Messrs Costain (West Africa) have shown themselves everywhere as bad workers. The road tarred by them from Enugu to Awgu is the worst of all the tarred roads in the Region. I understand that the new Federal contract for tarring the Enugu-Onitsha road has been awarded to a Firm inadequately equipped for such a job. I am afraid that this Firm of Contractors will repeat what has already happened on the Awgu-Enugu road. I am taking this opportunity to appeal to the Minister to see that this Firm of Contractors who have not got enough materials do not get the contract. A competent Firm like Dumez should take up this work. I must say that the economy of this Region depends on the construction of good roads and bridges and we cannot do without these.

I want also to say something about the policy of the Ministry of Health on Joint Hospitals. The Minister of Health should maintain one straightforward policy for all its medical fields. In the Government hospitals students get treatment free while in the Joint Hospitals like Awgu, Government puts up a different policy. By this disparity school children in the rural communities suffer want of medical attention. The same thing applies to the service conditions of those working in Joint Hospitals. They are denied certain things which their counterparts in Government hospitals enjoy. Their work is the same and their service conditions should also be the same.

Lastly, I would like to know why Awgu Court Hall was left out in the Estimates whereas it was for a long time earmarked for Government's action. I call on the Minister of Justice to make a statement to this effect and give Awgu its due chance.

I support the Bill.

**The Minister of Health (Mr E. P. Okoya):**

I rise to support the Appropriation Bill and in doing so I would like to take this opportunity to speak generally on the activities of my Ministry, to outline our plans for the future and to reply to points made during the course of this Meeting. As His Excellency noted in his Speech from the Throne, very good progress continues to be made towards the attainment of the declared aim of my Ministry—a National Health Service for this Region. By this we mean, as hon. Members will recall, a fully co-ordinated preventive and curative service, which will bring modern medical and health facilities within the reach of everyone in the Region, both in terms of distance and of cost. If we remember that the population of this Region is eight millions and is everyday increasing, the immensity of the task which faces my Ministry in the attainment of our goal will be apparent. If, however, we look back over the past few years, we have every reason to be justly proud of our achievements. It is appropriate, I think, in this year of Nigerian Independence that I should compare the position of my Ministry as it was prior to Regionalisation in 1954 with what it is today. By 1954 there were fifteen Government General Hospitals in the Region. All of them were overcrowded, under-equipped and understaffed. Apart from the Leprosy Service, which has just been inherited from the Voluntary Agencies, and minor services operated by Local Government bodies, Rural Services were virtually non-existent. The two Joint Hospitals at Umuahia and Amaigbo were only just beginning.

Since then progress has been immense. By 1956 the form and pattern of the Rural Hospital and the Rural Health Centre programmes had begun to take practical shape. Both of these programmes, as Members will be aware, are undertaken in association with Local Government Councils and local communities in a spirit of true community development. Apart from those already completed, there are now nine Rural Hospitals under construction, two more having been added to the list during this last financial year. Under the second stage of this Programme, details of which, Members will recall, I announced to the House in my speech at this time last year, certain of the hospitals completed as units of up to thirty-two beds will be increased to units of sixty beds by the



injection of Colonial Development and Welfare funds, and on completion will be operated by the Regional Government, probably as Joint Hospitals. This has already happened in the case of the Mbaise project which has been operating since the 1st of April last year as a Joint Hospital in association with the Roman Catholic Mission. The expansion of the Okrika, Umumuato and Abiriba projects has begun.

I had hoped that by this time, the Mbano project would also have been similarly expanded and taken over. It is a matter of very great regret to me, however, that differences in this area have not made this possible. Throughout the whole of last year, strenuous efforts were made by the Ministry, by me personally, and by others, to resolve these differences and to restore harmony, but this could not be achieved. Whilst therefore the Mbano District Council has been permitted to go ahead with the opening of the hospital and its operation as a 32-bed unit, we cannot afford such time-wasting disputes to hold up the execution of the second stage of the Rural Hospital Programme. I would like to take this opportunity of correcting the impression left by hon. Iwueke and hon. Onwudiwe that it is my Ministry which is preventing the opening of this hospital. Nor is my Ministry responsible for any delay, which is entirely due to local disputes.

The Rural Health Centre programme is the essential counterpart of the Rural Hospital Programme in the field of preventive medicine. These Centres which also have a curative function, primarily serve as a base from which preventive medical services can operate. In my speech last year, I reported that twelve Centres had been completed. There are now twenty-three in operation. During the first stage of expansion to be completed in the present year, every Administrative Division will have at least one proto-type Health Centre. We shall thus then have passed one further milestone on the road to our declared goal. There will then be sixty Health Centres functioning.

In the field of Rural Health Service, too, the Rural Hygiene Demonstration Area based on the Government Health Centre at Nsukka is setting a pattern in the development of Rural School Services and Domiciliary Health Services. Improved training programmes for

Medical Auxiliaries have provided a raised standard of services, while even more significant is the increasing number of Government Medical Officers engaged full time in the development of rural services. Next year twelve Government nurses will also be posted to take charge of certain Rural Health Centres.

It is thus perhaps in the field of Rural Health that the progress made in the last few years and the results of the emphasis placed on the development of this field are most dramatically apparent. The Yaws Eradication Programme, which began with a pilot scheme in Nsukka, has now surveyed and treated more than 3½ million people. This programme, which is being extended throughout the Region, will be continued and consolidated until this terrible and debilitating disease has been totally eradicated.

Not only is the eradication of yaws within practical reach, but also there have been tremendous strides in the treatment of leprosy. As Members will recall, we were the first Region to repeal the old repressive and penal Leprosy Ordinance. Invaluable contributions towards the conquest of this disease have been made by the Leprosy Research Unit at Uzuakoli. In this connection, I would like to pay personal tribute to the dedicated services of Dr Davey, who last year left the service on retirement. The high standards of the Leprosy Service continue and it is my intention that Nigerian officers shall be more actively associated with this work than in the past. The Western Provinces show a progressive decline of patients yearly. In the Eastern Provinces surveys suggest that the number of patients under treatment has reached a peak and a decline may soon be expected. Thus, too, can we look forward with confidence to the total eradication of this disease in the foreseeable future.

I would like at this point again to recognise our indebtedness to the World Health Organisation and U.N.I.C.E.F. for their invaluable technical and material assistance. We are associated with these organisations in three Plans of Operations: Leprosy Control, the Yaws Scheme and a scheme covering Maternal and Rural Services generally. The untimely death of the Senior Medical Officer in charge of the Yaws project—Dr Fraisse—in a motor



[MR OKOYA]

accident last year was a sad blow and a great loss to the Region.

I shall now turn to Government-administered Hospitals. In 1954, there were fifteen Government General Hospitals. Since then, the hospital at Yenagoa has been completed and is now in operation. There has also been a very considerable expansion of and improvement in existing Government hospitals generally since 1954. Under the 1955-60 Colonial Development and Welfare Scheme for Health Services, £210,000 was provided for the Training Hospitals at Aba, Calabar, Enugu and Port Harcourt, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Umuahia, and a Nurses Preliminary Training School, Aba. This part of the programme is now complete. A further £168,000 was provided for the improvement of Degema, Ikot Ekpene, Okigwi, Opobo and Owerri hospitals. This part of the programme is also complete. The Training School, Oji River and the Health Visitors Training School, Aba, also provided for in the scheme, are also complete. There remains only to finish up the second stage of the Rural Hospital programme, one Rural Medical Officer's quarter and this £715,000 Colonial Development and Welfare Scheme, I am pleased to report, will have been completed as planned. Likewise, a similar £44,800 Colonial Development and Welfare Scheme for Leprosy Control has also been completed. The £25,000 touring launch for the riverain areas, to which I referred in my Budget Speech last year, is now under construction in the United Kingdom and a smaller one for the Leprosy Service has recently been built locally. The yaws campaign and Rural Health Centre programme are gradually being extended throughout the Region.

Nor has the development of Government hospitals stopped with the Colonial Development and Welfare Plans. From Regional Funds, as I reported in my speech last year, some £150,000 was also provided under the 1958-62 Development Programme for Government Medical buildings. Good progress has been made by the Ministry's own Building Officer with this programme. The new Operating Theatre at Owerri is nearing completion and an S.M.O.s Office there has been finished. Work on Senior Medical Officer's quarters at

Abakaliki and Ikot Ekpene, offices at Abakaliki, Onitsha, Ikot Ekpene and Degema, Junior Service quarters at the Yenagoa Hospital is being undertaken by the Ministry of Works. The preliminary drawings for the new Regional Laboratory have been completed and the work put out to tender.

As to the future, Members will note from Head 801, sub-heads 116-131 of their Estimates that a further £159,050 has been provided for capital works for my Ministry next year. Included in this amount, is a sum for preliminary survey and sketch for a Specialist Hospital for the Region, which is intended to be built at Enugu. Members will recall that reference to this project is made in the 1954 Policy Statement and from time to time, Questions have been asked in this House concerning progress made. I am pleased to report that it was possible to secure the advice last year of a World Health Organisation Consultant in Hospital Construction. It is envisaged that this project will begin as a specialist hospital of about 150 beds and will be expanded over a number of years to a full teaching hospital in association with the University of Nigeria. There will then be no need for this Region to look elsewhere for the training of doctors and specialist services.

In the development of medical services, however, the physical expansion of buildings is one aspect, and unless this physical expansion is accompanied by an increase in staff and in drugs and equipment, little true expansion of activity is possible. Last year, therefore, a Committee was set up in the Ministry to examine and report on the supply of drugs and equipment in Government Hospitals. As hon. Members will see from the Estimates, the amount provided under Head 434, Sub-head 9—Drugs, Medical Equipment and supplies in 1960-61 shows an increase over the sum provided this year of no less than £102,100 which very nearly equals the total amount actually expended on this item in 1958-59. This I am sure, is but one part of the problem of improving the supply position in Government Hospitals. It is my intention that the whole machinery of distribution shall now be similarly reviewed and thoroughly overhauled, and I hope that a significant improvement will soon be apparent. There has also been a satisfactory improvement in the staffing position



in Government Hospitals. In 1954, for example, in the Hospital Section of the Department of Medical Services, there were posts for four Senior Medical Officers, six Specialists and 39 Doctors, not all of which were filled. We now have eight Senior Medical Officers, 12 Specialists and 46 Doctors. So, too, has our strength of Staff Nurses increased. The intake of the Preliminary Training School at Aba has been doubled. In 1954, there were 270 Staff Nurses and Midwives: today our establishment is 399 and, in the Estimates for 1960-61, now under consideration, 575.

One aspect of the Speech from the Throne concerns the serious problem posed by illicit trafficking in dangerous drugs. For some time past, I have been most concerned at the growing menace to public health by the unrestricted sale of drugs and to dangerous activities of quack doctors and drug peddlars in the Region. Hon. Iwueke and hon. Etuhube have both spoken at length on this problem during this Meeting and I do not propose to go over grounds already covered by them. Suffice it to say that I am well aware of this problem and share their concern. This is a most serious situation but the problem is by no means an easy one. I have long been of the opinion that these abuses will only effectively be checked by concerted action on a Nigeria-wide scale, and this view is borne out in the report of a Committee which I appointed last year to study this problem.

**Chief Morphy:** Standing Order 77 (3):

"After the motion for the second reading of the Bill has been made and seconded and the question thereon has been proposed the debate shall be adjourned for not less than two days and when resumed shall be confined to the financial and economic state of the Eastern Region of Nigeria and the financial policy of the Regional Government. (For the purposes of this paragraph "day" includes Saturday and Sunday and any Public Holiday and the period of adjournment commences from the day the motion was moved). Individual Heads in the Estimates may not be debated on second reading. Three days shall be allotted for the 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 Standing Order."

But the Minister is now anticipating us. He should wait until we start talking about his Ministry, then he can get up to reply.

**Mr Speaker:** I think circumstances permit the Minister to do it now, when I think of what happened during the Debate on the Governor's Speech. This is the only opportunity for the Minister to tell hon. Members something about his Ministry.

**Chief Morphy:** We are not questioning your ruling but I hope they are not creating a precedent for us to be following every year.

**Mr Speaker:** It is difficult to separate the two. They are so interwoven and tied together that it is impossible to draw any real line of demarcation.

**Mr S. G. Ikoku (Enyong Division):** When a previous speaker was on, you did rule that, considering these various Heads—the appropriate time is the Committee Stage—and I am quite sure that following from that a Minister who wants to talk about his Ministry should wait for the Committee Stage. In any case, you have made your ruling and we abide by it. All I can say here is that it will not be very nice, after the Minister had gone half-way through his speech, for us to send him back to his seat. We shall allow him to complete his speech and then make sure that no other Minister follows up. We want to hear the Minister of Health and go away.

**The Premier (Dr M. I. Okpara):** The convention in this hon. House is that Ministers, during the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill, are free to come to the Front Bench and present their activities to the House in answer to points made by hon. Members. That has been the practice for the last eight years I have been in this House and it is unconventional to cut the Minister's speech so abruptly. I do not think my hon. Friends opposite will support that.



**Mr Speaker:** That is why I said that circumstances do permit what the Minister is doing now. This is the only opportunity for the Minister to present the activities of his Ministry to the House and I think the Minister will use his discretion if any points arise later on, and I have no doubt that he will be very careful not to repeat himself.

**Chief Morphy:** I think the Standing Order has preference over any convention. We have not created any convention here.

**Mr Speaker:** I am acting on circumstances and discretion.

**The Minister of Health:** As I was saying before, these abuses will only effectively be checked by concerted action on a Nigeria-wide scale, and this view is borne out in the report of a Committee which I appointed last year to study this problem. There must be means whereby dangerous drugs can be checked from the time they enter the country until the time they enter a patient on a doctor's prescription. For some time past this view has been put to the Federal Ministry of Health but the response of that Ministry has not been as enthusiastic as I would have wished. I therefore myself visited Lagos early this year and had discussions with the Federal Minister of Health as a result of which all Regional Ministers of Health are to meet in Lagos sometime this month for further investigation of this problem. I hope that from this meeting will emerge concerted action to tackle this serious social problem: for my part, I would assure the House that my Ministry will continue to do everything humanly possible to stamp out irregularities in the practice of medicine and the sale and disposal of dangerous drugs in the Region.

Before I conclude, I would like to touch on certain points made by hon. Members in the course of this meeting. I am grateful to hon. Okeya, hon. Akilo, hon. Imeh, hon. Akpan, hon. Ekpe, hon. Opara and hon. Etuhube for the kind things they have said and the compliments they have paid to my Ministry.

I note that hon. Agba objects to my "going about the Region opening hospitals here and there and being flashed by photographers"

but I am not sure whether it is my touring or my opening of hospitals or my being photographed that he does not like. I promise hon. Agba two things: Next year I shall:—

(i) do something about improving the Ogoja Hospital which worries me as much as it does him, and

(ii) I shall visit Ogoja.

Perhaps when I do so, hon. Agba will come and be photographed with me.

**Mr Agba:** Point of correction. I would like the Minister to understand that my opposition to him was not because he was being photographed or because he was going about opening hospitals in the Region but because my own area has been neglected to the benefit of others.

**The Minister of Health:** Hon. Okeya, Iwueke and Etuhube spoke about the problem of irregularities in the sale of drugs to which I have already referred in the body of my speech.

I have also commented on the Mbano Rural Hospital project and the unfortunate disputes which have sprung up about it. May I take this further opportunity of assuring both hon. Iwueke and hon. Onwudiwe that my Ministry and I have the welfare of the Mbano people at heart.

As to the hon. Imeh's suggestion that the Ituk Mbang Methodist Mission deserves assistance with its proposed Maternity Village, the hon. Member may be interested to know that I have already promised the Medical Superintendent before he went on leave last month substantial financial aid towards this project of which I am well aware.

In reply to hon. Ekpe's request for more Health Centres in Opobo Division, I would point out that Opobo already has one and the hon. Member is well aware of Government's policy for the distribution of Health Centres.

**Mr A. J. Ekpe** (Opobo Division): I would like to point out that there is no Health Centre in Opobo Division.

**The Minister of Health:** We are building a Health Centre in Opobo Town and there is one hospital which Government has built



at the cost of £23,000. In this connection, too, as the hon. Akilo admits, Udi Division is already well served. As to converting them to Rural Hospital, I would point out the relative proximity of this Division to the Government Hospitals at Onitsha and Enugu and that it is my duty to see that the resources allotted to my Ministry are evenly and fairly shared.

I think that the views of Dr the hon. Onubogu on the Nnewi Rural Hospital project are hardly fair to my Ministry. The Rural Hospital programme envisages constructional costs being shared on a fifty-fifty basis. My Ministry's contribution far exceeds that of the community's. It must also be borne in mind that the responsibility for execution of building work under the Rural Hospital programme rests with the sponsoring community and not with my Ministry. A water supply, however, is now in process of being installed by my Ministry. I have done everything possible and will continue to strive for an early opening of this hospital.

I note that hon. Etuhube would like the Ikot Ekpen Hospital to be properly equipped and developed on modern lines. So would I. Indeed, S.M.O.'s generally have already been instructed to forward to the Ministry their requirements for bringing all hospitals up to date.

I have tried in the course of my speech today to give some indication of the achievements of my Ministry, not only in the last financial year but also since Regionalisation and the introduction of responsible Ministerial Government. Now, as we stand on the threshold of national independence, we can, I submit, look back over the period since 1954 with a sense of pride and confidence—of pride, in the measure and extent of our past achievements—of confidence, in our ability to maintain those standards in the years that lie ahead. This is the year of Freedom. Let our slogan be not only political Freedom but also Freedom from all the giant evils that beset us—Freedom from Want, Freedom from Fear, Freedom from Ignorance and Superstition, Freedom from Sickness and Disease. I would assure the House that in our struggle towards the attainment of that goal, my Ministry will play its part.

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** I wish to refer first of all to the brilliant and unprecedented speech made by the Leader of the Opposition yesterday when he opened the debate on the Second Reading of the Budget and to thank him for the very excellent contributions he made. I say the speech is unprecedented because right through from the beginning to the end I was unable to find any serious blemish. It was polished and completely void of politics. It is the first of its kind I have ever heard delivered in this House by a Leader of Opposition in reply to my Budget Speeches during my five year's experience as Minister of Finance. The speech was full of constructive criticisms and as I listened to him I could not help being convinced that he was making his points with all sincerity.

There is only one minor quarrel I have and that is in the choice of words. He started off by indicating general agreement in principle with the Budget and proceeded by using the words "lucid" and "realistic" in describing it. Then he went on to classify his points under what he termed the "bright" and "dark" spots in our finances. I do not accept the use of the phrase "dark spots in our finances" because I can find none. I have no quarrel with his laying more emphasis on the warning I gave at paragraphs 10 and 11 of my Speech about the high rate at which we are spending on social services—in fact I am happy to note the favourable reaction of the whole House to this warning—but I certainly do not agree with the Leader of the Opposition that such spending constitutes a "dark spot". If the growth of our revenue could keep pace with the rate there would be no need to worry. All I am saying therefore is that we should be a little more cautious about expenditure in this sector and concentrate more on economic development in the few years ahead if we must sustain the buoyancy of our finances. We must now lay the soundest possible foundation for our future development.

I ask my hon. Friend, Mr Ekpe from Opobo, to note that this is the correct way of putting the matter. It carries the implication that whereas productive development for which we can manage to set aside money now will later sustain our revenues, the alternative of an over-rapid extension of social services will only defeat itself if revenue does not continue



[DR IMOKE]

buoyant as at present. To me this appears to be plain commonsense.

Continuing, the Leader of the Opposition tried in a rather subtle manner to introduce the word "deficit" into the Budget. While I agree with him that deficit budgeting by Government is occasionally permissible, I do not think he is doing us justice by imagining one where it does not exist. His point is that because our surplus is only £114,000, and we expect £321,000 from new taxes we would have had a deficit of £207,000 but for the new taxes. Then in the next breath he referred to the transfer from current (1960-61) revenue of £500,000 into the Capital Development Fund. Of course, it is obvious from this that we did not call for these slight increases in tax to avoid a deficit Budget but simply because we felt that in this year of Independence it is necessary to call on our people to contribute a little more towards the development of the Region so as to make our Independence a reality, and we have no doubt that our people will co-operate. We could still have balanced our Budget with a heavier surplus if we had decided not to make these slight increases in tax by foregoing the contribution to the Capital Development Fund.

In conclusion, I must say that we in the Treasury Bench are delighted to note that the Leader of the Opposition and both sides of the House unanimously endorse Government decision not to extend the Mbanefo Award to super-scale officers. I can only add that I entirely agree with the hon. Leader of the Opposition when he dissented from the suggestion made by the Mbanefo Commission that there should be smaller but more frequent adjustments in the pay structure of the Civil Service. Such a policy would be most unsettling to our finances and it is in any case quite unusual to base pay adjustments automatically on cost of living movements. There are always other factors to be taken into account which require special examination and cannot be properly assessed at frequent intervals.

I have already referred to the valuable contribution made by the Leader of the Opposition such as the creation of Freedom Savings Certificates to provide capital for the Region's development, a Nigerian Stock Market, taxes

on beer, tobacco, etc., to mention but a few. Several other speakers who spoke after the Leader of the Opposition also made very valuable contributions some of which I have no doubt my colleagues have noted and may like to refer to when speaking to their own Heads of the Estimates at the Committee stage. Hon. Onwuma mentioned salt as one of the commodities to be taxed. I must warn, however, that in this matter of indirect tax Government has also to go cautiously. If you tax the commodities in daily use by the man in the street, you hit him harder than you do the rich man who may also use them. That is why we have been very careful in our choice of fiscal measures this year. Of course, we do not deny (and with due respect to the hon. Leader of the Opposition, we are not so disingenuous) that the man in the street is this year asked to pay a small additional amount in income tax; and it is very small. But we are also asking something more from the wealthier man who runs a car. These are the measures by which we propose to find some of the money which we must have to make a continuing contribution to our Development Programme.

Some hon. Members also made specific suggestions about the type of economic development that should be included in our Programme. I have noted with much interest the various ideas. The hon. Member for Opobo, whose constituency I was recently fortunate to visit for the first time, put forward several ideas which should doubtless be considered on their merits. Others have also made suggestions, some critical and some constructive. I will not attempt to take them in detail. But I will merely repeat what I said in my Budget Speech: this Government wants to see more truly productive development and will examine all the suggestions made during this debate with that criterion in mind.

Finally, may I end by expressing on behalf of myself and my colleagues in the Cabinet, with whom I am bound to share the encomiums or the many feathers on my cap, that have been showered from both sides of the House, for the presentation of this Budget, how elated and encouraged we all feel about it! I would like to take this opportunity, if I might crave your indulgence also to mention my new



Permanent Secretary, Mr O. L. Williams who, in co-operation with the Acting Principal Assistant Secretary, Mr U. C. D. Okoye, and other members of the staff of my Ministry, all of whom have virtually lived day and night on their office desks for some weeks now to ensure the presentation of this Budget. I wish to use this forum in expressing my appreciation to all of them and I have no doubt that hon. Members may wish to join me in this.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill accordingly read a Second time and under Standing Order 77 (4) stood committed to the Committee of Supply.*

**Mr Speaker:** Committee when ?

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):**  
Monday, 4th April, 1960.

### ADJOURNMENT

Resolved: That this House do now adjourn.  
(*The Minister of Finance, Dr S. E. Imoke*).

*Adjourned accordingly at eighteen minutes to eleven o'clock a.m.*



EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Monday, 4th April, 1960

The House met at Ten o'clock a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Senior Assistant Secretaries

1. **Mr M. N. Onwuma** asked the Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies), why the Senior Assistant Secretaries (Supernumerary) in the service of the Eastern Region are graded in "Group 8", while their counterparts in the Federation are in "Group 7".

**The Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies):** Other Governments in the Federation have in their Establishments administrative posts of Deputy Permanent Secretary or Principal Assistant Secretary graded in Group 6. There are no such posts in Ministries in this Region. In no Ministry is the officer next senior to the Permanent Secretary graded higher than Group 7. It is considered that a grading of Group 7 for Supernumerary Senior Assistant Secretaries would be too high if their present responsibilities are compared with other officers in the service in Group 7. It would therefore be detrimental to the morale of the service because it would be unfair not only to the Principal Assistant Secretaries in this Region who are in Group 7 who got there after ten or more years in the Administration, but also to others with longer and better experience in the service, who are still on the long scale, to grade Supernumerary Assistant Secretaries in Group 7.

As pointed out to the hon. Member, when he asked a similar Question a few months ago, there is no direct counterpart to our post of Senior Assistant Secretary (Supernumerary) in any other part of the Federation for comparison. For example, both in the West and the Federal Government, supernumerary posts are restricted to members of the service who are appointed to them as a trial promotion. Thus

a scale A officer with long experience can there be promoted to Group 8 or 7, and a Group 7 officer to Group 6, supernumerary posts. In this Region, appointment to the post of Senior Assistant Secretary—the only supernumerary post in existence—is open to those outside the service in competition with those within. The majority of the present holders are those outside the Government service who are being trained for permanent absorption to the public service if at the end of their probationary period they are found suitable.

Bearing in mind, therefore, their responsibilities and the fact that they are supposed to be on training and are still unconfirmed in their appointment, it is not considered that their present salary grading is unfair.

Local Government Bye-laws

27. **Mr M. N. Onwuma** asked the Minister of Local Government, what District Council bye-laws have been refused approval since April, 1954, giving details of bye-laws, year made, name of the District Council and the reason or reasons for refusing approval.

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Local Government (Mr P. U. Amaefunah):** I am directed to answer as follows:— We do not keep a record in the Ministry of bye-laws which have been rejected. We only keep a record of bye-laws approved and where to find them is the *Gazette* Supplements. Very few bye-laws are actually rejected. Many take a long time before they are approved because Councils fail to observe procedure, or include paragraphs of doubtful validity, etc.; but in the end we generally manage to produce a satisfactory draft which is acceptable both legally and in content. Bye-laws which are rejected are those which offend public policy or are outside a Council's powers and functions or interfere with the liberty of the individual, etc. Sometimes I also reject a bye-law if the Council cannot show that it has adequate executive capacity to enforce the bye-law. Subsidiary legislation that cannot be enforced might just as well not be made. If however the hon. Member has any particular bye-law in mind and wishes to know the detailed reasons why it was rejected I will gladly give him the information if he cares to call at my Ministry.



**Mr Onwuma:** Is the Minister of Local Government prepared to tell us that in future they will keep a set of statistics and records of bye-laws that have been rejected?

**The Minister of Local Government:** If we find that that is necessary in the Ministry; as a matter of fact, there are only very few that are rejected and they are always sent back to the people concerned and eventually if they comply with the conditions laid down, they are approved. No bye-laws are rejected as such. It is not necessary.

**BILLS PRESENTED**

**(1) Native Courts**

Bill to amend the provisions of the Native Courts Ordinance and of the Customary Courts Law, 1956, relating to the hearing of Appeals and to the control of Native Courts, presented by the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, Mr M. O. Ajegbo; read the First time; to be read a Second time Tomorrow.

**(2) High Court**

Bill to amend the High Court Law, 1955, presented by the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, Mr M. O. Ajegbo; read the First time; to be read a Second time Tomorrow.

**(3) Magistrates Courts**

Bill to amend the Magistrates Courts Law, 1955, presented by the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, Mr M. O. Ajegbo; read the First time; to be read a Second time Tomorrow.

**(4) Chiefs**

Bill to provide for the Recognition of Persons as Chiefs within the Eastern Region; to exclude the jurisdiction of the Courts to hear and determine Chieftaincy Disputes or Questions as to the Recognition of Chiefs and for matters connected with those purposes and to replace the Recognition of Chiefs Law, 1956, presented by the Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies), Mr O. U. Affiah, read the First time; to be read a Second time Tomorrow.

**ORDER OF THE DAY**

**The 1960-61 Eastern Region Appropriation Bill**

*Considered in the Committee of Supply*

(First Allotted Day)

(In the Committee)

**The Chairman:** I would like to call the attention of hon. Members to Standing Order 77 paragraph 9:—

“On the question that the sum of..... pounds for Head.....stand part of the Schedule, debate shall be confined to the policy of the Ministry and the services and departments under the Ministry or the policy of the service for which the money is being provided as the case may be including the Revenue for which that Ministry or service is responsible. On such debate Members shall not deal with the details of Expenditure but may refer to the details of Revenue.”

A Minister may introduce the Head of the Estimates under his portfolio and after debate on the Head, he may also reply if he wishes. After a Minister has introduced his Head of the Estimates then debate will follow. If he does not introduce the Head and wishes the debate to go on, hon. Members are free to debate. But Members should please limit their speeches to the financial position of that particular Ministry and nothing more.

*Clauses 1-7 postponed.*

**FIRST SCHEDULE**

**Head 421.—Premier's Office**

*Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £720,020 for Head 421—Premier's Office stand part of the Schedule.*

**The Premier (Dr M. I. Okpara):** May I seize this opportunity to answer to some of the points made during the Second reading of the Appropriation Bill.



[THE PREMIER]

Firstly, I am very grateful to all hon. Members for the constructive way in which they have criticised the Budget. Indeed, in some cases, Government has received unequivocal praise. I am sure that the hon. Minister of Finance is as elated as I am, for this is the first Budget presented since I became Premier of the Eastern Region. It was therefore with some relief that I noticed that the criticisms instead of taking the well-worn tracks of bitterness had suddenly become constructive. This is indeed a new phenomenon in our Parliamentary history and I hope it continues for many years to come.

May I join others in congratulating the Minister and Ministry of Finance for a very creditable performance. When you consider that we are going to spend £22.6 million this year (Capital plus recurrent), that we shall have on the 31st March, 1961 a Consolidated Revenue fund of £6.4 million, that we have accommodated £1.5 million of the Mbanefo Awards this year, which were unforeseen expenditure, I have nothing but praise for the Minister and all the members of his staff who helped him to come out with such flying colours. My only comment is that we hope that next year will even be better than this.

May I, Mr Chairman, take up a few major points raised by some hon. Members.

The Leader of the Opposition and hon. O. O. Ita and one or two others came back to the intriguing subject of Economic Planning. The Leader of the Opposition said (I am quoting his words, Sir):

“The relation between the Ministry of Commerce and the new Ministry of Economic Planning should be carefully defined. I suggest that the Ministry of Commerce should confine itself to the pilot projects and the attraction of private investments, while the big public project and joint projects (i.e., public and private capital in partnership) should be left to the Ministry of Economic Planning.”

There is no conflict or overlapping as this quotation might suggest. The Ministry of Economic Planning will plan all aspects of our economy. The new Ministry of Economic Planning will be able to define objectives and targets which executive Ministries like Commerce, Agriculture, Education, Health, and

Works will endeavour to attain. Thus the new Ministry will not only be concerned with planning in Commerce but planning in other fields. Only through a co-ordinated plan setting out priorities can orderly and rapid progress result.

In Puerto Rico, which I visited in November 1958, there were 454 experts in the Planning Board (and they only have a population of barely 2 million). Their duty was to plan all aspects of Puerto Rican Economy.

As all who are knowledgeable in these things know, this is a Ministry of experts. The Minister there, who may not be an expert, is to push the Ministry to producing realistic plans and showing results.

Because of the enormous authority concentrated in the hands of such experts, it is proposed that plans will be considered by a committee of Executive Council where I shall be Chairman, to make it easier for some of my colleagues to swallow some of their unsavoury but sound recommendations.

I agree entirely with hon. O. O. Ita that there should be many experts, not one. That is the intention. But we must start somewhere and expand later. Government proposes to secure the services of the best brains available. To this end Government has made approaches to the Ford Foundation, the International Bank and to the Israeli Government for experts in various fields of development. The intention is that a team made up of an expert in Agricultural Development, and another in Industrial Development and a third in the general problems of under-developed countries should conduct a survey of the economy of this Region. After the survey, one of them will remain as Economic Adviser to see to it that their recommendations are carried out. The Adviser will also help to reorganise the work of the new Ministry which will consist of: Collection and Analysis of Data and Statistics concerning the Natural, Human and Financial Resources of the Region. Preparation and Revision of the Regional Development Plan. Selection of projects likely to lead to the quicker implementation of the overall Development Programme; co-ordination in Economic Matters between Ministries and with other Nigerian Governments. The compilation of regular reports



on the state of projects and inquiries as to whether such projects are being carried out in accordance with general economic policy.

I share with the Leader of the Opposition the hope that the new Development Programme will show the course which the new Ministry has charted.

I endorse in its entirety all that the Leader of the Opposition has said on Iron and Steel. I firmly believe that until the country has started an Iron and Steel Industry that real Industrialisation has not begun because on Iron and Steel industry are based nearly all other Industries. Once this industry is started we shall shake off the inertia of centuries and advance like other modern nations. Indeed the Minister of Commerce elucidated to the Kaine Coal Inquiry our point of view on Coal, which was that the unemployment facing the Coal Industry would be reduced and even eliminated if we set up an Iron and Steel Industry here utilising our coal which is now proved to be coking. I dare say the Minister of Commerce will have more to say about this later. I can assure this hon. House that the Government is determined that this Industry is established without undue delay in the Eastern Region. As I said, the Ford Foundation is to carry out the necessary survey on which we shall base intelligent action in the future.

May I now come to the Public Service. The Leader of the Opposition made two points here which are apparently contradictory. First, he said, and I quote, Sir,

“In any case, let us take the Government view that super-scale posts are not going to have a penny addition. This Region will very much like that to be a firm policy. We do not want to come back here for any Supplementary Budget Session to learn that so much pressure had been brought to bear on the Government and they were compelled to give in and to pay arrears. We do not want to hear that. We want to go away this morning quite satisfied that for good these super-scale posts are not going to get a penny”.

And later he said:

“The immediate correction of all anomalies that exist in the civil service as regards salary scales, e.g. in Printing, I suggest the setting up of a small departmental committee to examine all salary grades with a view to regrading where necessary. The objective here is to remove every possible cause of discontent among the public servants on whose devotion to duty and sense of mission will greatly depend the success of economic planning in this Region.”

If we were to review salary grades we would definitely have to consider super-scale posts and we may well find that in some of them, though not in all, that there is a good case for an increase. Much as I believe in narrowing the gap between the top salaries and lower ones, I think it would be unrealistic of anyone to expect a young man straight from Grammar School to earn anything near what a Permanent Secretary earns. I am sure no one wants the salaries of all super-scale officers to be static in the East only, when all the Governments of the Federation are in the market for able officers.

I feel I must advise Members to be careful how they bring Civil Service matters into this House. The reason is that many a time their sources of information are either second-hand or sometimes inaccurate or from interested parties who are therefore unable to give an objective and unbiased account of the true position. Let me say here and now that I have the greatest confidence in our Service and would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to their loyalty, industry and devotion to duty. Members must remember that the Service is now almost Nigerianised and we have to co-operate and move together as a team if we are to succeed in this arduous task of nation building. Members must appreciate that although it is the politician that wrests political power from the imperialist, it is the civil servant who makes such self-government a reality. In this struggle for independence, we must realise that the civil servant has also served.

Several Members spoke comparing the salaries of super-scale officers with those of clerical officers. May I say that much as my



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Government would like to see that our lowly paid staff are paid a decent and living wage, and that is why we have accepted the Mbanefo Report fully and without reservations in their own case, it will be misleading to compare the salaries of these two classes of workers.

These salaries are determined by the qualifications and calibre of officers as well as the duties and responsibilities attached to the posts they occupy. Officers on super-scale salaries are mostly successful professionals, lawyers, doctors, experienced administrators, engineers, etc., and their wages often do not compare favourably with what they could get in either private or commercial life.

Hon. Members will agree with me that no one ever thinks of comparing the earnings of a Doctor with that of his nurse or that of a Lawyer with that of his clerk; or much less that of a Company Administrator and Director with that of his clerk.

Members may wish to know that even in England, the difference between the salaries of top-ranking officers and those of junior rank is much wider than it is here in this Region. There Permanent Secretaries receive £7,000 whilst junior clerks receive £364, i.e., £7 a week. If this is compared with this Region, where a Permanent Secretary is on £2,640 and a junior clerk on £180, you will see that whilst a junior clerk in U.K. gets about one-twentieth of the senior man's salary, his counterpart in Nigeria gets one-fifteenth.

Let me emphasise that we want a contented service where every worker will not only be satisfied but where every worker no matter how lowly placed will have the opportunity of rising to the top provided he has the necessary qualifications. This we have done by the introduction of the Executive Class which had the effect of abolishing the distinction between the former senior and junior services. It ensures that a clerk can rise from the clerical grade through the Executive Grade to the senior Administrative and Professional Grades otherwise known as Super-scale.

Before leaving the Civil Service, I would like to refer to the observation made by an hon. Member to the effect that there are so many officers floating around Enugu. This gives

the impression that we have more officers in Enugu than are really necessary. Members may wish to know that here in the East the Civil Service is grossly understaffed. This could be seen from the number of officers, both senior and junior, who every afternoon return to their desks in order to cope with the ever-increasing volume of work. A glance at the 1959-60 Estimates of both the Western and the Eastern Regions will show that whilst we have 102 posts of Administrative Officers and Executive Officers in Enugu, Ibadan has 226 posts. This means that we have less than half of their number. If we restrict the figures to only Administrative Officers we have 56 to their 114. I wish that Members could realise the strain and pressure under which some of our officers work.

Some Members have also attacked overseas leave and courses for Civil Servants. Overseas leave and courses are not only desirable but are necessary and conducive to efficiency. They broaden the outlook of officers and enable them to see how other countries solve similar problems facing us in this country. These are part of the training of junior officers for posts of higher responsibilities. Some of these courses, especially those in America, do not cost the Region anything more than the cost of international travel. All allowances and internal travels are borne by such organisations like the International Co-operation Administration or the Ford Foundation. Other Regions are taking advantage of these courses and there is no reason why we should not do the same.

Finally, I wish to end my reply by saying that our Public Service is still by and large efficient and good. There may be a few cranks and misfits who prefer to stir up trouble and discord rather than work. But you see this is in all walks of life. The path of honour for these misfits is that they should quit while we are still on speaking terms. But for those who remain we can promise they will have a fine career with no regrets.

**Mr E. O. Eyo** (Uyo Division): I would like to deal with the Provincial Administration in the Region under the Premier's Office. You will observe that as far back as May last year the Government appointed the so-called Provincial Commissioners and you will remember that this House did pass a law—the Pro-



vincial Administration Law—setting out quite clearly the duties of these Provincial Commissioners. But may I ask the Premier to tell us whether he is aware that these Provincial Commissioners, for the mere reason that they have not had any work to do, throw their weight about in the Provinces interfering with every aspect of administration.

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** Point of Order. Standing Order 30 (5). The hon. Member said “so-called Provincial Commissioners”. He should not use “so-called”.

**The Chairman:** Standing Order 30 (5) states:

“It shall be out of Order to use offensive and insulting language about Members of the House”.

I hope the hon. Member concerned will observe this Standing Order.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I am subject to your ruling, Mr Chairman, but I hope that Ministers will not come to this House and want us to follow a beaten track. In other words, we are not here to be dictated to about what words to use. If in your opinion the description is unfair, I am prepared to agree, but I must make it clear that as far as we are concerned, we regard Provincial Commissioners as party secretaries. However, as I was saying, the Provincial Commissioners have been throwing their weight about. Would it not surprise you, Sir, to hear of a Provincial Commissioner who had the boldness to issue instructions to a Secretary/Treasurer of a District Council to transfer a court clerk? Would it not surprise you to hear of a Provincial Commissioner who attends every local council meeting in his area? I thought we wanted Provincial Commissioners to preside over Provincial Assemblies. I know some Provincial Commissioners are worried about this but I thought I was doing them good to get Government to find them something to do. You do not expect them to earn £2,400 for doing nothing.

I thought the Premier himself would be very sorry for the Region for employing twelve of his party men in this way and he may increase them. But for goodness sake, when he does increase them, he should find something for them to do. Could you envisage a position such as this: you contemplate building a

Native Court and then one year in advance you appoint a Court Clerk. You are thinking of building a Native Court in the area and one year in advance in order to implement that decision of yours, you appoint a Court Clerk who has nothing to do other than to wait when the Minister will build a Native Court. That is just exactly the position in which these Provincial Commissioners find themselves. If I may link up the whole idea of Provincial Administration with the case of the Minorities in the Region, the whole Provincial idea is N.C.N.C. idea and it was used to impress the Minorities Commission as a tangible proposition by Government to allay the fears of Minorities. But what did the Minorities Commission find? The Minorities Commission recommended that in addition to the Provincial set up proposed by the N.C.N.C. that the old Calabar Province should be constituted a minority area and should have a Calabar Council. If I may draw your attention to Chapter 14 paragraph 35 of the report. It says:—

“In Calabar a very similar situation exists. The former Province of Calabar is the centre of a distinguishable culture and a similar arrangement might there be made . . . Its functions and duties would be quite different from those of Local Government Councils and it should, we think, come into operation whatever decisions are reached regarding Sessional Paper No. 2 of 1957”.

**The Premier:** What did the Conference agree to? It is the recommendation.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** It is the recommendation, very good. The Premier has asked me to say what the Conference agreed to but, before I do that, may I also quote paragraph 36 of the Report before I come to reply to the point made by the Premier:

“It may be that after independence the Federal Government and the Regional Governments will agree that other areas too should be declared minority areas in this way. We do not however feel justified in making other recommendations of this kind at this stage. These two are the areas in which, it seems to us, there is the strongest and most united local sentiment and the most clearly distinguishable culture. Our suggestion, quite simply, is that the limesight



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should be turned on to these areas and the normal sanctions of democracy brought into play”.

Now, that went before the resumed Conference in London in 1958 and if I may refer to what the Conference recorded at paragraphs 53 of its Report, may I with your permission read:

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

Point of Order. Standing Order 33 (1). This question of Minority area for Calabar is entirely at the discretion of Government and this Government sees nothing wrong in using its discretion.

**The Chairman:** I think Mr Eyo is discussing its relation with the Region and the Federation.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I appreciate the point made by the Minister of Finance. I will come to that later on but, I am discussing the question of establishing a Calabar Council for the former Calabar Province in line with what we all agreed upon at the Conference. Paragraph 53 is very clear:

“The Commission had also recommended that the former Province of Calabar should be made a Minority Area and that a Calabar Council should be appointed. The Conference agreed that there should be a Calabar Minority Area consisting of Calabar Province, subject to subsequent enquiry by the Governor of the Region and decision in his discretion as to whether any or all of the Annangs and Aro-Ibos should for this purpose remain in or be excised from the Area”.

I hope the N.C.N.C. Members will read this report intelligently. The question of a Calabar Council is established but what remains to be decided is the area, the extent, and that was left at the discretion of His Excellency. Now, at the Conference, the N.C.N.C. delegation took up a very dangerous position for maintaining that the Annangs did not want to be included in the Calabar Council.

**Mr Okpokam:** Point of Order. Standing Order 30 (2).

**The Chairman:** I think one of the finest policies of a Member of Parliament is to take-in

coolly the bitterest criticism and he should be able to reply effectively so as to smash that criticism instead of disturbing by heckling.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I was saying that the N.C.N.C. delegation at the Conference impressed or rather tried to impress upon the Conference that the Annangs in the Calabar Province did not want to be included in this Calabar Minority Council.

**Mr G. C. Okeya (Owerri Division):** Point of Order, Standing Order 30 (4). This matter had been discussed in this session when the hon. Member tabled an amendment. Why was that amendment withdrawn?

**The Chairman:** Standing Order 30 (4):

“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 afraid these two words have spoilt it, “current session”. This session is just beginning.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I appreciate the attitude of the N.C.N.C. but my work here is to put forward the case of my people in the Calabar Province, and if they will allow me to speak, I think the Premier will have every opportunity to reply.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice (Mr M. O. Ajegbo):** Point of Order.

**Opposition Bench:** What Point of Order?

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** Standing Order 31 (1).

**The Chairman:** Yes, Standing Order 31 (1) may be all right but that is when a Member raises a point of order. It was an interruption.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** That is if am prepared to give way, but I am not prepared to give way. I was saying that at this stage it will be left for the Premier to reply. The Annangs in the Calabar Province want to be included in the Calabar Minority Council . . .

**The Chairman:** Mr Eyo, I think it will be a nice thing if we practise what is called



“give and take”. You should stop so that the Minister can say what he wants to say.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** Unless he is rising on a point of order, I am not prepared to give way.

**The Chairman:** Yes, although it is the rule that when one rises on a point of order you will probably give way, but do you not think it will be very unwise to make a hard and fast rule?

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** But that is the trouble. I was saying that the N.C.N.C. delegation was relying on the memorandum which they submitted to the Conference . . .

**The Premier:** Standing Order 39. The Chairman has given the Attorney-General audience. That is the ruling from the Chair. It cannot be questioned.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Members, I think it will not be a bad thing if the Speaker uses his discretion, and I think it is quite wrong for any Member to challenge his right to use his discretion for the smooth working of Parliament. As I said, if I did not allow the Minister to make that interruption, it might be laying a hard and fast rule in which case I shall never allow any Member to make any interruption in this House. That will not be good for you and me; it will not make for the smooth working of this Parliament. Therefore, I am appealing to Mr Eyo that in spite of the Standing Order, he should allow the other man to say what he wants to say. I am quite prepared to allow Mr Eyo his full thirty minutes without interruptions.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** The point I want to make is your ruling that Mr Eyo should go on because, you will remember, he gave notice of an amendment to the Speech from the Throne. I think that is the point the Government Chief Whip is making. He tabled that amendment to the Motion in this session. I do not challenge your ruling, but the point is that the amendment on the Speech from the Throne is in this session.

**The Chairman:** I quite agree but I am afraid there was no decision on it by the House.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** If I may, I ask the N.C.N.C. Members to raise all their Points of Order so that I may continue. The N.C.N.C. attitude

at the Conference was based on what they put forward, namely, that the Annangs did not want to be included in this Minority Council, and I was saying that they were relying on the memorandum which was submitted to the Conference by the Annang Welfare Union. I am coming out clearly to attack Government policy with regard to the creation of this Minority Council. It is the responsibility of the Regional Government to create the Minority Council and I want to know what this Government has done about it. In the Western Region, the Western Regional Government has already created an Advisory Council for the Mid-West Area.

I am seeking information from the Government as to what proposals they have made and how soon we will have our Minority Council. I was hoping that a few Members of the Government side who come from this Annang area would join in the debate and I was preparing to show the House what led to the Conference assigning the duty to His Excellency the Governor to ascertain the wishes of the people. The N.C.N.C. opposition was based on a memorandum submitted by a body known as the Annang Welfare Union. I hope no Member on the N.C.N.C. side will have the face at this stage to claim to speak for the Annangs on the issue. We accepted the challenge in London. There was all that bluff; Ministers and Members from the Annang area were claiming to speak for the Annangs in this respect; but we are now in a much stronger position on this issue. By “we” I mean the Members on this side of the House. We went for the last general elections and I conducted the campaign in the Annang area.

**Mr Okpokam:** Standing Order 36 (1).

**The Chairman:** Thank you; that is left to me.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** If only the Government had given us the Minority Council I would have spared them this embarrassment of coming to the House to discuss the issue. By Annangs we mean two constituencies in Ikot Ekpene Division, two constituencies in Abak Division and one constituency in Opobo Division. They comprise the Annangs. And so we went out during the last campaign and put this issue clearly to the electorate: Do you



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want to be included in the proposed Calabar Minority Council? And we wanted them to go and vote once and for all. What was the result? In Ikot Ekpene Central we won with a very overwhelming majority; in Ikot Ekpene South we won with an overwhelming majority; then we came down to Abak Division and the two seats there were won by us. I am trying to support our claim that the Annangs in the former Calabar Province want to be included in this Calabar Minority Council. I expect that the Premier in his reply will say what His Excellency has done about it. The issue was to determine whether all or any of the Annangs in the former Calabar Province wanted to be included in this Minority Council and we are saying that we have the support of the Annangs to be included. I hope none of the Members who claim to represent the Annangs in this House will have the face to speak on this issue. It will interest you to note that the Secretary of the so-called Annang Welfare Union (one red-Indian who goes by the name H. O. Akpan-Udo and who sent this memorandum to London) contested the election and lost. The Chairman of this so-called Annang Welfare Union is a cousin of the Minister of Internal Affairs. He is a Barrister-at-Law. He contested the election and lost to a teacher. So that on the question of the Annangs there can be nothing in doubt as to the wishes of the people. The Annangs, one hundred per cent, want to be included in this Calabar Minority Council.

Now, for the Aro-Ibos the position is different. I am referring to the Provincial Administration Law, 1959 Regulations published in the *Eastern Region Gazette* No. 16 Vol. 9 of 18th March, 1960. Government has clearly set out the clans under the Aro-Ibo District Council at page B 190. They have Aro clan consisting of Aro and Iwerri Local Councils. Then they have Ibo clan under which they put down Ihie, Ututu, Ukwa, and Isu. Here our only claim is that any of these Ibo Local Councils that do not want to join the Calabar Minority Council should stay out. But we must speak for our own brothers—the Ukwas. If the people of Ihie want to stay out they can do so; if the Ututus want to stay out they can do so; if the Isus want to stay out they can do so. But would it be fair to force the people of Ukwa to stay out? I would like our new Premier to be more

serious on this issue. It was agreed that we should have the Calabar Minority Council irrespective of the existing Provincial set-up. Government seems to be confused; their idea seems to be that since we have got the Provincial set-up there is no need for the Calabar Minority Council. But that is not borne out by the decision we arrived at in London.

**Mr Okpokam:** Standing Order 36 (1):

“Unless the Standing Orders otherwise allow and subject to paragraph (2) of this Standing Order, 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 Chairman:** I have taken notice of that, Mr Okpokam.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** If I may conclude, I wish to impress upon our Premier that this is a matter in which they cannot play politics. The Conference decided that the former Calabar Province which is a minority area should have a Minority Council and I want to know when this Council will come into being because my people are very anxious; they are not interested in the N.C.N.C. Provincial set-up. The Calabar Minority Council which we envisage is something more dignified. It is going to have certain powers delegated to it by the Regional Government. It is not going to be the type of Provincial set-up in which you have these people from Local Councils attending. So I hope that when the Premier will be replying he will be good enough to tell us, since we returned from London in 1958, what action Government has taken towards the setting up of the Calabar Minority Council.

**The Minister of Internal Affairs (Mr I. U. Akpabio):** I consider it my bounden duty,

as a true son and accredited representative of Annang in this hon. House, to speak on this Head in order to place on record my strong objection and the objection of the whole of Annang Province to the frequent interference by the hon. the Chief Whip of the Opposition in the affairs of Annangs.

The other day he sought to cajole this hon. House to regret “the omission in the Speech of any reference to steps taken by His Excellency the Governor to ascertain the wishes of the



Annangs and the Aro-Ibos as regards their inclusion in the proposed Calabar Minority Council in accordance with paragraph 53 of the Report of the London Constitutional Conference of 1958". To begin with, the Opposition Chief Whip ought to know better. He should know that Aro-Ibos having now joined Bende Division there is no way in which he could force them to return to Calabar Minority Council.

My main attention is being focussed on the Opposition Chief Whip's reference to the Annangs whose prayer, by the Grace of God, has been answered and they have been liberated from the stranglehold and oppression of certain unscrupulous men who had wished to absorb Annang area into their tribal confines and so make us lose our identity. Thanks to the unflinching will of the Annangs and the democratic ideals of the East Regional Government to which I proudly belong, the Annang Province has become an imperishable reality. We, her stalwart sons and daughters are in duty bound to defend her borders against all encroachments from without, and shall never live to see political predators violate our territorial integrity as Annang Province.

Indeed, Mr Chairman, the hon. the Opposition Chief Whip has no moral right to speak for the Annangs. In the first place, he is not indigenous to the Province. And again, the Party which he leads has only one of the six hon. Members from the Annang Province in this House. All the Annang Chiefs in the House of Chiefs gave evidence against inclusion in a C.O.R. State before the Minorities Commission. Where then is the Opposition Chief Whip's *locus standi* in this matter over which the Annangs have repeatedly made their position and declared intentions crystal clear?

My people, the Annangs, are not interested in joining the Calabar Minority Council for six principal reasons:

(1) In the so-called Calabar Minority Council, the Annangs shall become a minority entity. We believe that this state of affairs will be equivalent to setting the hands of the Annang clock backwards because having just freed ourselves from the shackles of local oppressors, it would be tantamount to suicide, if not

political lunacy, for us to vote to join a so-called Calabar Minority Council where we shall be dominated, by groups of people who have no sympathy for our aspirations.

(2) Past experiences have taught the Annangs an unforgettable lesson in the art of negligence. Representatives of the old Calabar Province in the Legislative Council and the Eastern House of Assembly of those days deliberately and consistently omitted any mention of the needs of the Annangs in their speeches. The result was that the Annangs were treated as if they did not exist, and consequently, not even crumbs of amenities from the master's table came our way.

(3) Moreover, the present Opposition party advocates of the Calabar Minority Council have from the very beginning been sworn enemies of the accredited Annang leaders. The reason for this was that they realised that if they must continue to exploit the Annangs for their own selfish purposes, then they must first destroy their leaders. This pernicious plea to include Annang into the Calabar Minority Council is a subtle method of wanting to destroy Annang Province and personality through the back door.

(4) The so-called Calabar Minority Council is ideologically incompatible with the N.C.N.C. policy of one Nigeria, hate-free, greed-free and fear-free. An overwhelming majority of the Annangs are N.C.N.C. supporters (*Mr E. O. Eyo: Since last December?*) and will therefore have nothing to do with this Action Group-sponsored Calabar Minority Council because we believe it will not be in the best interest of Annang. The very problem of minorities which it seeks to solve will be complicated by the existence of recurring minorities.

(5) The creation of Annang as a separate Province with its own Provincial Assembly, which will soon be established, is, and has been, the only panacea for the political ills of the Annangs who have now ceased to be a minority inside a minority. In the present Provincial dispensation, the Annangs are determined to develop their fatherland with vigour and skill, using such shares of Regional and Federal funds as are allocated to them. These will be in addition to the social amenities which are regularly made available to the Province by the Regional Government, and to a lesser extent the Federal Government.



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(6) The Annangs are represented in the Eastern House of Chiefs and in the Federal Senate. These stalwart exponents of Annang personality are uncompromising witnesses of the people's opposition to any subtle design to submerge our identity into the so-called Calabar Minority Council. I challenge the Opposition Chief Whip to cause such amendment as he wanted to move in this House the other day, to be tabled at the coming meeting of the Eastern House of Chiefs and let him observe the unwelcome reception which it will have in the hands of all Annang Chiefs.

I have just concluded an extensive tour of Annang Province and I can emphatically say that no true Annang son or daughter is in favour of joining the so-called Calabar Minority Council. We are satisfied to remain, as at present, a respectable entity with our own Province, in the wider fraternity of the Nigerian nation, and not in a hate-engendering sub-state called the Calabar Minority Council.

Indeed, throughout the period of my recent tour, I was inundated with welcome addresses eulogising the East Regional Government for its magnanimous support of the aspirations of the Annangs for a separate Province.

At the Adiasim Local Council, that corporate Local Government body praised the Regional Government through me for the creation of Annang Province. They added, and with your permission, I quote:

"Your praise will be incomplete if we fail to mention the greatest of all your achievements. Many years ago, the Annangs were unknown to the outside world. Today, by dint of your hard work, Annang has become one of the Provinces of the Region ... We seize this opportunity to request you to convey to the hon. Premier and your other colleagues in the Regional Government our whole-hearted support. We also wish to register our unflinching confidence in the leadership of Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe."

I beg your indulgence, there are one or two more examples of my people's expressed feelings sorted out from the hundreds of such documents now in my possession.

At Obot Akara, the entire Local Council Area said *inter alia*:

"We are very thankful to you and to the Regional Government for the creation of a Province for the Annang people. In remembrance of your meritorious services as Minister of State, as Acting Premier on three different occasions during the unforgettable regime of Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, and as a devoted fighter for Annang nationalism, we give you this golden feather as a sign that you are a true son of Annang. We also present you this staff to be used in beating down your enemies."

The following day, the entire community of Obot Akara received me. In their Address of Welcome, they said this, among other things:

"Hon. Minister, your Government is good. Its ideology is praiseworthy. It knows what is good for the people and always makes great endeavours to satisfy their needs. Your Government has showered us with abundant amenities. The greatest of all, your Government has given us a Province of our own, and we are satisfied. What we have we hold. Never shall we allow our Annang territory to be joined to the so-called Calabar Minority Council. We present you this sword, not as a reward, but as a weapon to conquer your and our enemies, for whoever is not for Annang is against her."

At Ikot Abia, the Local Council decorated me with the insignia of "Ndo", the highest Annang traditional honour and wrapped my wrist with a leopard skin. The welcome address presented to me had this to say, among others:

"The creation of Annang Province by the Regional Government has solved once and for all our minority problem and we would oppose any move from anti-Annang elements to absorb us into the Calabar Minority Council. You have the champion of Annang self-determination and you are worthy of the greatest honour Annang can bestow. Praise be to you, to the East Regional Government, and to Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe."

Last week, a joint meeting of the Ikot Ekpene Local Council and Urban District Council said this in their welcome address to me, and this is an answer to some Opposition



hecklers who are referring to the results of the last Federal Elections in Annang land, I quote:

“Honourable Sir, the people of Ikot Ekpen Division are solidly behind the N.C.N.C. despite the results of the last Federal Elections. They were only being deceived by the false propaganda of the Action Group. In fact, voting in the urban area portrayed a strong support for the Government party. We are sure that the Ikot Ekpen electorate have now discovered that a kingdom built on false propaganda soon collapses. The Federal Elections are over, but taxes and rates are still being paid contrary to Action Group false propaganda, the price of palm produce has not been doubled as the Action Group promised, and the C.O.R. State is no more mentioned. Indeed, Annang people cannot be deceived all the time. We are henceforth a worthy partner in the Provincial set-up of the Region. We shall have nothing to do with the Calabar Minority Council; we are Annang in Nigeria!”

I can produce before you hundreds of such expressions of the minds of my people with regard to the so-called Calabar Minority Council to show you that my people will have nothing to do with it and that the Opposition Chief Whip is talking through his political hat. I challenge him, to produce resolutions or memoranda passed and approved by my people in support of his speech. He can produce none. If any, such will only come from groups of irresponsibles.

Why should he take his Excellency the Governor to task for not saying something about the wishes of the Annangs and the Aro-Ibos as regards their inclusion in the Calabar Minority Council?

His Excellency was present at the London Constitutional Conference and he knows what decisions were taken as regards the destiny of Annang. And I may add, His Excellency heard us say that we would never join the Calabar Minority Council.

His Excellency knows that the proposed enquiry is not one deserving of a certificate of urgency because the people of Annang are really satisfied now with the present Provincial set-up and would not like the present tranquility to be disturbed by political fishermen in troubled waters.

There is no reason, therefore, why the Opposition Chief Whip should regret the omission by His Excellency of any mention of this enquiry.

I am satisfied that when the Governor deems it fit and proper, he may graciously institute the enquiry as provided in the Constitutional Report. And when that happens, the Opposition Chief Whip and his colleagues will be left in no doubt as regards the overwhelming desire of the people of Annang to retain their identity in the present Provincial set-up. One wonders why the Opposition Chief Whip and his colleagues are so anxious to strip Annang of her heritage as an entity with her own responsibility for the development and progress of the fatherland and people?

I can answer that. They want to absorb Annang into the Calabar Minority Council so that, as of old, they will continue to serve as middlemen between us and the Regional Government. And, we all are well aware that in any enterprise it is the middlemen who make the profit. So, we the Annangs refuse to allow any person or groups of persons to make profit out of us by serving as our middlemen.

By this subtle arrangement too, they will prevent the Annangs from representing their needs to the Regional Government direct. They would want us to pass our needs for amenities through the bottleneck of the Calabar Minority Council. Do you think that if this bottleneck had been in existence for the past six years since this Government party took over the reins of the Region's administration, the Annangs would have got a well developed hospital, pipe-borne water now in operation, secondary, teacher and post-secondary scholarships, some good roads and bridges, equitable grants-in-aid, and so on? In fact, could Annang Province itself have been created? The answer is an emphatic “NO!”

Finally, I would advise the Chief Whip of the Opposition to get on with their own development and let Annangs develop themselves. It does not prevent us from being brothers. When two brothers fail to agree in one house, each can erect a separate building and then visit his brother any time he desires.

We the Annangs do not wish to, and never will, join the so-called Calabar Minority Council either now or in the foreseeable and unforeseeable future. This is Annang Will and Testament.



**The Chairman:** I am happy that the House is so lively this morning!

**Chief I. I. Morphy** (Ogoja Division): What the Opposition is asking for is that the Government should carry out what has been agreed upon and recorded in the Report of the Resumed Nigeria Constitutional Conference paragraph 53. The Opposition Chief Whip has referred to this paragraph and with your permission I have got to read it again because what we are asking the Government to do and carry out is what has been agreed upon as in paragraph 53:

“The Commission had also recommended that the former Province of Calabar should be made a Minority Area and that a Calabar Council should be appointed . . . The Conference agreed that there should be a Calabar Minority Area consisting of Calabar Province . . .”

This is what the Conference agreed upon. We are trying to show that there is a difference between the Provincial Assembly and this Minority Council. I refer you to paragraph 55 where the Conference agreed on the Provincial Assembly. With you permission, I read:

“The Conference took note that the Government of the Eastern Region proposed to establish a Provincial Assembly, comprising representatives of local council areas and recognised Chiefs as a deliberative and consultative body in each Province of the Eastern Region. Members of the House of Chiefs and House of Assembly from the Province should be *ex officio* members of the Assembly. The Regional Government proposed to appoint a Provincial Commissioner, who would not be a public officer, to preside over the Assembly, and a Provincial Secretary to act as a liaison between the Regional Government and the local councils within the Province. The Conference took note that before the Ogoja Provincial Assembly was set up the Regional Government would give careful consideration to points made in the course of discussion concerning the area and peoples with which this Assembly should be concerned.”

Now, even here we are talking about what does not really worry us in the Eastern Region at present but what worries Nigeria now. So if the Conference has agreed that a Minority Council for Calabar should be created, we

advise the new Premier that this is not the time to get into things that will worry him. This is the time when all of us in this House should look ahead and not look back. The Premier should create this Minority Area. This is all we are asking for. If he does that we shall be satisfied. All of us know that the Ibos are in the minority the Yorubas are in the minority and the Middle-belt men are now also in the minority in this country. The only people who are now in the majority are the Fulanis and the Hausas. If you compare the minorities of the Region and their difficulties you will be confronted with difficulties which will not let us look ahead. Our trouble now is to try and make Nigeria really a place worth living. That is what the Opposition wants. Let us not concern ourselves with Regional troubles, forgetting the whole country.

Now coming to another point there are certain groups of workers who are on certain scales. These officers are on scale C (E)/(T) 2, 3. These fellows are not in the senior group who enjoy the benefits which senior servants enjoy but they are given car advances. They are denied certain amenities and these amenities are enjoyed by senior servants and most of these fellows work in the High Courts. Some of these fellows are in the same rank with those in the Ministries of Agriculture, Finance, Health, House of Assembly, etc. Some other fellows in that grade are enjoying what others are not having. What we want the new Premier to do is not to allow people on the same scale to be discriminated against. Anybody on the same scale should enjoy what his fellow on that scale enjoys. If this is not so people will not be satisfied and they will not do their work adequately. People of the same grade should enjoy equal amenities.

Then I come to the case of drivers and mechanics. These are under the Premier's Office. These people since 1954 have been agitating for better salaries and better service conditions. The Gorsuch recommendations of 1954-5 remarked that drivers were poorly rated and despite the Gorsuch recommendation for the improvement of the service conditions of these drivers and mechanics the Government of the Eastern Region gave no serious attention to these fellows. Gorsuch recommended that these fellows should be better paid. At present these people are on G 1, 2, 3, 4. And they want their scale to be extended from



F 1 and 2 to F 3. This will give them better condition and it will help them to do their job better too. This same group of people are still daily paid, but Government told us that all daily paid workers would have to be made permanent. How has Government then redeemed the promise that they are making that all daily paid workers will be converted into permanent servants of Government? I would very much like this group of people to be considered and placed on permanent basis and also that they should be placed on better scale of salary.

Taking the office of the Commissioner in London, last year I said in this House that visitors to London are never satisfied with the attitude of our boys in the Office of the Commissioner. If you take the Englishman, when you meet him and you are introduced to him he becomes very good and you will be satisfied by him in all your wants. But if you take the African, he is very cool. He does not act like the Englishman when introduced and he does not act like the African. In London, you need somebody to be warm as the African is. His duty is to help Africans who are there to find their way but the boys in the Commissioner's Office are not doing their work; they are so cool. So I am asking the Premier to do his best to let the Commissioner know that people who go from here to London should be better treated. Those boys should be as warm as Africans are; they should not be so cool. They are in London to show the people there our way of living and to publicise us.

**The Chairman:** I wish to remind hon. Members particularly those who have their names down on the amendment to reduce Head so and so by so and so amount, that I take it that they wish to speak on that Head generally—debate the policy of that Head generally. So they should stand up and not wait because I would allow anybody who stands up to speak on the Head generally, in spite of the fact that his name is not there.

**Mr M. N. Onwuma (Aba Division):** I just want to point out to the Premier that I think there is a mistake in the schedule for Provincial Assemblies as it affects Aba Division. You will remember that Aba is submerged in what is called Umuahia Province and besides, that numerical strength which we think that we have is now meaningless. In that schedule for Aba there are 28 seats so that the mistake

arises from the grouping together of Akumimo and Ohanze. Each of these clans is quite large in itself and they should have one representative each. As a matter of fact, I think that has been agreed upon and it might be a mistake from the Premier's Office. So I should like to have that mistake corrected.

Secondly, Abanaohazu too is in the same schedule. I am referring to *Eastern Region Extraordinary Gazette* of 18th March. Abanaohazu should stand separate from Amairinano. When you do that you will see that we are still short of three seats. If it is a mistake, I would like the Premier's Office to take necessary action to have the mistake remedied.

The other point I want to make is this—it may be that the matter is to be explained to me, but quite frankly I cannot understand why the regulation for the House of Chiefs, or the Recognition of Chiefs, as it concerns Aba Division has been amended. The regulation for the selection or appointment of Second-class Chiefs has not been amended in all the other Divisions. I do not know why Aba Division has been singled out for amendment. I would like to know when the Premier replies if it is on a case of minority. If that is so, then of course we are suffering in Umuahia Province and we should be given Ngwa Province. But if it is not on minority, I would like to have an explanation on why Aba Division, of all the Divisions in the Eastern Region, should be singled out for the amendment of the regulation for the selection of Chiefs.

The other important case I would like to make is something concerning Executive Officers generally and in the Premier's Office in particular. The Executive Officers in this Region are not at par with Executive Officers either in the Federation or in the Northern Region. During the debate some time last year on the Appropriation Bill, the then Premier pointed out that every effort would be made in order to bring the position of Executive Officers at par with other Regions. But so far, that has not been implemented. Perhaps it is a mistake or an oversight and we would like the Premier to look into it. Added to that, what exactly are the service conditions of Higher Executive Officers generally in this department and in the Service as a whole? Apart from salary, what other amenities are Higher Executive Officers in this Region entitled to? Are they enjoying those amenities?



[MR ONWUMA]

Is it true that a circular has been sent out from the Premier's Office that civil servants cannot have coffee or tea or move about with Legislators? Is it true? If it is true, Mr Chairman, we do not know exactly what is happening. We would like to know so that we will be able to explain and make our position quite clear. I cannot understand why, if I have a brother or a relative at Enugu who is a civil servant, and I come up to Enugu, he cannot come to see me or I cannot go to see him. I want to know whether it is true that such a circular exists whereby civil servants of all grades even junior ones should not see hon. Members of the House when they are in Enugu, either in the chalets or anywhere. We, as politicians, do not know why such a circular has been issued, and we want to know so that we can know exactly where we stand.

Finally, I would like to know from the hon. Premier how soon we will be inviting applications for those who want to enter into the University of Nigeria either in September or October, because this is April and if we are to celebrate Independence with the University, I should suggest that the machinery should now be set in motion whereby candidates who are intending to enter this University should now be accepted because between now and September and October is so short a time to recruit or at least interview those who are willing to enter into the University. I would like the hon. Premier to let us know either now or before the House adjourns how soon it is likely that this matter will be taken in hand.

**Mr S. O. Achara** (Okigwi Division): Since 1957, we have consistently made a very strong case on the floor of this House for Local Government trained staff in the public service of this Region. Some of them were selected and promoted, others were left without promotions. Although promises had been made in the past, that Government would look into this matter, it appears that either no action has been taken or that Government is not prepared to take any at all. I want to know why there is that discrimination in the treatment of these Local Government trained members of staff in the public service of this Region. Why should some be selected and promoted and others left behind?

The second point is that with the exception of this Region, all the other Local Government trained people from Ibadan in the Federal Government, in the Western Regional Government and in the Northern Region Government have been promoted to responsible posts in the respective Governments.

**The Chairman:** Why not leave that; why not discuss that under the Local Government Head?

**Mr Achara:** No, Sir. I am dealing with the public service of the Region under the Premier.

**The Chairman:** Is that not in connection with the Ministry of Local Government?

**Mr Achara:** This has nothing to do with the Ministry of Local Government. I am only saying that they went and received training at Ibadan. When they came back here they were not only posted in the Local Government Ministry, some of them are in other Ministries of the Region. I am discussing staff matters generally as they affect those under the Premier. Do I proceed, Sir?

**The Chairman:** Proceed.

**Mr Achara:** Their counterparts in the other Governments of the Federation have been promoted to substantive executive posts—Assistant Secretaries and Assistant District Officers. Even those who have been promoted here are merely on the lowest rung of the ladder of Executive Officers and yet those who are left behind have petitioned in vain. I want a categorical statement from the Premier as to why his office has not been able to deal fairly with those who have been left behind. I suggest that there should be a small Committee to go into all these irregularities in the grading of civil servants in the lower segment of the service of this Region. If it will not be effective to appoint a Civil Service Committee I suggest that a small Parliamentary group be appointed to go into the details. In 1957 an assurance was given on the floor of this House that the Government would look into this matter. Since 1957 nothing has happened at all. There was no action. In 1959 the same promise was again repeated. We want an end to this promise which has in the past not been fulfilled. If we are desirous of eliminating



small discontentment here and there it is this type of thing that should be tackled. These gentlemen went to Ibadan, had a very high training and came out with flying colours only to come here to mark time on the salaries which they were receiving before they went to Ibadan. Only a hand-full of them were promoted. I want the hon. the Premier to kindly take up this matter and remove these irregularities once and for all.

Finally, when we raise this question of Provincial Commissioners, I think it is prudent for them to listen to us in silence. After all, I understand they are on the same status as Ministers. Their behaviour in this House should conform with the standard of behaviour of Ministers. Those of them in whose Provinces the Government party lost in the last election make the largest noise in this House. And it is not intended that by making this noise Government should overlook the fact that they did not discharge their duties.

**The Chairman:** I think we may now have a break for 30 minutes. My experience in the Federal House is that there is a Business Committee which sat and limited the number of speakers on various Heads. You have a number of Heads to go through and I hope it is intended to finish the Committee of Supply on Friday. So it is necessary for the Whips, the Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition to let me know what Heads would be gone through each day.

*Sitting suspended at 12 noon.*

*Sitting resumed at 12.30 p.m.*

**Mr Achara:** I was developing my argument for the support that the hon. Premier would do well to hasten all arrangements in finding enough work to keep our Provincial Commissioners busy. The right step is to establish as soon as possible the Provincial Assemblies. When I was at school one of my teachers told us that a vacant mind is a devil's workshop. When Government appoint grown-up people, call them big names and give them big salaries without responsibilities Government is making them idle and sufficient work must therefore be found for them. I submit that it is not enough for these Commissioners to tour Local

Government Councils and parade convent schools with Police orderlies.

**Mr G. C. Okeya** (Owerri Division): Point of order—Standing Order 30 (7). The hon. Member said that Commissioners were visiting convents.

**The Chairman:** I do not think there is anything wrong with visiting convents.

**Mr Achara:** The sooner these Provincial Assemblies are established the better for us, and the more justified will be the Provincial Commissioners in drawing their big salaries and allowances to which their high offices entitle them. This is the case we are trying to make and I think the Premier will be good enough to summon Provincial Commissioners to a private meeting and give instructions to those of them who constitute themselves into a noisy group on the floor of this House, so that they will not convert this House into a village council where a man must keep his office by making as much noise as possible to impress his leader. Government will expect the Provincial Commissioners to win all the seats for it at the next Regional elections and where they fail I suggest that the sooner those of them who have not lived up to the expectation are recalled the better.

**The Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies) (Mr O. U. Affiah):** In rising to speak I have two clear-cut duties to perform. One is to answer to the points raised in connection with matters for which I am responsible in the Premier's Office, the other one I will tell you when I get to that stage. It is clear from the points made about the Public Service since the beginning of the present meeting that hon. Members are not very well informed on certain aspects of the service. It is therefore my duty as a Minister responsible for Establishments to clear as far as possible certain misconceptions which the different statements made in this House have shown to exist in the minds of some hon. Members.

First, there has been repeated mention of what speakers have called the "wide gap" existing between the different grades of the service and the urge on Government to bridge the "gap".



[MR AFFIAH]

Much as Government appreciates that there may be some cases for improving the pay of the lower paid employees, and has proved its intentions towards this end by its recent decision to limit the new salary awards to such employees, it is clearly wrong to talk of a "gap" existing in the service. There is nothing, and I repeat nothing, like a gap in our Civil Service.

It seems that Members are either not aware, or have lost sight of the fact, that for many years now the distinction created by the terms "Junior" and "Senior" service has been removed. The gap which had existed when the service was so divided has now been completely abolished both by the creation of an Executive Class and by the extension of the salary scales payable to the senior members of the clerical staff. Members of the Executive Class can, by normal promotion progress, get to the top of scale C (E) or (T) 5 which is only a little below the top point of Scale A or B, the two scales which used to be regarded as belonging to what used to be known as "Senior" Service". In other words, members of the Executive Class can rise to almost the same maximum salary as members of, say, the Administration who are on the long scale. As regards clerks, the maximum salary of their most senior members, that is, Senior Staff Officers, goes beyond the minimum for, say, Administrative Officers; thus we have a Senior Staff Officer on his maximum salary earning more than the newly recruited Administrative Officer. Further, certain privileges which used to be reserved to members of the so-called senior service—when the term had any meaning—are now also enjoyed by, say, members of the clerical service. One example of such privileges is that of motor vehicle advances and allowances.

We have one service with members divided into categories according to their responsibilities and qualifications. Most important of all, no barrier exists between one category and another, and there is nothing to stop any official in one category from proceeding to another, if he has the necessary ability and qualifications.

One argument frequently advanced in support of the argument about the existence of a "gap" is that the salaries paid to those on super-scale posts are too high in relation to

those paid to, say, clerks. This again is an argument based on a misconception. Salaries of posts are determined by the responsibility and qualifications attached to the posts and should have no relation to what the most junior post attracts, because the responsibilities between the two can stand no comparison. In this, we are following the practice not only of other Governments the world over but of industry as well. Perhaps an illustration would be useful. Taking the top and lowest posts in the administrative ladder we have Permanent Secretaries in this Region as the hon. Premier has already stated receiving £2,640 per annum while third-class Clerks receive £180 per annum. In Britain, I am informed, the corresponding officers receive £7,000 and £364 per annum respectively. This comparison shows that the ratio between the salaries of a junior clerk and of the most senior officer is more favourable in this Region than even in Britain.

Mr Chairman, I have said that it is wrong to talk of a gap existing in the Public Service. But a gap does exist elsewhere—and as a matter of fact, we will come to that later on.

The next point I would like to touch upon is that of Nigerianisation. His Excellency in his Speech from the Throne did inform the House of the remarkable progress made here in this respect. But people both inside and outside this House are wondering if enough is being done to prepare ourselves against independence. We are doing everything possible to ensure a full Nigerianisation of all ranks of our Public Service within the shortest possible time. As a Member rightly stressed during the debate on the Speech from the Throne, we must at the same time ensure that standards are not dangerously undermined. Nigerianisation does not mean a reckless replacement of expatriate staff whose services will be required and welcomed even after independence.

Hon. Members are well aware of the super-numerary posts of Senior Assistant Secretaries, which is a device of training suitable material for responsible posts in the policy-making hierarchy. By means of open scholarships suitable candidates are being sent, by hundreds, every year to higher institutions of learning for the purpose of equipping them for appointment to the administrative, professional and



technical posts in the service. But since scholarship courses may take many years, Government has devised and is operating a scheme for in-service training for members of the service. These courses which can be taken locally or abroad take shorter time, thus quickly turning out trained people for use in appropriate responsible posts. For this purpose, there is a Standing Committee on Training which meets regularly, or as need arises, to consider claims from the different Ministries. As a supplement to our efforts, Government has received the assistance of International Co-operation Administration which is also kindly sponsoring short training schemes overseas for members of the Public Service.

In order to avoid any wastage in man-power, and to facilitate planned Nigerianisation a man-power survey is at present being undertaken in this Region with the help of members of the Ford Foundation of America.

The views of hon. Members that the work and efficiency of our public officers should be improved is appreciated. It is precisely in order to ensure that the best in efficiency and economy is obtained from our public officers that the Organisation and Methods Unit, mentioned in paragraph 12 of the Speech from the Throne, is being set up.

The Leader of Opposition in his speech on the Appropriation Bill made the point that 26 per cent of our public revenue has been earmarked for spending on our Public Service, and described it as a "dark spot" in the Estimates. The percentage may be high in relation to our resources and in comparison with the more advanced countries. Remarkably, however, he did not say that the expenditure was unnecessary; nor did he mention the fact that a good proportion of the members of the Public Service, for whom the amount is earmarked, will be engaged in planning and development work which will further the wealth and economic progress of this Region. All countries in our position have had to face such a situation. As our development schemes materialise, and our wealth and public revenues increase through the efforts of these public service personnel, the percentage of public revenue spent on Personal Emoluments and ancillary charges will correspondingly decrease. A

dangerous cut in staff at this stage will retard rather than advance the pace in this direction.

It will be for my colleagues in charge of the different Ministries to explain the different provisions made in their respective Heads of the Estimates. As the Minister charged with responsibility for Establishment matters, it fell to the lot of my officials and myself to scrutinise all new proposals for staff in the whole Service before their final consideration by Government. I can, therefore, categorically assure the House that no increases have been included in the Draft Estimates which were not found to be absolutely necessary for the efficient running of the Service.

Government is not maintaining a wasteful public service. Members will probably have heard that discussions are at present proceeding between the Official and Staff side of the Whitley Council with a view to seeing how the existing conditions of service of public officers can be remodelled to modern needs. The aim of the exercise is to see where economies can be effected without endangering the efficiency or the well-being of public officers. Certain types of allowances for indigenous staff are being reviewed with a view to their modification or abolition; leave conditions are being reviewed and so on. All these are done in order to reduce certain types of ancillary charges. Other Governments of the Federation have felt as we have, and are taking action along the same lines as we are doing.

Before I finish with this point I want to deal with certain points raised today. Chief Morphy has mentioned about disparity in allowances of officers in the same grade but he did not say specifically what allowances he had in mind.

**Chief Morphy:** Point of Order. I said that these people under the same grade are not enjoying the amenities that a senior servant enjoys. The senior servants live in the senior service quarters; they have children's allowance; they have basic allowance—you know all these things. That is what I mean.

**The Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies):** I will talk about Executive Officers later on, but as far as I am concerned



[MR AFFIAH]

at the moment I am talking about the points he raised about certain people who are on the same scale of salary but have different treatment, and I want to assure the House that as far as I am aware there is no such thing in the Civil Service of the Eastern Region.

**Chief Morphy:** Point of Order. (*Shouts of No!*). I have a right in this House. I want to clear myself. He said that what I said was wrong, and I want to tell him that I am not wrong. I am one hundred per cent right.

**The Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies):** As regards Daily Paid Employees Government has redeemed its promise since majority of daily paid employees are now on established labour force with greater security than before. It is true that salaries of artisans of certain categories are based on what their counterparts get in other parts of the Federation and elsewhere.

As for the points raised by Mr Onwuma on behalf of Executive Officers, I should say that what we call Executive Officers in this Region are styled Assistant Executive Officers. But on the whole, conditions for Executive Officers are more favourable in this Region than even in the Federal Government. If the hon. Member wishes to be more informed he can call at the Premier's Office and obtain particulars.

Hon. Onwuma asked why the Chieftaincy Regulation was amended in the case of Aba. Aba chieftaincy matter was a peculiar one which needed special treatment hence the amendment made to solve the problem there and as far as I know all sections of Aba are satisfied with the amendment which was done in good faith to solve the deadlock in Aba. The action taken by this Government on this issue was a wise one and in the interest of peace and tranquility of Aba Division. It, however, has no connection with the Umuahia Province to which the hon. Member referred.

I shall answer to other points raised by other hon. Members in connection with chieftaincy matters tomorrow when I shall be moving the Second Reading of the Recognition of Chiefs Bill.

My second duty is to oppose all that hon. Eyo said in connection with the proposed

Calabar Minority Council. To the best of my knowledge this hon. Member has not received the mandate of my people of Annang to speak on their behalf.

The proposal to consult the Annangs as to whether or not they will like to be included in a Calabar Minority Council was arrived at when the Report of the Commission appointed to enquire into the fears of Minorities and the means of allaying them was considered by the 1958 London Constitutional Conference. It is necessary to remind the hon. Members here of the stand of the people of Annang on the issue of minorities in this Region as demonstrated before and during the Minorities Commission. That done, I shall enable every hon. Member to assess whether or not the Annangs are interested in being included in a Minority Council for Calabar.

On the 8th and 9th of November, 1957, the Annangs met at Afaha Obong under the auspices of the Annang Welfare Union and drafted a memorandum which was presented to the Minorities Commission and deliberated upon before that Commission for two days, the 17th and 18th January, 1958, at Port Harcourt. After the presentation of the draft memorandum it became necessary to authenticate the submissions by receiving a mandate from the people of Annang. A delegation of the Union was appointed and empowered to tour the nine Annang Districts. The delegation toured all the nine District Councils and many Local Councils in Annang and received their full mandate to present the memorandum to the Willink Commission on Minorities problem.

It is not my intention to enumerate all the points contained in the memorandum submitted by the Annangs to the Minorities Commission since, in my opinion, it does not pay to be raking old wounds. Suffice it to say that the Annangs were completely opposed to having any exclusive political affiliation with their brothers of Ibibio because of their past dealings with each other in which the top ranking political leaders of Ibibio meted out many inhuman treatments to the people of Annang. These ill-treatments compelled the Annang people to break away from the Ibibio Union and form one of the most powerful cultural



organisations in Nigeria—the Annang Welfare Union. The Minorities Commission summed up our stand in the last paragraph of page 48 of their report which reads, with your permission, as follows:

“... however, the Annangs and the Ibibios appear recently to have fallen out, and in evidence before us many Annang leaders expressed themselves as hostile to the idea of the State.”

Up to this moment the Annangs do not believe that they can fare well in any political organisation in which they are exclusively merged with the Ibibios because of their Action Group leaders.

It is strange that hon. Eyo who was one of the fifteen signatories to the memorandum submitted by the C.O.R. State advocates to the Minorities Commission should make this move when he and other Ibibio Action Group political leaders did not think it fit and necessary for any Annang man to subscribe his signature to their memorandum.

I want to tell this hon. House that the voting by the people of Annang for the Action Group in the last Federal Elections does not in the least mean that the Annangs have identical views with the C.O.R. State advocates on minorities issues. (*Opposition Bench: How; what are their views?*). I will tell them. Before I go on I want to tell this hon. House that hon. Eyo went to Ika and told the people of Ika so many lies against the leaders of Annang. He told them that all the money which was intended to be used in Annang for provision of amenities had been taken up by the leaders of Annang. He also promised them so many things which I will deal with later on. The people did not believe him. They asked hon. Eyo to swear one of the most powerful jujus in Annang land, believing that he is the kind of man to be moved by juju. Mr Eyo not only swore to this juju but he jumped over it.

**Chief Morphy:** Standing Order 33 (1):

“Debate upon any motion, Bill or amendment shall be relevant to such motion, Bill or amendment, and in the case of a substantive motion for the adjournment of the House the debate shall be relevant to the subject matter raised on the adjournment.”

**The Chairman:** Hon. Affiah.

**The Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies):** It was the Action Group deceit and unfulfillable promises which misled my people to vote for the Action Group and one needs go into Annang area today before one can fully realise how the Annangs are regretting for voting for the wrong party at the Federal elections.

**Mr Agba:** Standing Order 33 (1):

“Debate upon any motion, Bill or amendment shall be relevant to such motion, Bill or amendment, and in the case of a substantive motion for the adjournment of the House the debate shall be relevant to the subject matter raised on the adjournment.”

**The Chairman:** Hon. Affiah.

**The Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies):** Hon. Agba is only trying to confuse me. As I said before, the Annangs are regretting for having voted for the Action Group. They have promised never to be misled again and of course the Action Group cannot succeed in deceiving the people of Nigeria all the time.

The people of Annang have commissioned me to ask hon. Eyo and his other helicopter campaigners the following questions:—

1. Have they reduced taxes ?
2. Have they reduced rates ?
3. Have they increased the prices of palm produce ?
4. Have they reduced bicycle licences ?
5. Have they built houses for Action Group supporters ?
6. Have they employed all the unemployed and fulfilled all the other odd and impossible promises in order to comply with the undertaking they gave the people before they voted for the Action Group ?

If these cannot be fulfilled they should count Annang out in all their political proposals and be sure they cannot deceive them again. We are perfectly satisfied with the Provincial System of Administration and will have nothing to do with a Calabar Minority Council the establishment of which, we feel, is no more necessary. The Annangs are grateful to the



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Eastern Government for being constituted into a Province and endorse its policy of even distribution of amenities. I warn politicians whose stock in trade is deceit to stop feeding the people of Annang on a diet of falsehood.

The Annangs believe in One Nigeria and will do all they can to maintain peaceful co-existence and regard every Nigerian as a brother irrespective of tribe or Religion so that the Independence of Nigeria might be enjoyed in peace and prosperity.

For hon. Eyo to come to this House to move this motion without the mandate of the Annangs is both insulting and malicious.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** May I remind the Minister that I did not move that amendment.

**The Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies):** To speak on behalf of the people of Annang without the mandate of the Annang people is tantamount to trampling upon the dignity and intelligence of the Annang people. It can only help to widen the gap between the Annangs and the Ibibios but for the fact that we have among the Ibibios people of goodwill.

Out of evil cometh good. Out of hon. Eyo's speech two good things have emerged:—

1. The admission of the death of the so-called "C.O.R. STATE" by the C.O.R. advocates.
2. The recognition by the Action Group Ibibio leaders of the existence of Annang as a bloc to be reckoned with.

The Action Group having realised that the C.O.R. State idea is dead and gone wants to cling to the creation of a Calabar Minority Council as a last straw in order, if possible, to create something with which to redeem their pledge to the people of Calabar whom they have misled all these years.

Since the catastrophe which befell the people of the former Calabar Province about three and a half months ago, we the N.C.N.C. leaders of that area have left no stone unturned in dispelling Action Group lies from that section of Eastern Nigeria. I have personally toured all the District Councils in Abak Division which for the first time were deceived to vote for the

Action Group in the last historic Federal elections. I have also toured almost all the other Divisions of the former Calabar Province. Throughout these tours the people of this area have regretted their deeds and condemned those who deceived them to cast their votes into the wrong basket. In short, the numerous addresses presented to me are a catalogue of regrets and condemnation for the Action Group.

**Chief Morphy:** Standing Order 30 (6):

"It shall be out of order to use expressions which are blasphemous or insulting to the religious beliefs of Members".

We believe in the Action Group.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Affiah.

**The Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies):** Many recent events in and about the Ibibio territory reveal that the people of the former Calabar Province have fully realised that it was the wrong horse that they backed during the last Federal elections. As a result there is trouble in the Ibibio land now. There is trouble now, serious trouble within the camp of the Eastern Region wing of the Action Group.

The Opposition Chief Whip should focus his attention on these troubles now and stop dabbling into the affairs of the Annang people. How can the Annangs come into partnership with people who are so much in trouble? The newly formed Dynamic Wing of the Ibibio State Union is calling on the mover of this motion and others in his group to answer the following questions:—

(1) Why they have not taken steps to provide a continued overseas scholarship awards to deserving Ibibio youths?

(2) Why they have split the Ibibio nation into two factions—the Annang and the Ibibio factions?

(3) Why they have run the Ibibio State College for six years without a published and audited account of the proceeds and expenditures of the college?

(4) Why they have shelved an alleged report which circulated around the Nation on the alleged embezzlement of a sum of £8,000 from the Ibibio State College?



(5) Why they have shelved an alleged report of unauthorised withdrawal of a sum of £2,800 from the Bank of West Africa Limited, Uyo from the funds of the Union?

(6) Why they have injected politics into a Cultural Organisation like the Ibibio State Union thereby making the Ibibio Union a Political Party?

(7) Why they have continuously suppressed resolutions from Branch Unions abroad?

(8) Why they have denied the indigenous sons of Ibibio the right to partake in meetings and assemblies where matters of major importance affecting the destiny of Ibibio are discussed and decided?

(9) Why they have suspended without reasons the National Secretary of the Ibibio State Union, Chief B. U. A. Attah?

The Opposition Chief Whip should go and face these questions and leave the Annangs alone.

In the *Eastern States Express* issue of the 12th instant the leading front page article captioned "Action Group Leadership in East in Hot Water" reveals the impending disaster at the door of the Action Group. Is this not enough to embarrass the Chief Whip of the Opposition and make him forget about the affairs of the Annangs in whom he has no interest?

Perhaps the prophesy of Mr P. E. Ekanem, Member of the House of Representatives for Enyong Division which appears in the issue of the *West African Pilot* of the 22nd instant might be of real concern to the Opposition Chief Whip. May I read the relevant portion with your permission, Mr Chairman. (*Interruptions*). Mr Chairman, in order to shorten my speech I do not want to read the extract. Suffice it to say that Mr Ekanem prophesied that within a space of two years the whole of Nigeria, particularly the Eastern Region would all go N.C.N.C.

It is significant, whether the Chief Whip of the Opposition admits it or not, that the *Eastern States Express*—an Action Group paper, the Ibibio people forming the dynamic wing of the Ibibio Union and, a leading Action Group Legislator should, at the same time voice out with one accord the doom of the Action Group in the Eastern Region.

May I join the list of these political prophets and prophesy that before long the idea of a Calabar Minority Council, though a Constitutional proposal, like the N.I.P., U.N.I.P. and C.O.R. State idea will be forgotten and the entire people of Calabar—Annang, Ibibio, Efik and Oron—will march on with the rest of Nigeria as brothers and sisters in peace and prosperity. It is then and only then that the Opposition Chief Whip and others of his school of thought will realise that their efforts were wasted in vain and look back to the past with regret, for their ineffective attempts at destroying the unity of Nigeria which is the most important country in the continent of Africa.

**The Premier:** I wish now to wind up the debate on this Head by talking on a few points raised by some hon. Members.

The first, the question of Provincial Assemblies, was touched by hon. Achara and the Chief Whip of the Opposition. Some doubts have been raised that their duties were rather nebulous and indefinite. I think this is quite wrong. I had on one occasion in this House pointed out that we shall shortly start the Provincial Assemblies and one of the major duties of the Provincial Commissioners will be to act as Speakers of these Provincial Assemblies. Another major duty of Provincial Commissioners, you know very well, is to act as Ambassadors of Government to the people, and as Ambassadors of the people to the Government. And in carrying out these duties it is to be expected that they should visit Local Government Councils and act for Ministers in various fields. As a matter of fact, they should be up and doing in moving about. You cannot be a proper Ambassador by staying in one place with your hands folded; you have to move about. In addition, Provincial Commissioners really are miniature Ministers right close to the people in the rural area, and eventually as I said, we shall devolve quite a number of the powers that are exercised by the Ministers on to them. I feel the big mistake people are making is that they want to see results over-night. We have only started these Provincial Assemblies; it is not quite one year old, and within this very short period many people want to see results! Since the present Government machinery was set up, it has taken about eight years; I think everybody will agree that most Ministries are



[THE PREMIER]  
only just beginning to run smoothly. I think we have to give the system time to run in. This is not the only Region where this has happened. It is going on in Ghana, and in many parts of the world. The trouble with us is that we refuse to read, to be educated, or to learn what is happening in other places and we come here to criticise every genuine move of the Government. This is not such a wonderfully new thing, and we will do well to emulate fine examples from other countries.

Mr Eyo was wondering why these Provincial Commissioners should be appointed before the Assemblies were established, and he drew the rather tenuous analogy of a native court clerk in a court that had not been built. May I draw your attention, Sir, to the fact that that analogy is quite inappropriate. When you want to start a college, it is easy enough to know that the quickest way of getting it started is to appoint your Principal so that things will be properly done right from the very beginning. As a matter of fact, that is precisely what we have done.

Now, regarding the Minority Area Council which has engendered a very lively and indeed an interesting debate in this hon. House, may I congratulate my two hon. Colleagues—the Minister of Internal Affairs and the Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies) who have made very spirited speeches. In order to save this House from the embarrassment of these political speeches, that was why we tried very hard but failed to stop the Chief Whip of the Opposition from dragging the Minority Area Council problem into this debate. But when we failed by quoting Standing Orders and he was allowed to proceed, we naturally had to reply—and no doubt, he has now heard from the horse's mouth.

Coming to the actual provision in the Report of the Constitutional Conference which had been quoted here, I think that many people have entirely missed the point in question. I would like, with your permission, Sir, to refer to paragraph 53 (6):

“The Commission had also recommended that the former Province of Calabar should be made a Minority Area and that the Calabar Council should be appointed. The Conference agreed that there should be a Calabar

Minority Area consisting of Calabar Province, *subject* to subsequent enquiry by the Governor of the Region and decision in his discretion as to whether any or all of the Annang and Aro-Ibos should for this purpose remain in or excised from the area.”

In other words, if I may interpret this for the benefit of those who have not understood, the Minority Area Council is to be set up first. When it is set up, then the Governor will set up the enquiry. This enquiry will only be set up only after the Council has been established. But what of the composition of the Council? With your permission, I refer to paragraph 52 (b)

“The proposed Council should be composed of Members of the House of Assembly, House of Representatives and House of Chiefs . . .”

And everyone knows that last year we all tried to contest the elections to the House of Representatives. In fact, that involved all of us in a very strenuous political campaign throughout the whole year, so that there was in reality no House of Representatives that could go to form this Minority Area Council.

Secondly, there was no House of Chiefs. We only established the House of Chiefs in the Eastern Region on the 8th of January and, therefore, the major part that could form the Minority Area Council was non-existent. How could it therefore have been set up? Besides, the administrative machinery was busy not only conducting many lectures but also was involved in organising Local Government elections, and presently, elections into the Provincial Assemblies which, as I told this hon. House earlier on, will start in a very short time; so nobody should be blamed for not setting up the Minority Area Council.

My biggest point, Sir, is that in the Instrument—Order in Council—there was no mention made of Minority Area Council. It has no force of law, as my able Legal Adviser here would say. It is only a gentleman's agreement!

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** Exactly, which could be torn up!

**The Premier:** The Order has to be made—and none has yet been made—and not until



the Order is made, I do not think anyone should come here to accuse others of ulterior motive. There is no ulterior motive whatsoever. We have given our words in London that we will set up a Minority Area Council. Let us work on the Provincial Assemblies—we have taken that first. When these have been established, the time will then come for the Governor to do his duty according to the recommendations of the Conference.

I do not wish to speak about those things and other points which the Chief Whip of the Opposition mentioned. About "Ukwa", I am reliably informed that "Ukwa" is not an Ibibio word. I would like to end this portion of my speech by saying that although we did not win the election in Annang Province, I wish to remind the Chief Whip of the Opposition that "stuffed ballot boxes are no index to the wishes of the people".

Now, I will come to what Chief Morphy said about the Commissioner's Office in the United Kingdom. He was saying that our boys are slow and cold, perhaps because the climate is very cold. In that case, we shall bring it to the notice of the Commissioner to look into it, so that his staff could be warmer to visitors.

Hon. Onwuma once again went on to his hobby-horse which he likes to ride. He wanted more seats for Aba. I think this would destroy the agreement reached between the representatives of Bende Division and Aba Division. You will recall that originally Aba Division had twenty-one seats in the Provincial Assembly and Bende had twenty-four and when it was brought to the notice of Government that an obvious injustice had been done, they agreed to so expand the representation to the Provincial Assembly as to give Aba twenty-eight seats and to retain twenty-four for Bende. If now he proposes that Aba should still have more, then the whole schedule will have to be reviewed; but there is an obvious handicap.

The members of this Provincial Assembly have got to be paid and if we have too many of them, we will have to pay more allowances and when we come here to increase taxes, I think you will be the first to oppose the whole thing. Therefore, I think that the Government will at the present time give it a fair trial to see how it will work. If it does not work, we could

always come here to amend the schedule. I advise you to desist from opposing "Umuahia"—Umuahia Province as the battle is lost.

He also went on to wonder why the Chief Secretary to the Premier should issue a circular disuading civil servants from lobbying politicians. Let me quote the relevant portion of the circular:

"There are unhealthy signs that civil servants are indulging in the habit of lobbying politicians, particularly Members of the Legislature, as a means of bringing pressure to bear on Government to grant them concessions or promotion. This is a direct contravention of G.O. 04217 ..." which with your permission I quote:

"The influence of members of any Legislative House in Nigeria or Members of Parliament in the United Kingdom or of other persons must not be sought by officers or employees as a means of bringing their services to official notice in connection with promotion. Official arrangements are in existence which ensure due consideration of the claims of all suitable officers and employees on the occurrence of vacancies in the Service. Attempts made to obtain promotion by influence will injure rather than further an officer's or employee's chances of advancement."

Well, these are the General Orders and it were better that the new entrants into the public service were made conversant with the provision of these General Orders. Why should a civil servant lobby a politician to come here and make speeches on his behalf instead of the civil servant concentrating on his work. Those who are really efficient will go to the top without lobbying anybody.

On the point made by hon. Onwuma about the application of students who wish to go to the University of Nigeria, I do not think that there is any question for me to answer in this House. We have said that we are going to start and we are doing so now. We have started to put up buildings, the Provisional Council is working and they have their experts now. We have presented to this House the Progress Report of the University. Why do you want us to make statements on the University of Nigeria every week?



[THE PREMIER]

Finally, I wish to commend this Head to this hon. House knowing that every point has been thrashed out and it should now be passed.

*Question put and agreed to.*

#### Head 422.—Audit

*Question proposed: That a sum not exceeding £64,890 for Head 422—Audit—stand part of the Schedule:*

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

In speaking on this Head I wish to direct the attention of hon. Members to two things. The first is that I wish to place on record the very valuable work which this Department has been doing both in placing the accounts of Local Government bodies on a sound footing and in promptly calling officers controlling Government expenditure to question whenever the Director of Audit considers it necessary to do so. I am sure that the Public Accounts Committee will share my view in this matter.

Secondly, it would appear that I was not quite understood on 16th March while replying to the point raised by hon. V. K. Onyeri during the debate on the Audit (Amendment) Bill when I said *inter alia*:

“In the past, the Audit Department had been under the Ministry of Finance; it was supposed to be a Division of the Ministry and the Permanent Secretary is at the head of the whole Ministry and it was not thought wise that the Permanent Secretary—the head of the whole Ministry—should be receiving the same emolument with a head of a Division of the Ministry. Now, the Constitution has changed the position and this law is only trying to legalise what has been existing this current year and it is left to the Government to take into consideration what the hon. Member has raised.”

The Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation's report on my speech on this matter was also misleading.

Section 119A of the Order in Council states in part:

“Provided that, except for the purpose of submitting questions relating to such matters

to Executive Council and conducting Government business relating to such matters in the Legislative Houses of the Region, a Regional Minister shall not be charged with responsibility for the audit of the accounts of the Region.”

The purpose of this section of the Constitution is to make it clear that the Audit Department is a non-Ministerial one and therefore not part of the Ministry of Finance. Hon. Members will see that this Department is included at page E 35 of the Estimates under the non-Ministerial Group.

As regards the salary of the Director of Audit, the position is as follows:

In the Federal Government, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance is on Group 3 (£2,880) and the Director of Audit Group 4 (£2,640); in the Northern Region, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance is on Group 4 (£2,640), the Director of Audit Group 4A (£2,520). In the West, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance is on Group 3 (£2,880) and the Director of Audit Group 5 (£2,400). In this Region, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance is on Group 4 (£2,640) and the Director of Audit Group 5 (£2,400). These salaries do not include the Mbanefo pay award. It is clear therefore, that in all the Regions and the Federation, the intention is to grade the Director of Audit lower than the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance and the practice in this Region is therefore not out of step.

**Mr M. U. Etuk** (Uyo Division): I just rise as the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee to give my agreement to what the Minister of Finance has said on the work of the Director of Audit . . .

**The Chairman:** Are you debating the policy of the Audit because that is what we are doing now?

**Mr Etuk:** The Minister of Finance made a statement on which I want to agree to and I am speaking on the policy of this Head by saying that I agree to everything the Minister of Finance said in connection with the good work done by the Director of Audit.

*Question put and agreed to.*



**Head 423.—Electoral Commission**

£17,210 for Head 423—Electoral Commission—agreed to.

**Head 424.—Judicial**

*Question proposed: That a sum not exceeding £132,610 for Head 424—Judicial—stand part of the Schedule.*

**Mr E. U. Eronini** (Owerri Division): Last time I spoke on the possibility of our posting a High Court Judge to Owerri. There are a lot of cases now from Owerri outstanding in Onitsha and they have not been heard for over two years. There are also cases from Okigwi outstanding in Onitsha. It is not a good policy to have two Judges in one area whilst there are some areas without one. I am appealing to the Minister concerned to do what he can and post a Judge to Owerri to take over the cases at Owerri, Okigwi, Orlu and Ahoada.

**Mr J. O. Ihekwoaba** (Orlu Division): I only want to draw the attention of this Ministry to previous statements which have been made in this House about posting a Magistrate at Orlu Division. I think we have been saying this over and over. If you look into it you will agree that it is a great cheat on Orlu. Orlu is larger in population than Awka and many more cases come from Orlu, but the Magistrate is posted at Awka which is smaller than Orlu. I am appealing that a Magistrate should be posted to Orlu.

Another point is this question of building court halls in Orlu Division. If you go to Orlu, you will see that Magistrates and Judges try their cases in our former native court halls and the desks in these halls are like ordinary school desks. I am therefore appealing that the Minister should look into this matter. The money Government is accumulating in this Division is very large but Government has done nothing to contribute towards the progress of this Division. This is very shameful.

**Mr J. A. Agba** (Ogoja Division): I have only two points to make here and one is that I want to remind the Minister concerned that Ogoja is now a Province comprising Ogoja proper, Obudu and Ikom. These places are

very far apart and there is no resident Magistrate. We have accumulation of cases outstanding for about three months and it is always a question of a rush over when the Magistrate travels from one place to another. As a result cases stand untried sometimes for three months and sometimes for six months. I am appealing to the Minister that he should make all possible arrangements to have a Magistrate resident in Ogoja. He can easily radiate—it is a sort of radiation—to Obudu and Ikom. This rush over business does a lot of harm.

My second point is that it is disgraceful for a Division not to have an ordinary Magistrate Court. I am appealing again that this matter should be looked into by the appropriate Minister. The Judge Mr Palmer, was at Obudu and it was disgraceful that the Judge had not a court to hear his cases. He had to go into a Council Hall to hold his court because there was no Magistrate Court there. Also instead of the Magistrate using a proper court there, he uses a small house which was formerly used as a Council hall. I think the Minister can see himself that this Obudu is worthy of the name Division and should be taken into consideration on this question of court halls. I think it will be a good thing if a Magistrate Court is provided for Obudu Division. Obudu is 45 miles from Ogoja and you cannot expect criminals to go from Obudu to Ogoja for trial. It is also boring for the Magistrate himself to travel from Ogoja to Obudu for his cases only to find a little hall to hold his court. This little house where he is accommodated to do his cases is so small in the first place that the slightest noise made outside really disturbs the Magistrate inside. The Magistrate has not only the trouble of settling the case, the job of thinking how to deal with each particular case but also the trouble as to how to stop the people making noise outside. The Minister should think over this seriously and provide a Magistrate Court at Obudu this financial year.

**Mr C. A. Abangwu** (Nsukka Division): I was really surprised at Head 424 Sub-head 2 (2) which deals with the number of Magistrates. During the last Budget Session, I raised a point about the number of Magistrates we had and I did express to the Minister that the number was very much lower than is necessary for executing the work which falls on the Magistrates. Last year we had twenty-three



[MR ABANGWU]

Magistrates in the Estimates. This year, despite the fact that the Customary Court Law had imposed greater burden on the existing Magistrates by bringing all the appeals coming from the County Courts to the Magistrate Court, we still have the same twenty-three Magistrates. Mr Chairman, it is very well known that in all parts of the Region criminal and civil cases sometimes lie for over three to four years just because there are no Magistrates to try them. In fact, I know that in some Divisions, as a matter of fact, civil cases sometimes lie unheard for about four years. In the Enugu Magisterial District, at Nsukka for instance, civil cases have been lying since 1959 without even a mention. The same thing happens in Enugu here. A man takes an action in Court and he will be coming to Court every month, without a hearing. It is adjourned from month to month until naturally he gets tired. He may lose his summons money if the case is struck off. In Enugu it is much worse than in any other township in the Region. This is the Headquarters, but Magistrates have got to be drawn from places like Awka to come to this place for a week to help clear cases. I do not know why we cannot have four resident Magistrates here. We want more Magistrate Courts. These Magistrate Courts are self-paying because the Magistrates make more money by way of fines and fees in a month from the court than the aggregate of their salary and that of their staff. A lot of money is also made from records of proceedings; for instance, a folio which originally cost about 6d now costs about 2s and these fees and charges in the Eastern Region are higher than any other part of the Federation. I am not suggesting that the fees should be altered but only craving that there should be more Magistrates to be able to do the work.

The other point I want to make is that in Enugu, as we all know and as I have mentioned some times, there is no suitable Magistrate Court. The building we have here is a shack made of stick. This is unsuitable for Magistrates. In Nsukka Division, which is under the Enugu Magisterial District, we have been using the old native court. It means that when the Magistrate makes use of this court, native court Judges are forced to go somewhere else for any of their sittings. I humbly press

for the building of more courts not only in Nsukka Division but in other districts where Magistrates sit. Most of them find the existing make shift houses too hot. Some of the buildings have no ceiling; by 12 o'clock you cannot concentrate!

Finally, I will speak about the appeals coming from the Customary Courts. It may be a good idea if special Magistrates are appointed to deal only with appeals coming from the Customary Courts and Native Courts. These appeals are long outstanding land cases and in some cases they have to be retried. I know that at least in the Enugu Magisterial District these customary court appeals have never been heard for a long time now. Nobody thinks of them. The reason is because the Courts have no time. If special Magistrates are appointed to deal with these cases it may help. If you cannot appoint permanent Magistrates why not appoint temporary ones to clear these things?

With these few remarks, I support the Motion.

**Mr W. Abengowe** (Aba Division): I want to speak on the position of Court Clerks.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** I am not quite clear what the hon. Member is talking about. Is he referring to sub-head 2 item 13?

**The Chairman:** I hope the hon. Member is not referring to Head 437, Ministry of Justice because we are on Head 424—Judicial.

**Mr Abengowe:** The next point I want to make is the question of High Court building in Aba township. It will be appreciated that Aba Division and Aba township are growing rapidly. It is necessary for the Ministry to make provision for a new High Court building. The Judges hold High Court sessions in the former native court hall and that does not befit the status of Aba at all.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I would like to impress upon the Government the need for an increased number of Magistrates in the Region. Stating again, I have to mention Uyo Province. Here we have Uyo, Eket and Opobo Divisions



with a part of Enyong Division and also a part of Ikot Ekpene Division—all will come under the new N.C.N.C. Uyo Province. We have only one resident Magistrate. He covers Uyo, Eket, Opobo, Enyong and one section of Ikot Ekpene Divisions. The result is that this Chief Magistrate is stationed in Calabar. Calabar Division is a Province by itself and there you have two Magistrates, a resident Magistrate and a Chief Magistrate. But the Chief Magistrate at Calabar has to come from the Oron ferry and do all the cases on the main land. Uyo in particular is requesting to have a resident Magistrate. You must have realised that Magistrates in this Region are overworked. They work from Monday to Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. everyday in every week, and this suggests that they have more cases to do than the Judges. Imagine the situation where a man is resident in Uyo; he sits one or two days, then moves into Eket Division, then into Opobo and comes across to parts of Enyong and Ikot Ekpene Divisions, only one Magistrate. I do not think the position is quite good. If you have a look at the Estimates there is provision for 23 Magistrates as against 4 Chief Magistrates. I do not know the basis on which these Estimates are made. My suggestion is that in every Province, there should be one Magistrate and one Chief Magistrate. In any case, the people of Uyo Division desire a resident Magistrate in Uyo and also a Chief Magistrate to do all the cases in Uyo Province. May I say that in my view all Magistrates in the Region are overworked.

**Mr J. O. Okeh** (Ahoada Division): At present what obtains in Ahoada is a very difficult thing in matters of people attending the Magistrates court regularly. At the moment the Magistrates hold their courts in the old native court hall, and this is very uncomfortable and ill-ventilated. Sometimes the court is held in the local council hall, so that when the Magistrate comes he finds it very difficult. While the population of Ahoada is a fairly large one, I cannot understand why we were in the Degema Magisterial Area, which is a comparatively smaller Division. Owerri as large as it is has to share one Magistrate with Ahoada Division, and the result is that sometimes in some civil cases people go to court for about two or three years and are finally obliged to settle their cases at home.

Moreover, it will be seen that with a growing population like that of Ahoada there is bound to be more and more cases springing up. And we have always brought this matter on the floor of this House that Ahoada needs a resident Magistrate. At present the Magistrate after sitting drives back to Owerri and comes back the following morning because he has no house. I appeal to the Government to consider giving Ahoada a resident Magistrate and a Magistrate Court.

**Mr V. A. Nwankwo** (Abakaliki Division): What is the real difficulty and suffering today in Abakaliki is the lack of Magistrate. In the whole Ogoja Province comprising six Divisions, we have only one Magistrate stationed at Abakaliki and this one Magistrate travels to the other five Divisions leaving only about five to seven days in which to do cases in Abakaliki. I would like the Government to give consideration for a second Magistrate to be stationed either at Obubra or somewhere else within the old Ogoja Province. That would help the disposal of cases pending. It will be surprising and striking to hear that over 200 cases have been struck out because witnesses were not present; the reason being that these witnesses did not know when and where the court sat. Perhaps they had been coming for months without their cases being heard and human nature being what it is they got tired of travelling in vain. So we are asking that an immediate consideration be given to Abakaliki for a second Magistrate to handle cases of a criminal nature which the court must necessarily handle. If one looks into the statistical report from Abakaliki one sees that criminal cases are growing day by day and, therefore, that one Magistrate is not enough. As I said earlier, witnesses never used to know where the Magistrate court will sit. We have only one old court hall where the Magistrate resident in Abakaliki sits, but this court hall is always vacated when you have a Judge sitting; when this happens, the Magistrate leaves the hall and goes to look for another place either in the Police Recreation Club or in a District Council hall. The witnesses will go about asking where the Magistrate will sit. Sometimes a witness does not come in time. In the circumstance, I do not see why he should be held responsible.



[MR NWANKWO]

The Magistrate is doing his best. So as things stand today in Abakaliki we need the services of one more Magistrate.

Another point I would like to bring to the Government is that I observe that in the Estimates the cost of local transport and travelling amounts to £900 but if one checks up the arrears of bills which Magistrates' Court have still to honour after the financial year, one will find that the total bills surpass the amount already earmarked for the current year. Therefore, I am asking that a Magisterial area should have a transport of its own instead of having to hire vehicles every now and then the Magistrate travels. It will be more economical to do and then I would like the question of hiring vehicles to be stopped.

Another point I would like to make is on sub-head 8.

**The Chairman:** I think your amendment is on sub-head 2.

**Mr Nwankwo:** I am asking that accommodation should be made for a Judge in Abakaliki so that the Magistrate should not be debarred from coming to Abakaliki merely because the Judge is present and accommodation cannot therefore be found for the Magistrate. This sort of thing has happened on one or two occasions.

**The Chairman:** I think the hon. Member has exhausted what he wants to say on sub-head 2 and I am therefore calling on Chief Morphy to speak.

**Chief Morphy:** What I want to say is that we want Magistrates to be stationed at Ogoja and not one Magistrate to be in charge of the five Divisions in Ogoja Province. This Magistrate only goes to Ogoja once in four months. As a result litigants suffer in gaol without being tried. I would like more Magistrates to be provided so that these people will not suffer in gaol without trial.

**The Chairman:** I am afraid we shall defer debate till tomorrow when I shall call on the Minister to reply.

*And it being 2.15 p.m. the Chairman interrupted the business and left the Chair to report Progress and ask leave to sit again.*

(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)

Committee report Progress. To sit again Tomorrow.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Resolved: That this House do now adjourn. (*The Minister of Finance, Dr S. E. Imoke*).

*Adjourned accordingly at sixteen minutes past two o'clock p.m.*



EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 5th April, 1960

The House met at Ten o'clock a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ORAL ANSWER TO QUESTION

Eastern Region Students in Universities

Mr J. W. E. Anaba asked the Minister of Education, how many students from this Region are doing higher studies in Universities and the respective divisions from which they come.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Education (Mr D. S. A. Agim):

I am directed to answer as follows: There are 447 students from this Region doing higher studies in Universities, and their divisional distribution is as follows:—

Division	No.
Aba ... ..	18
Abak ... ..	11
Abakaliki ... ..	1
Afikpo ... ..	9
Ahoada... ..	13
Awgu ... ..	7
Awka ... ..	41
Bende ... ..	32
Brass ... ..	7
Calabar ... ..	15
Degema ... ..	16
Eket ... ..	12
Enyong ... ..	14
Ikom ... ..	4
Ikot Ekpene ... ..	13
Nsukka... ..	9
Obubra ... ..	2
Obudu ... ..	—
Ogoja ... ..	2
Ogoni ... ..	6
Okigwi ... ..	26
Onitsha ... ..	96
Opobo ... ..	9
Orlu ... ..	25
Owerri ... ..	42
Port Harcourt ... ..	4
Udi ... ..	26
Uyo ... ..	17

Mr Imeh: Will the Minister please tell the House whether all these students are on Eastern Regional Scholarship?

The Minister of Education: I refer the Questioner to the Question itself; these 447 students are studying on their own.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(1) The Recognition of Chiefs Bill

Order for Second Reading read.

The Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftancies) (Mr O. U. Affiah): I beg to move that the Bill be now read a Second time.

The objects and reasons for this Bill have been set out in the Bill itself. The circumstances surrounding chieftancies in this Region are such that a law such as the one now proposed is absolutely necessary for the sake of stability and the peaceful progress of this Region. Chiefs have an important part to play in the maintenance of law and order in their respective communities, in community development efforts and, not least, in the running of Local Government Councils, which form a vital link in our Regional administration. In order that the Chiefs recognised may be able to play these roles constructively and well, they must be saved the harrassings of pretenders, rivals or even mischief-mongers. Even more important than the personal security of the Chiefs themselves is the overall welfare of the communities concerned. There can be no welfare, no peace and no stability in the different communities if their loyalties are divided, or if they are not certain where such loyalties should lie, and above all, if they incessantly dissipate their efforts and funds in expensive litigation between the rival chiefs whom they may be led or misled to support.

I want to make it absolutely clear that those are the main considerations behind this Bill. It is not a question of Government trying "to prop up their favourites as chiefs" as alleged by the Leader of Opposition—an allegation to which I shall return presently. This Government, foremost in the whole Federation, has always extolled the principle of absolute impartiality of our Chiefs in partisan politics.



[MR AFFIAH]

That is one strong point of disagreement between us and a certain Government of the Federation, well known to the hon. Members opposite!

In his speech on the 17th of March, the hon. the Leader of Opposition spoke as follows—and here I quote with your permission:

“A second threat to parliamentary democracy is what I may term Government’s irksome habit of tampering with the traditions of our people in an attempt to prop up their favourites as Chiefs. Chiefs who have been clan heads, for many years are being manouvred out of office because they are not prepared to act as political agents of the Government party. Chiefs are recognised by Government contrary to the wishes and accepted traditions of the people concerned. Good examples of this are the Amanyanabo of Kalabari, the Obi of Oguta and the recognition of the so-called Obi of Awka-Etiti. How can we expect our people to take kindly to a political system that rides rough-shod over their cherished traditions?”.

There are two possible interpretations of the term “favourites” in this context. If it means those who co-operate with, and are loyal to, the Government of the day, irrespective of the political party forming such Government, then it is true that this Government considers such Chiefs as responsible ones who should deserve encouragement. If on the other hand, it means Chiefs who support not the Government as such, but the particular political party forming such a Government, then the allegation of the Leader of Opposition must be rejected as untrue and misleading. For this Government to countenance only those Chiefs who support our own party, at the expense, possibly, of those with better claims, would be a direct negation of our uncompromising attitude upholding the principle of absolute neutrality of Chiefs in partisan politics: it would mean preaching one thing and doing another.

The hon. the Leader of Opposition’s accusation of this Government as “tampering with the traditions of our people” was, to put it mildly, tendentiously unkind. Let me take the examples of two of the cases he cited, namely, that of the Amanyanabo of Kalabari

and of the Obi of Oguta. What are the facts? As soon as it became known that a dispute existed in these two places, Government appointed two independent Commissioners, one Nigerian and the other expatriate, and both civil servants, to conduct impartial enquiries in each of these two places. In each case the Commissioner was to find out, by means of enquiries and evidence on the spot, who, by the traditions and custom of the people, was the rightful claimant to the stool. The final decisions of Government in the two cases followed the recommendations submitted by the Commissioners concerned. One does not flout the traditions of the people by appointing impartial judges to determine these traditions, and subsequently accepting and implementing the recommendations of these judges. It is therefore left to the Opposition Leader to say wherein lies the justification for the accusation of Government “tampering with the traditions of our people”.

**Mr E. O. Eyo** (Uyo Division): That was how they killed the Amanyanabo of Kalabari.

**Government Bench:** We did not kill the Amanyanabo of Kalabari; everybody knows that. The Opposition started the trouble.

**Mr Speaker:** I will not like to see hon. Members use words in that way to the detriment of others.

**The Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies):** I am not very clear on the reference by the Leader of the Opposition to the “so-called Obi of Awka Etiti”. If by that he is referring to any Second-class Chief who may have come from a clan of which Awka-Etiti is part, I can only refer you to the Selection of Second-class Chiefs Regulations, 1959, which lay down the procedure followed in selecting Second-class Chiefs. As you may be aware, the earlier regulations were criticised by well-meaning people and organisations, including the Leader of the Opposition himself.

Accordingly, Government suspended the regulations in order to consult organisations and individuals on the best method of selecting Second-class Chiefs since the diversity of our chieftaincy traditions in this Region is such that no simple formula could be applied. Several representations and views were received



from Eastern Chiefs Conference, Chiefs and people of each of the twelve Provinces and several individuals. The representations were considered in making the current regulations. The regulations therefore generally reflect the views of the people of this Region. Can anything be more democratic? Every Second-class Chief selected has been selected in accordance with these regulations.

How in the face of all these dare anybody accuse this Government of tampering with the traditions of the people of this Region when this Government is foremost in upholding these traditions?

Finally, I thank all those hon. Members who have praised the efficient and satisfactory method with which chieftaincy matters in this Region have been handled. I want to assure all hon. Members that chieftaincy matters will continue to be carefully handled by the Eastern Government so that in the end justice will be done to all concerned by treating each case according to its merits. I hope this Bill will commend itself to all peace-loving people of this Region.

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

**Mr Speaker:** Mr Eyo has an amendment to make.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** Under Standing Order 47 (2) (a), I rise to move to leave out the word "now" and add at the end of the question "upon this day six months". You will observe the speed with which Government wants to rush through this Bill, and if you look up the Bill itself it says "it shall come into operation on the day this Law is passed". In other words, Government wants to rush through this Bill today so that it may take effect as from today. Our main objection to the Bill is that while it seeks to repeal the Recognition of Chiefs Law, No. 19 of 1956, in order to get the House to understand the whole purport behind this Bill, the new Bill does not make any attempt to define a Chief. If you look up the old Law which is intended to be repealed, Government was very careful to define who a Chief was in the Eastern Region:

"A Chief means any member of a tribe or clan or local community whose authority and

control in that behalf is recognised by such tribe or clan or local community".

That was a very sensible thing. So that we could know right from the start who a Chief was. But the new Bill does not make any attempt to define who is a Chief. In other words, the House is being called upon to pass a Law which answers the name—I do not know what the name may be—the Recognition of Chiefs Law, 1960. Is it not very significant that this new Bill does not make any attempt to define a Chief? And may I suggest to the Attorney-General that unless his new Bill defines who a Chief is the time of the whole House is being wasted, because what we have is that where the Minister is of the opinion that no dispute exists as to the person entitled to be a Chief—but before there can be any question of a dispute arising as to who should be a Chief we must in the first instance know who a Chief is. I beg to suggest that the N.C.N.C. idea of a Chief is "anybody". I emphasise the word "anybody". In the view of the N.C.N.C. anybody can be a Chief. But we on this side take exception to this. Anybody cannot be a Chief, but in the N.C.N.C. view anybody recognised by the N.C.N.C. is a Chief in the Eastern Region.

May I draw Government's attention to a report published by an expert. I think the N.C.N.C. itself was very serious over this chieftaincy matter; it brought Professor Jones all the way from Cambridge University, but it looks as if it is not even bothering to read this report. I am referring to paragraph 217 of this report, at page 61:

"There are few Chiefs in the Eastern Region above the village grade level, and their traditional and present-day authority is not very great. There would therefore appear to be no need to provide for their appointment, recognition and deposition by legislation as formidable as that of the Western Region... The Eastern Region Recognition of Chiefs Law (No. 19 of 1956) would appear to be perfectly adequate..."

Here is an opinion expressed by an expert. I do not know how much it cost the tax-payers of the Eastern Region to bring out Professor Jones who has advised that the provisions of Law No. 19 of 1956 are very adequate for the people of the Eastern Region. Yet the



[MR E. O. EYO]

N.C.N.C. Government is calling upon us to reject that Law entirely.

The Minister when moving the Second reading of the Bill made reference to regulations about Government's selection of Second-class Chiefs in the Eastern Region. He made an attempt to pay tribute to certain Chiefs in the Region. I think it would have been fairer and more dignifying if he paid tribute to the official Opposition of the Region. All along the fight has been ours, and the N.C.N.C. has never taken any positive interest in this all very important question of chieftaincy. Our main objection to the regulations is that while the Minister, or rather Government, is willing to apply the principle of fair selection, i.e., if you want to be a Second-class Chief or your supporters put you forward, Government upholds this principle of selection; but then it goes on to say "where there is a dispute". We cannot reconcile the principle of selection with the question of dispute. The moment you have asked somebody to submit himself to selection, one should have thought that the verdict of the people selecting him would be final. But Government says "you must go and be selected, but if you do not get 100 per cent, then the final choice will be made by Government". As a result you have so many people contesting; and we have never for one moment thought that the issue of chieftaincy would be subject to election. There are certain areas in the Eastern Region which have their own traditional methods of selecting their Chiefs.

If you come to the old Calabar Province, for years gone by we have these Chiefs. They are there now. In each clan we have had a clan head. All the Chiefs in the area—the village heads and the group heads met and put forward somebody who would be their clan head. Every clan in the old Calabar Province has a clan head and there has never been any dispute. But there is dispute now that the Government wants to grant recognition. How does this dispute arise? You come to a clan where there is a Chief who has been there and who was formally (about ten years ago) installed as a clan head and the Government, in trying to inject the traditional members into Councils, recognises this clan head. Now when Government called for selection, would it not

surprise you to know that people who have never been village heads in their lives, who have never been group heads, are all of a sudden selected. What was the result? The real man who had been there for years and who had the support of the village heads and the group heads has been thrown off. The Administrative Officer just counted the votes. Mr X who has been clan head for all these years—30 votes; the new clan head—one vote. That, in the opinion of the Minister, constitutes a dispute. And it may well be that this new man who only voted for himself and scored one vote is the man making all the noise in the area. He wears the red cock on his cap and by all standards he is likely to be the recognised Chief. He comes up to Enugu and goes into the Minister's office. Then the Minister may be so impressed by this man who comes all the way from Ikot Ekpene or Uyo or Calabar to reassure the Minister that he supports the N.C.N.C. The question of chieftaincy is such a sacred institution that we must not prostitute it.

Now, reference has been made to mischief-mongers. When the Minister was moving the Second reading of the Bill he made reference to mischief-mongers. I wish he were not here at Enugu but at home so that he might be able to know for himself who are the real mischief-mongers. I think we should be able to agree that in order not to have chieftaincy disputes in the Region all we have to do is to be guided by the traditions of the people. We are not going to be guided by the party labels of the contestants. If the people in the area hold out that a man be installed a Chief, village head, group head or clan head, it would be wrong to reject him because one or two people are opposed to him. These people who are opposed to him, by local tradition, have no right to challenge his office. This is what I want the Government to note. (*The Premier: How do you know?*) By local tradition we know. The Premier asks "how do you know?" I do not like the Premier to come here and ask this because all along I have known his views on the chieftaincy matter. And may I remind the Premier that he comes from Bende and Professor Jones made very strict observations against the people of Bende in his Report. I was saying that what should guide us on this matter of chieftaincy should be the local custom and Professor Jones has written a very excellent report on this.



Now, the Minister made reference to what he calls the personal security of the Chief concerned. Well, that must be very interesting. You see, there are many disputes at the moment in the Region. The Minister is very much afraid. All the trouble makers may be N.C.N.C. supporters. The Minister is very much worried; he wants to get up one morning and present a paper to the Executive Council for Government to recognise the trouble makers. So, Government must come to this House today and make a law on the matter, to provide for extra security for these would-be Chiefs. I do not think any Chief worthy of that name would remain in office because of certain provisions in a law made by the Regional Government to keep him in office. Do you not realise that if one is really a Chief in any locality he does not need any of these safeguards for his personal security? That is why we say a Chief is a Chief. If you put up a puppet, if you put up somebody who is not entitled to be a chief (and here I have to warn the Premier because he has got to take this very seriously) no matter what law the Government will provide, there is bound to be trouble. You cannot go into an area and recognise a slave because he happens to be a party supporter. You cannot do that and if you provide a law that if anybody challenges him that man will go to prison, the fact is that there are so many of them. If you go to a place and recognise somebody as a chief, if that family is not entitled to rule the people, there is bound to be trouble.

As I was saying, the Government must be guided by local traditions, and here I have to say a word or two about the advice which may be tendered by the Administrative Officers in the Divisions. Where you have an Administrative Officer for four, five, six or seven years in a Division, I should have imagined that that officer is in a better position to forward an unbiased report to the Minister because an Administrative Officer having been in a Division for five, six or seven years should be able to know in that area people who for years past have been recognised by the community as chiefs. If we will not go by that, I wonder what else we shall go by.

Now, what does this new Bill seek to provide?

“(a) The determination of a question, or issue, relating to the selection, appointment,

setting aside of appointment, installation, recognition, withdrawal of recognition, deposition, suspension or abdication of a person as a chief.”

On those aspects, our Courts have no jurisdiction. But it goes further: a Chief who has been recognised under these or other laws is not precluded from taking action in the court of competent jurisdiction for the recovery or delivery of the property mentioned, etc. He is not prepared to submit himself to a Court judgment. But the moment the Minister recognises him then he has a right to go to Court to get the Court to order a regalia! He will die! He will die in the Court. These new Chiefs will die in that process. I mean, if this new man is not prepared to go to Court, and there is a dispute, somebody feels that either this man is a slave or the son of a slave and therefore cannot be a Chief in the area; or by local tradition, a Chief cannot come from that family. Why then should the Regional Government make a mistake and appoint him as a Chief?

**The Premier (Dr M. I. Okpara):** Point of Order. I do not know the exact one now but the word “slave” has been banned in the Eastern Region and the hon. Member should not use that word. The appropriate Standing Order is 30 (6).

**Mr Speaker:** I think if I remember, the word legislated against was that commonly known as “Osu”.

**The Premier:** What I am saying is that it is not proper for an hon. Member to use a word that has been abolished in this Region.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** If I may reply, the word “slave” is in the dictionary. (*Several hon. Members: Withdraw the word.*) There is nothing to stop a Member of this Parliament from making a speech. On the other hand, if I had called a Member of the House a slave then the Premier would have been in order; but there is nothing to preclude a Member of the House from using the word “slave”.

**The Premier:** But we have abolished the word.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** Where is the Law?



**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice (Mr M. O. Ajegbo):** The definition of the word "Osu" includes an Oru or Ohu or an Ume or an Omoni and also includes the descendants of an Osu, an Oru, an Ohu, an Ume, and an Omoni and any person subject to a legal or social disability or social stigma which is similar to or nearly similar to that borne by an Osu, an Oru, an Ohu, an Ume or an Omoni.

"Osu System" includes any system, status, institution, or practice which implies that any person is subject to a legal or social disability or social stigma which is similar to, or nearly similar to, that borne by an "Osu".

**Mr S. T. Akpan (Eket Division):** The word "slave" is not there?

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I was saying that somebody might wish to go to court but under the provisions of this new Bill, he can not go to court to contest his right to be a chief. In the old Calabar Province, I want them to get this down, we have Chiefs, Clan Heads. They have their regalia; they were installed as far back as 1950. I am telling them that no matter who they may recognise now, there is nothing they can do to get these old men in their regalia to hand over to these their new chiefs. I hope Members have got in their pigeon holes a well prepared document. This document comes from an area which has intelligent people to read the new Bill. I hope they will accept the suggestion that the Bill should be suspended for six months in order to let them see what will be the public reaction.

"After the Governor in Council has recognised a person as a Chief, a person who—(a) installs or purports to install another person, or (b) allows himself to be installed as a Chief in the stead of the person so recognised, is guilty of an offence." This comes from the N.C.N.C. Government!

"After the Governor in Council has recognised a person as a Chief, a person who—(a) holds himself out as, or (b) carries out the functions of, a chief in the stead of the person so recognised, is guilty of an offence: Penalty, imprisonment for six months or a fine of one hundred pounds".

Now, all the clans in the Region have been asked to select; some were very fortunate there were no disputes, no opposition. But there are certain areas in which there are disputes. Now, the Minister is afraid, because he knows he is going to do the wrong thing. He will not be guided by the advice of the Administrative Officers, who, I beg to say, are wiser. Now, they have their own Chiefs; they must have to be Chiefs—recognised ones—and the Minister wants to arm himself in order to threaten people. Somebody who has been a Chief as of right and by tradition, immediately he hears that the N.C.N.C. Government has enacted a law, he will rush off and say, he will be jailed if he does this or that. This is entirely wrong. I thought the aim of the Bill is to preclude chieftaincy matters from going to law court. Now, I remain in my house and I get my relatives to instal me as a Chief and immediately I do that, I will be put into jail. Keep all these matters out of the courts.

**The Premier:** That is a different matter.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** Eh! A different matter? Why then a different matter?

May I say this on behalf of the C.O.R. State Chief Conference that this will be opposed and the Members of the Opposition will never support this.

I beg to move.

**Chief I. I. Morphy (Ogoja Division):** I beg to second.

**Mr Speaker:** Since an amendment has been proposed to leave out the word "now" and to add at the end of the question the words "upon this day six months", the question, therefore, I have to propose is that the word "now" be left out and that the words proposed to be inserted be there inserted. I wish to draw the attention of hon. Members to paragraph 3 of Standing Order 47. By that, you will see that the debate on the amendment embraces the debate on the general principles of the Bill, so that your debate should either be in support of the amendment or against it.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice (Mr M. O. Ajegbo):** I beg to



support the Bill and oppose the amendment. Before I make further statements, I would like to give the House a short background of this law.

In 1956, this hon. House enacted the Recognition of Chiefs Law. The title of that Law reads:

“A Law to provide for the Recognition of Chiefs within the Eastern Region in certain circumstances; to preclude the hearing and the determination of chieftaincy disputes from the Courts in an original and in Appellate jurisdiction and for matters connected therewith.”

The whole object of the Law, was, firstly, to provide for the recognition of the Chiefs in the Region and, secondly, to remove chieftaincy disputes from the jurisdiction of the courts.

At the time the Law was enacted in 1956, the Legislature believed that, by the legislation, the jurisdiction of the courts would be completely ousted. Section 4 of the Law reads:

“Notwithstanding the provisions of this Law, any other written law, or any local customary law, the recognition of a Chief by the Governor in Council shall be final as to such recognition and not *subject* to question in any court of law and no petition relating to such recognition shall be entertained by any authority.”

Section 6 went a little further. It reads:

“Notwithstanding anything in any written law contained whereby or whereunder jurisdiction is conferred upon a Court, whether such jurisdiction is original, appellate or by way of transfer, a Court shall not have jurisdiction to entertain any civil cause or matter instituted for the determination of any question relating to the selection, appointment, deposition or abdication of a chief.”

I must state here that as far back as 1948, the then Legislative Council of Nigeria passed the Chieftaincy Dispute (Preclusion of Courts) Ordinance and section 6 of the Recognition of Chiefs Law, 1956, which I have just read, was bodily lifted from section 3 of that Ordinance.

May I quote with your permission section 3 of that Law:—

It is Law No. 30 of 1948 (Chieftaincy Disputes) Section 3 reads:

“Notwithstanding anything in any written law contained whereby or whereunder jurisdiction is conferred upon a court, whether such jurisdiction is original, appellate or by way of transfer, a Court shall not have jurisdiction to entertain any civil cause or matter instituted for (a) the determination of any question relating to the selection, appointment, deposition or abdication of a chief.”

“(d) The recovery or delivery of property in connection with the selection, appointment, setting aside of appointment, installation, recognition, withdrawal of recognition, deposition, suspension or abdication of a person as a chief.”

That was in 1948. The legislation to remove chieftaincy disputes from the courts is, therefore, nothing new.

In 1957 Chief Samuel Will Braide brought an action against Chief J. T. Princewill Amachree asking for a declaration that the defendant was not duly recognised by the Governor in Council, Eastern Region, as the Amanyanabo of Kalabari and, therefore, put the Recognition of Chiefs Law to the test. My predecessor in office sought, by way of motion, to have the plaintiff's claim dismissed on the ground that the court had no jurisdiction. The motion failed. The court held that it had jurisdiction to hear the case and so it did. The belief that the 1956 Law would remove the jurisdiction of the courts became illusory.

An amendment in 1958 sought to remove whatever doubts that existed as to the intention of the Legislature to remove chieftaincy disputes from the courts by providing that where a chief was recognised by the Governor in Council, whether under the Recognition of Chiefs Law or not, such recognition was final and could not be questioned or inquired into by any court of Law. This, we had hoped would clinch the matter. But a ruling made by Jibowu, Chief Justice of the Western Region, in November, 1958 in a chieftaincy matter in the Western Region again threw



[MR AJEGBO]

further doubts on the law. In that case, the Governor of the Western Region had recognised one Momoh as the Olukare of Ikare. An application was made for the Governor of the Western Region to show cause why a writ of *certiorari* should not issue for the purpose of quashing an order of approval and recognition made by him. It was strenuously argued that the court had no jurisdiction and that a writ of *certiorari* could not lie but the learned Chief Justice held otherwise. The Government of the Western Region has since enacted the Administration of Justice (Crown Proceedings) Law (W.R. No. 3 of 1960).

**Several Opposition Members:** Where is the law? We have not got the law.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** The law came into force on the 21st of January, 1960. I read section 3 of that Law. (*Mr E. O. Eyo: Which law is that?*) The law of your Government in the Western Region:

“3. (1) The High court shall not have jurisdiction to issue an order of *mandamus*, an order of prohibition or an order of *certiorari* to the Governor or to the Governor in Council in respect of:—

- (a) the approval or setting aside of the appointment of any chief;
- (b) the suspension or deposition of any chief;
- (c) any decision of the Governor or the Governor in Council in a dispute with regard to the appointment to a chieftaincy;
- (d) any other thing done or required to be done by the Governor or the Governor in Council, under any enactment relating to chiefs.

“2. In this section ‘enactment relating to chiefs’ includes the Appointment and Deposition of Chiefs Ordinance, the Western Region Appointment and Recognition of Chiefs Law, 1954 (as from time to time amended), and the Chiefs Law, 1957 (as from time to time amended).

“3. For the further avoidance of doubt it is declared that the provisions of this

section extend to things done or omitted to be done before, as well as after, the commencement of this Law.”

This Bill is an admission that the second object of the Recognition of Chiefs Law, 1956, namely, “to preclude the hearing and determination of chieftaincy disputes”, has eluded us and that there is still a gap in the Law. It is this gap that we are determined to close in clause 7. For four long years the corporate will of this hon. House has been thwarted. We intend, by this Bill, to fulfil the intention of the Legislature, expressed as far back as 1956.

There are certain other features of the Bill that are worth noting. We have left out the definition of the word “Chief”. Chief is defined in section 31A (2) of the Nigeria (Constitution) Orders in Council, 1954 to 1960, to mean “any person who is for the time being recognised as a Chief under the Recognition of Chiefs Law, 1956, as from time to time amended, or any Law replacing that Law” and it is no longer necessary to include the definition of “Chief” in our Law.

The Law did not make any provision for the recognition of a Chief where no dispute exists. This has been remedied. Clause 3 of the Bill provides that where the Minister is of the opinion that no dispute exists as to the person entitled to be a Chief or to be appointed a Chief he shall advise the Governor in Council accordingly and on the receipt of that advice the Governor in Council may recognise a person to be a Chief.

Section 3 of the Law now becomes, with some modifications, clause 4 of the Bill. The Law provides that where the Minister is of the opinion that a dispute exists as to the person entitled to be a Chief or to be appointed a Chief he may refer the matter to the Governor in Council and the Governor in Council may, after such inquiry as he thinks fit, recognise a person to be a Chief. This provision has been found to be a bit vague and an opportunity has been taken in the new Bill to clarify the position. Clause 4 provides that where the Minister is of the opinion that a dispute exists he may make such inquiry as he thinks fit. He will then submit a report to the Governor



in Council on the whole matter. After studying the report from the Minister the Governor in Council may recognise a person to be a Chief.

Clauses 9, 10 and 11 are new. Clause 9 makes it an offence for anybody to instal a Chief in opposition to a person already recognised to be a Chief by the Governor in Council. Clause 10 makes it an offence for any person wrongfully to hold out himself as a Chief after another person in that community has already been recognised to be a Chief by the Governor in Council and clause 11 makes it an offence for any person, in a manner likely to cause a breach of the peace, to use, occupy or appropriate a real or personal property attaching to a person recognised by the Governor in Council to be a Chief.

We feel that these provisions are necessary in the interest of peace in the community. We know that a good number of people have been trading on chieftaincy dispute and we intend to stop that illegal trade. Incidentally, for the benefit of the Chief Whip of the Opposition, this is not a new law. As a Member of the Action Group he should be aware of section 17 of their Chiefs Law of 1957 which says that any person who instals, or proposes to instal a person as a recognised Chief other than a person approved by the Governor in Council in accordance with this part or who, not being a person approved by the Governor in Council in accordance with this part permits himself to be installed a Chief and so on, shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to imprisonment for 2 years—we have only provided for 6 months or £100 fine. Theirs is 2 years without an option of fine.

I think that all hon. Members would agree that this is a welcome Bill. It is time we stopped racketeering in chieftaincy disputes.

I beg to support the Bill.

**Mr J. A. Agba** (Ogoja Division): My only regret in speaking in opposition to the Bill and in support of the amendment is that this bogus Bill should have been introduced at the time when the trend of the debate in the House seemed to encourage the new Government which is doing so well. In opposing this Bill, I crave your indulgence to allow me use such words that are expressive of my

feelings; otherwise I cannot be brought out clearly.

**Mr Speaker:** Provided they are not unparliamentary.

**Mr Agba:** I refer you to Standing Order 30(5):

“It shall be out of order to use offensive and insulting language about Members of the House”,

not about Bills or anything else.

I shall oppose the Bill under ten headings, and I take them one by one. The first point is that the Bill is most obnoxious and I am going to speak on that. Secondly it cuts across our customs in the recognition of Chiefs. Thirdly, it seeks to make the courts subject to the Minister. Fourthly, it introduces dictatorship, Nazism and Communism into the Region. The fifth point is that it is a way to suppress not only the conscience but even the expressions of humble citizens. Sixthly, it brings in its train nepotism, favouritism, bribery and corruption. The seventh point is that it kills the spirit of proper selection of leadership in any particular area. The eighth point is that it is a deprivation of the right of citizenship. The ninth point—I beg your pardon—the Bill is nonsensical. It has no historical background; if it has at all, it is a very bad one. Lastly, the Bill is fundamentally wrong; it is revolutionary and out of place, particularly in the Region.

I take the first point. I say that the Bill is obnoxious. I think the main thing here that the Minister sets out to prove is about recognition of Chiefs. By the word recognition I understand that it is derived from the Latin word *cognisco* meaning: I know; *cognoscere* to know; *cognivi*: I have known; *cognitum*: knowing; *re*: I know has the sense of looking back that is in crude language. I think the Government then will recognise a person who has already been selected by the appropriate authority. That is what I understand by the word recognition; the Government has no power of selection of a chief for a people. It is obnoxious to think of it. But here, as we go along, you will see that there is a departure from the very word that the Minister used. It is not talking about recognition any more; but is talking of selection. It goes down to



[MR AGBA]

hurt the people who are so concerned and the particular individual involved in the matter. I hope further to show you that this number one permeates the whole Bill; when I say that it is obnoxious, and unparalleled in history.

Secondly, I said it cuts across our customs in installing Chiefs. I will do a bit of history here; I will take a particular clan, say Obudu with which I am very well familiar. Before a Chief is selected or installed, the villagers come together; go through their usual rites and by that process the particular individual is chosen as the most competent person to be installed a Chief. Usually, when the news comes to the man, he has to run out of the village and it takes many days to bring him back to the area and then he is installed a Chief. After that he goes into the ceremony of the installation. But if we have to allow this Bill through it will mean that we are setting up really N.C.N.C. Chiefs, not those according to our own customs. I think the duty of the Government is to respect the customs and traditions of the people it rules. I take your mind back to India. You will remember the Indian mutiny. There were about fifteen causes of that mutiny but I will give you only one of them. A new cartridge was introduced in the Army and the cartridge was said to be mixed with fats of cows and pigs. To the Mohammedans the pig is unclean animal and to Moslems the cow is equally unclean. The cartridge was really a violation of their consciences and the Government of India... (*Mr Ajegbo: It is not Moslem, it is Hindu.*) Thank you, that is a good correction. But I would like you to accept corrections and criticisms as well as I do. Even then, when there was crisis in India, the Government of India did respect the feelings of the people. That was only one small part of India. Now what we are doing here is cutting across the customs of our people. If we do this, we will not be building up the nation, but rather we will be breaking it up. A good Government should seek to build on the customs of its people than demolishing these customs which are part and parcel of the nature of the people, and the nature of a people is of Divine origin. (*The Minister of Internal Affairs: It is not a new law.*) If it is not a new law, why amend it. It requires the consent of the people and the practicability of the law amongst the people must be considered.

If the people cannot practise it, then it is useless. I think the law of the Government should be built on the customs and traditions of the people and if they do that, I think it will be building them up. If they do that I think we will be teaching our people a lot more than merely introducing things which will really clash with the customs and traditions of the people. I am not accusing anybody of not knowing some principles in education. But I take just the word 'education' itself to analyse it. It really means withdrawing from a man instead of putting into him new things and if the law is to be of use to us and to the people, I think the Government should endeavour to introduce such laws as will not clash with the customs and traditions of the people, but will really educate them, taking out from them other things which were really not very natural and human and putting in their place the new things. I think they will be doing well in that respect.

The third point: To seek to make the courts subject to Ministers. I refer you to Clause 6 (2) (a), (b), (c) and (d) of the Bill, and there you will see that after all, the courts are supposed to be dependent on the Minister and if the Minister's behaviour and his mistake cannot be questioned by any court, I wonder what use the courts will be to us. They are completely useless. Where are we heading to? I say that if the independence we are anticipating will lead us to something like what happened in France—the French Revolution—the Ministers becoming so big that they were completely above the law, that they could even kill somebody's child and give him a penny and say: "Oh! my killing the child is a sort of relief to you". Here our Ministers cannot be tried by the court we are heading to ruin. Their actions cannot be questioned as is stipulated in Clause 6 (2) (a), (b), (c) and (d) of the Bill. That is why I say that the Bill seeks to make the courts subject to the Ministers and to every person acting in the place of the Ministers.

My fourth point is that this Bill introduces dictatorship. I refer you to Clause 7; there you will see that the Bill really silences anybody who wishes to appeal to higher authorities for justice. He cannot now do so. In other words, once a Minister or the Governor in Council takes a decision that so and so is a Chief, it is unquestionable. Then what are



we going to be in the State? The Government, I am sorry to say this now, is introducing measures to enable it to win elections.

**Hon. Members:** Speak louder.

**Mr Agba:** I am accustomed to speaking loud, but I cannot help those people who have bad ears.

It means that where there is a dispute between two Chiefs the Government will come along and that is usually done even in the Councils as Ministers often do; the Government will come along and ask: "Who is in support of the Government between the two". And the answer would be: "Mr B is in support of the Government". Now the Governor in Council will come along according to his discretion to select the person he likes. It is the fellow who is in support of the Government that will be selected. But Mr "B" may not be in existence, so the words I am going to use now are not out of place: that Mr "B" may be a slave in the village. I know there are no slaves now-a-days, but what will be his position after his recognition by the Government? What will be his position amongst the people? You will notice that the people dare not make any plea. His opponents dare not oppose him any more. What will happen? That is the man the Government has recognised. That is complete dictatorship. We are going the way of Russia during the time of Joe Stalin when his actions were unquestionable when he said something and everybody kept silent. I say that the Bill brings in nepotism, favouritism, bribery and corruption. When the Government is in a position to do a thing which cannot be questioned, what else will happen? Suppose Mr "C" has a relative in Obudu and "B" is contesting chieftaincy with him and the relative happens to be the Commissioner sent to investigate into the matter? He will come back and report the matter to the Governor and the Governor in Council according to his discretion will recognise Mr "C"; and who is Mr "C"—a relative to the Commissioner!

That should not be encouraged.

I say it kills the spirit of proper selection of leadership. It is the people who really know who can help them as their leader, and I think it was Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe who here last year defined a chief as the leader of the people. I wonder that somebody from the

outside should come along to select a leader for you! How does he know that that man has the capabilities of a leader, one of which is bravery? You from outside should select a Chief who would come along to represent his people! I warn the Government. Of course I will come to it when I come to my last point. But I will warn them now. Take note of the event in Afghanistan. The Minister of Justice will soon tell me again of what happened in Afghanistan leading up to the Kabul disaster. The English were going to appoint a Chief for the Afghans, but they would not accept a Chief appointed by foreigners. They must retain their own. What happened? The English sent Forces to Afghanistan and the result was the Kabul Disaster of 1847. (*The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice: I do not know it!—Laughter*). I want him to help me, with your permission. What I was saying, is that it is very improper for the Government to muzzle the free conscience of the people, not giving them the right to select and bring to the Government's own notice the right man they really want to lead them. Now, if this Bill is passed I say all right is lost, and we are finished.

My ninth point is that the Bill is nonsensical and unhistorical, and if it has any historical background at all, it is a bad one and based on false imitation. I took this from what the Minister of Justice said. Time and again the Government come to this House and talk of imitating the West. Action Group has done this, therefore we must do that. But listen. Why cannot we as Easterners use that intelligence that God has given us, the initiative, the strength in doing physical things, and do things independently of the West, knowing fully well that our customs, our habits and a host of things are different from those of the West. (*Interruptions from Government supporters*). You always make noise like little parrots. (*Laughter*). The Westerners have customs right from origin—customs different from ours in the East. In chieftaincy matters they know better than we do.

**Mr Speaker:** Five minutes more.

**Mr Agba:** Not bad at all, thank you.

As I was saying, in the West the people know how to respect their Chiefs. One Chief ruled a very large area of land of so many villages and



[MR AGBA]

clans. That sort of thing was not in existence in our own area. Every little clan and even village had its own chief. We were more democratic than the Westerners had ever been, even before the advent of Europeans. When we are considering matters of this kind why do we compare ourselves with the West. Because the Westerners do this, therefore we must do that. As I said, if the Bill has a historical background it is based on a false and pernicious one. Let us not deceive ourselves by false imitation. Let us take the traditions of our own people into consideration and not talk of the West.

Finally, this Bill is fundamentally wrong, revolutionary and unfair. It is wrong because it is based on wrong principles. If a man has not the right to go to court and seek justice for what he considers unfair to him, or to claim back what he originally possessed, I wonder where that is leading us. It is revolutionary because after the recognition of a man who is not, and should not be, the actual Chief of a clan or village, or whatever it is, the people will never rest satisfied. They will continue to harrass the Government; they will continue to harrass the so-called Chief and there will never be peace in the place, and the final thing is chaos some of you know it; That may be a mild word—anarchy, disaster, killing and all sorts of things. I say it is really unfair, really unfair indeed not to allow a person to express his own mind. I think the right way to defeat an enemy is to engage him in a straight fight. This is a very trickish way to beat an enemy—to muzzle his tongue. Let him stand there and you have a good deal of it, and then you will soon see who will raise up his hand and say "That's all right, I am quite satisfied". I think that should be a fair fight, but to say that the Governor in Council according to his discretion has decided that so and so is the man recognised to be a Chief, and the opponent has no redress but only to have his tongue muzzled is very unfair and I am asking the Government with all sincerity to withdraw this Bill as soon as possible.

**Mr S. O. Achara** (Okigwi Division): I don't like humour in this House especially when we are discussing a Bill of this kind. We should do a little bit of laughing and playing. For over 16 years the Party represented by the present Government fought, amongst other things,

against obnoxious Bills. In 1946 the late Herbert Macaulay led a country wide campaign in Nigeria to collect funds to lead a delegation to London to protest against obnoxious Bills—one of which concerned the Recognition, Appointment and Deposition of Chiefs. It was a Bill of this kind that we are now being called upon to pass today. It was in the course of his efforts to collect money for the purpose of this delegation that the grand old man died fighting the obnoxious Bill.

It is an irony of life that the very people who poured all sorts of abuses on the expatriates as well as on the African Members of the Legislative Council in 1947 and who led a delegation to London in order to fight against this kind of Chieftaincy Bill should now introduce the very Bill they had all the time fought against. That will show everyone of us what power is. It intoxicates. If you give power to a lunatic he will be violent and do more harm than good.

This Bill seeks among other things to by-pass the law and make the Minister the final arbiter in the interpretation of the law. We all know the standard of democracy in this country and I think it will be most unwise to give the Minister such absolute discretion of determining who is a Chief and who is not a Chief; who is to be recognised and who is not to be recognised. The only opportunity which a citizen has is the right to choose who is to represent him. I believe it was through the same process that all the Ministers came to this House. This Bill, to say the least, is undemocratic. Very often I hear my very good Friends opposite shouting first and foremost about democracy, socialist government and so on and I think, with due respect to the Government, that the Government ought to be thoroughly ashamed of this very Bill—a Bill the very Government had in the past energetically fought against. What will those people whom Members of the Government had attacked all these years think of the Government? They have not finally left this country. Members of the Government from one campaign meeting to another have accused these people as being wicked, violating the customs of the people and of breaking the traditional institutions of chieftaincy and now the Government wants to introduce this obnoxious Bill.

This Bill also makes room, as my hon. Friend from Obudu said, for favouritism, nepotism and bribery. What guarantee have



we that this man who recognises Chiefs is above bribery? Is the Minister above bribery?

**Mr Speaker:** Hon. Members, I do not like the suggestion that the Minister can be bribed.

**Mr Achara:** I am making a general statement. I have made mention of no particular Minister. I was asking a question. I can as well ask: Is a Member of this House incapable of being bribed? Is it a crime to say this in this House?

**Mr Speaker:** I would still not like the suggestion to be made by the hon. Member.

**Mr Achara:** I would like to accept your ruling, Mr Speaker, but what I said is true. You know very well that there is a lot of nepotism in this country.

**Mr K. J. N. Okpokam** (Ikrom Division):  
Point of Order—Standing Order 30 (5) and (7).

**Mr Speaker:** I have called the hon. Member's attention to the fact that I would not like the suggestion to be made, but if he persists I will have my privilege.

**Mr Achara:** I am prepared to recognise your authority by saying that I am prepared to abide by your ruling. I was saying that we know to what extent nepotism is being practised in this country and hon. Members should be very careful what contributions they make to this Bill. I am appealing to the Government to see that by the time this debate comes to an end that the Minister of Justice or whatever Minister is responsible for chieftaincy matters withdraws this Bill. It is an obnoxious Bill and it is against all we have laboured to establish in this country. I will now show how absurd it is for the Minister to assume the power of determining who and who should be a Chief. Suppose that in a village of 20,000 people, 500 support one man as a Chief while the remainder support another man and suppose, for the sake of argument, that the Minister recognises the man with fewer supporters as Chief, then this Chief will be an imposition on the will of the people. It is therefore better for the people to make the selection instead of the Minister to do it. Mr Speaker, with your permission, I will cite two instances to show to what extent it is dangerous to allow the Bill to

be passed. We have two disputes now, one in Oguta and another in Ndizuogu. In Oguta there are 26 villages. Twenty-five villages are solidly behind one man as their Chief, whilst only one village is supporting the other man.

It is that man having the support of one village out of twenty-six villages who will be chief. The second example is that of Ndizuogu. Out of thirteen villages, the present man Government has recognised comes from one of the thirteen villages and you will find that in that one village from which he comes, over 60 per cent of the people are deadly against him and because the former Premier and National President of the N.C.N.C. got there during the campaigns and said: "I am going to recognise this people irrespective of what you say", this Government has now recognised that man. Over whom do you expect that man to rule? (*Government Bench: Over you*). It is over his family. After all, many of us are from the Ibo area of this Region where there are no real Chiefs in the past. We should be very careful how we talk here. You cannot violate the tradition of the people merely because you have the power. You have a voting squad that will always vote rightly or wrongly what Government says. Let me tell you, no Government will be stronger than the Government of South Africa, and in spite of all obnoxious Bills passed from time immemorial in South Africa, the soul of the people is still marching forward till today. In spite of all that the white settlers have done in Kenya the people are still marching forward. So that there is no good in telling us here that we are the Government, we will pass this law. (*Government Bench: We will pass it all right*). Yes, you will pass it but, it is one thing to pass this Bill into law and it is another thing for that law to function. I wish to refer the Minister responsible for Chieftaincy to a Parliamentary book by an eminent British writer, Harold Laski. It is a very small portion that will give you an insight into what you are trying to do. I will just read part of paragraph one:

*Parliamentary Government in England, a commentary by Harold Laski.*

"Acts of Parliament are not self-operative; they have to be applied by men. And



[MR ACHARA]

application involves interpretation by a Court, since it is a principle of the British Constitution that only express and unambiguous words—perhaps not even these—can deprive the citizen of his title to have the meaning of legislative intention settled by a Court of Law. Thereby we have sought to avoid not merely the obvious dangers of unfettered executive discretion in administration . . .”

What this Bill is seeking to do is to give the power of life and death to the Executive Council, so that nothing that they do will be questioned anywhere. It is inhuman, it is wicked, it is the very opposite of all that we have laboured for. After all, what right have we to seek to rule ourselves if, on the eve of Independence you people who claim to be the strongest advocates of democracy will come here to pass this kind of law and expect honest and God-fearing men to vote for you. I want to appeal to my Friends—the Government back benchers—who are seen and not heard. All party patronages will not be denied you if you vote against this Bill. The patronage that comes from God lasts for ever and ever. I am appealing to you to think twice before voting for this Bill. The Government is not going to fall because of this Bill. I am appealing to you not to be cowed down, not to be intimidated to vote for this Bill. I know in the very hearts of those my Friends there, all of them are opposed to this Bill.

**Government Bench:** We are not opposed to it. You voted in favour of it last time.

**Mr Achara:** This is not the Bill we passed. I was in the Government party then. We could not have passed this kind of Bill. It is a most obnoxious Bill. It is a Bill that will shame any Government coming to introduce it. If this were the Bill, why bring this amendment?

**The Premier:** It is the same Bill. You voted for this Bill.

**Mr Achara:** It is not the Bill I voted for; you know that very well. Despite all the seeming support they give him, I am calling upon the Premier to withdraw it: he does not

lose face by withdrawing this obnoxious Bill. Instead, it will add to his stature.

**The Premier:** It makes it tighter.

**Mr Achara:** He can never succeed if he makes it tighter so long as all the obnoxious laws passed by Government twenty times stronger than this have never succeeded.

I oppose this Bill and support the amendment with all the emphasis at my command.

*Sitting suspended at 12 noon.*

*Sitting resumed at 12.30 p.m.*

**The Provincial Commissioner (Ogoja Province) (Mr M. E. Ogon):** It is unfortunate that a simple Bill has been made complex by those who want to use it in mischievous ways. What are the main arguments of my Friends opposite? One is that the mere fact that the Minister is bringing in an amendment now tantamounts to bringing in a new Bill. I do not think this is correct. Surely the Minister made it clear in the objects and reasons and said: the object of this Bill is to replace the Recognition of Chiefs Law by a new Law. I think this is the key-note to the new Bill. If a legislature has passed a Law and then the Court by some legal technicalities misrepresents the legislature, surely any Government in order to carry out its original intention, could bring in a new Law. It happens everywhere, in England and America. That is what the Minister is doing.

Some people said that we are making the court subordinate to the Minister. There is no relation between them. All that we are trying to do is to take chieftaincy matter outside the jurisdiction of the Court, and nobody would say that that is undemocratic. So it is wrong for us to use wrong concept and try to confuse the House.

The Mover of the Amendment did say something about respecting tradition, but in the same breadth he turned round and quoted the case of Oguta and said that 25 villages have said that they did not want this, they wanted that. Tradition is not a question of majority vote. You do not vote on tradition. As I said, if by tradition it is the turn of one



man to be Chief—and Government by enquiry has come to the conclusion that he should be Chief—but just because he is poor or has no sufficient backing, then you turn round and organise people, by means of fraud, to rise against him, Government should certainly recognise him. As a matter of fact, hon. Akpan said a Chief has so many qualities; he must be a leader of his people. Surely in a monarchy, when a person is next in the line of succession, whether the man is a dullard or not he must be enthroned. It is not a question of passing examination. So that if by tradition a man is entitled, Government has to enquire and after it has enquired the tradition Government is satisfied Government should not be challenged. So I ask my Friends opposite not to run into frenzy but help see to it that the proper intention of the Bill is carried out.

Hon. Eyo has said it in such a way as to show that Government would jump into a village, pick an ordinary man and dump him over the head of the people. What is it? It must be a dispute between two Chiefs. It cannot be a dispute between a Chief and an ordinary man. It is assumed that this dispute is between two Chiefs, and after due enquiry, Government selects one. I have just seen this applied in Ogoja Province. Government does not say "we are going to choose this man". A Government is based on the democratic vote of the people. We do not want to be unpopular in any part of the Eastern Region. Therefore we are not going to any Division and say "we are going to impose a man against the wishes of the people". We want to rule by confidence not by threat. That has been our tradition; we have been ruling by the people's confidence, not by threat. Everybody here is interested in one Chief or the other—Chief Morphy has his interest; I have mine. From the moment the Ministry charged with Chieftaincy matters sent out a circular saying that there was going to be an election of Second-class Chiefs, Chief Morphy went into the field.

The Minister is not going to say that because an Action Group clan has selected their Chief and there is no dispute therefore he is going to create a dispute. If any group of people do not want to go to court and they want their own chief to be recognised, the best answer is to settle it on the village level according to their

tradition. Once this is done properly the Minister will have nothing to say. But surely it is not only necessary in a democracy to say that you must give everybody freedom of speech and freedom to go to court, because there may be anarchy and there may be confusion. After all what is the rule of law? It means everybody doing everything according to law. The point is that you can agitate for chieftaincy but when it has gone to a high level where a Minister of State has considered it impartially and decided that you should stop at that level, you have to stop there. If we allow anybody to go out and sue in court, then what stops Mr Ojukwu from challenging all the Chiefs in this Region? The moment one rich man wants to cause confusion and challenges all, this democratic Government will fall. As a matter of fact, if you allow this type of process to happen the result will be chaotic. If one wealthy group of people wants to cause confusion and create trouble in this Region, all it needs to do immediately there is election into the legislature of the Eastern Region (meaning the House of Chiefs and the House of Assembly) is to finance people in all the Divisions of the Region. Then there will be anarchy and chaos and collapse of democratic principles. It is a fact that what the Government is doing has the blessing of all the Chiefs in the Region.

Before I sit down, I would like to correct the impression that in 1947 the N.C.N.C. collected £13,000 to fight against certain laws. There was no such thing. It was the imposition of Chiefs by aliens. I think we must get our history correct. In the heat of the struggle for independence British expatriate civil servants were trying to use Chiefs against the nationalistic struggle. This same apparatus is being used in Uganda where they have brought the Chiefs to oppose freedom of movement and freedom of speech. What happened was that British civil servants were trying to frighten our people by these laws and the N.C.N.C. Delegation went not only for this, they went also for many other things purposed to suppression. So it is very unfair to mutilate history when we are still all living. And again here in the East, people have been given the democratic freedom of challenging the Government. They can go out to Obudu or Calabar and say that what this or that Minister of State has done is not good. In the West if you get up to challenge a Minister's decision you will be



[MR OGON]

jailed. And even I do not think it is this Government's intention to bring in only N.C.N.Cers. As a matter of fact when the elections into the House of Chiefs were going on I was faced with the possibility of Chief Morphy going to impose Action Groupers on my electorate. I came to Enugu and reported that I was in trouble. But the Premier said that surely we do not want only N.C.N.C. Chiefs. Let Action Groupers come in if they want. As a result of these democratic principle we have people like the Obong of Calabar. What N.C.N.C. Chiefs have we in the West? So my appeal is that for a long time since this present session started we have set a very good tradition of free and constructive criticism, and I hope that the absence of Mr Ikoku, the Leader of the Opposition, does not mean that when the cat is away the mice play. I wish he were here to attract some bit of respect. This Bill is good. It is simple; it is fair; it is democratic; it is justified. Above all, this Bill will stop unnecessary litigation and give freedom and dignity to the chieftaincy institution in the Eastern Region.

**Chief Morphy:** My hon. Friend, Mr Ogon has just said that we are talking about the Minister recognising a Chief when there is dispute but here in paragraph 3 (1) of the Bill it is stated that where no dispute exists the Minister is allowed some discretion. I beg to read that part which deals with where no chieftaincy dispute exists:

"Where the Minister is of the opinion that no dispute exists as to the person entitled to be a chief or to be appointed a chief, he shall advise the Governor in Council accordingly".

And paragraph 3 (2) reads:

"After the receipt of that advice, the Governor in Council may in his discretion, recognise a person to be a chief".

Why that discretion? After advice why discretion? We are questioning that discretion. Why is it that after a Minister shall have advised where dispute does not exist the Executive Council still want to use their discretion? We are opposing this Bill on the ground that it seeks to take away all chieftaincy disputes from court, but right in Clause 6 (3) of the Bill a chief who shall have been recognised still has the right to go to court. We say

that this Bill is discriminatory. I read Clause 6 (3):

"A chief who has been recognised under this or other law, is not precluded from taking action in a court of competent jurisdiction for the recovery or delivery of the property mentioned in paragraph (d) of subsection (2)."

If the aim of this Bill is to take away all chieftaincy disputes from the court why is it that this very Bill still gives right to somebody who has been recognised to go back to court. On that ground we are saying that it is discriminatory.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice (Mr M. O. Ajegbo):** Property is not chieftaincy.

**Chief Morphy:** The Minister of Justice has said that property is not chieftaincy. If one does not put on a chief's regalia one is not known as a chief; as such it is part of chieftaincy.

Since the Bill is discriminatory and as such the Chiefs can go to court after this Bill shall have been passed to seek their rights under the Fundamental Human Rights. In the Report of the Resumed Nigeria Constitutional Conference, page 7 paragraph M, you find "freedom from discriminatory legislation". Now we are saying that this Bill is discriminatory in that the bill allows certain section of people to go to court and some other ones do not have to go to court. This is against the Fundamental Human Right as embodied in the Constitution. This Bill is discriminatory in that the bill allows certain section of people to go to court and some other ones do not have to go to court because they are prevented from doing so.

With your permission, I beg to quote:

"No enactment of any legislature in Nigeria and no instrument or executive or administrative action of any Government in Nigeria shall, either expressly or in its practical application, (a) subject persons of any community, tribe, place of origin, religion or political opinion to disabilities or restrictions to which persons of other communities, tribes, places of origin, religions or political opinions are not made subject; or (b) confer on persons of any community, tribe, place of origin, religion or political opinion any privilege or advantage which is not conferred on persons of other communities, tribes, places of origin, religions or political opinions".



The Government is conferring powers on a member of a community under this same Law and that power they are denying another man of the same community under this very Law. So we say that this Bill is discriminatory and it should be suspended for six months so that the Minister of Justice will go over it again. These are the grounds for which we are asking that Government should defer this Bill for six months, so that they will think of it again. What the Government should do in chieftaincy matter is to come in at the last stage whereby the Minister will have to recognise that person who has been accepted by the people and this person who has been accepted is always accepted in accordance with the people's custom. But this Bill seeks to take away the people's right. Here you do not find where the people have to discuss or decide according to custom before Government steps in. All we know is the Minister will advise the Governor in Council and the Governor in Council takes action in his discretion. We are saying that the people whom these Chiefs are to lead are the people who should have the first say. We are asking the Government to defer this Bill for six months so that when a new one is drafted the people's wish will be considered first. We ask that the Government should have the last say.

On this question of Chieftaincy disputes, you will find that two disputes still exist: one at Oguta and I say, Sir, that there are two Ministers who are interested in this Oguta case. I think they are using their influence. They are influencing the Government to bring up a Bill which is very unpopular simply to gratify their interests. Some Members will soon tell me I am not from Oguta. They forget that if it affects Oguta today it may affect them tomorrow. It is not proper for a Member of this House to come into this House and instead of speaking for the whole of the Region, he keeps telling people: "speak for your own Division". We are here to legislate for the whole of the Eastern Nigeria. So I am entitled to speak for any part of Eastern Nigeria. What we want is that these two Ministers who are influencing the Government should think again and stop influencing the Government wrongly.

**The Provincial Commissioner, Annang Province (Mr E. Chidolue):** Point of Order—Standing Order 30 (7):

"No Member shall impute improper motives to any other Member."

**Chief Morphy:** What I am saying is that two Ministers are influencing the Government because they are interested in the Oguta chieftaincy trouble. Because of this, we will like that Government should defer this Chieftaincy Bill and let us reconsider it. The one we passed in 1956 is better than the present one. At that time the power rested with the people and Government came in at the last stage. But this time, Government is starting it all from the bottom forgetting that the people have the last say.

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Education (Mr D. S. A. Agim):** I thank you for the opportunity given me to make a few observations on a reference which was made by the hon. Member for Okigwi Division, Mr S. O. Achara, in connection with Government action in recognising Chief Imo II, the Eze of Arondizuogu. He has tried to describe Government action in such a way as to represent it as an actual travesty of justice.

**Mr Achara:** On point of explanation. I never referred to any Chief in Arondizuogu by name. There are over fifteen of them there. I did not refer to Chief Imo II. He is misquoting me.

**Mr Agim:** He was referring to the recognition of the Eze of Arondizuogu and described this as one of the examples of the bad ways this law will operate in future; but if it is this way that this law will operate in the future, then I should say it is one of our best laws. The fact was that the Eze of Arondizuogu, as far back as 1957 had been selected by the thirteen villages of Arondizuogu, not only by the raising of hands but actually in writing, by the Heads of the thirteen villages in Arondizuogu.

What happened was that when the political "coup" which was planned by Dr Mbadiwe was about to start, this Chief instinctively felt that the "coup" was going to put Ndizuogu in a very bad stead. As a conscientious Chief, he told his people that it was dangerous to join the "coup" and declared that he and his people stood on the part of the Government, that is, on the part of the N.C.N.C. When Dr Azikiwe visited Orlu, this Chief, as one of the traditional Members of the Orlu District Council, joined in signing a welcome address which also contained a vote of confidence in



[MR AGIM]

the Premier and his Government. When his kinsman, Dr Mbadiwe returned, he threatened and bullied this man and asked him whether he had ever heard of an Onitsha Chief who signed a vote of confidence for Dr Mbadiwe and therefore he should not have signed that vote of confidence for Dr Azikiwe; that unless he withdrew he was going to get the people around to remove him. In the first instance, this chief was so terrified that he had to think of retraction and effected a move which was published in the Press. The Chief felt subsequently that it was not becoming a Chief to say one thing today and say another tomorrow. So he counteracted that retraction which was put out in his name and said he was on the side of the Government and the N.C.N.C.

The result of this decision was that in spite of the written mandate of the people, freely given, without even the knowledge of or interference by Government, Dr Mbadiwe succeeded in inducing some of the people to throw off their customary allegiance to Chief Imo. There was probably the usual free flow of drinks and plenty of "okporoko" to account for this sudden and sacrilegious change of attitude. Imo, as a conscientious Chief, thought of what is best for his people and stuck to it in spite of threats. When the Selection of Second-class Chiefs came along, these hirelings gathered together to overthrow him. They put up somebody right from this Chief's village—one of his servants—to challenge him on the Selection of Second-class Chiefs. Naturally, there was a dispute. Then Government got over the situation by appointing an Administrative Officer of the area to go into the dispute and submit a report. The Administrative Officer having gone into the dispute normally submitted a report and according to section 4 of the Bill under reference, Government looked at it and found that there was right and justice on the side of Chief Imo. That supports the point made by the Commissioner for Ogoja Province that it is not in everything that a majority of votes will decide what is right. This is so, because many people nowadays go against tradition because of money which could be given out at any time and in any demanded quantity.

**Mr J. A. Agba** (Ogoja Division): Point of Order—Standing Order 32 (5):

"Members shall not make unseemly interruptions while any Member is speaking."

**Mr Speaker:** Thank you for that, Mr Agba.

**Mr Agim:** Finally, I am saying that the action of Government has the support of the people. I wish to take this opportunity to report that since Government took that action, the people now have realised their folly and they have found that they were entering into a sinking canoe. As a result, they have now all come back and are supporting their Chief.

**Mr Speaker:** Hon. Members, much as it suits me, the Government would like to get through this Bill today. I still feel it is not the intention of Government to give the impression that they are trying to muzzle the Members of the Opposition; not only Members of the Opposition, but other Members too.

**Mr A. G. Umoh** (Enyong Division): So much has already been said and so efficiently by the Chief Whip of the Opposition, that it will not be necessary to make a long speech, but this Bill happens to be a very contentious one and I think it is my duty to make a contribution to its opposition. I rise to support the amendment by the Chief Whip of the Opposition, because I feel that it is absolutely unfair to deprive the people of this Region of the democratic way they were used to in selecting their own Chiefs. I am glad to note when Mr Achara made a statement here that there are no Chiefs in Ibo area, there was no contradiction. In our own area, we have ways of selecting our Chiefs. I want to make it clear that our people have got a traditional way of electing their Chiefs and if Government does not allow the people to exercise this traditional right, it is nothing—and I say it right here—but dictatorship.

The Bill seeks to prevent people from taking legal action against usurpers. There is a case which took place in my constituency recently. I am referring to Itam clan in



Enyong Division. Those who are conversant with that area know that the Itams selected a clan head and duly installed him several years ago. Last December when the Government gave notice of its intention to select chiefs . . . , (*Interruptions*). I am not going to allow any interruptions, if you have any Point of Order you can raise it. . . . a certain young man, a trader, who was not at any time made a village chief got up and said he was a clan head. Itam is made up of forty-seven villages and I want to say that forty-six out of the forty-seven villages stood by the old clan head and only a few people in the village from where this young man comes supported him. He threatened some teachers and nurses under the employment of the District Council where he is Chairman that if they did not vote for him he would terminate their appointments with the Council. The only people therefore who voted for this man were only a handful of the workers and his own villagers. But it was a shock that the District Officer who came to enquire on the matter decided in favour of this man who was supported by one village. Itam people were annoyed at this decision of the District Officer and have sued this usurper to see that justice is done to their rightful clan head. I do not know what will happen now that Government is trying to stop court action. It appears that the sole object of this Bill is to get the favour of the Chiefs during the time of election. As a matter of fact, unless you succeed in getting the favour of the people the Chiefs will do very little for you. As far as we are concerned you can get all the Chiefs, but we can still get what we want. You think you are succeeding but you are not. I have to express my disappointment and regret that the first major step which the new Premier has taken is a wrong one. He has abolished the democratic institution that was in existence in the Eastern Region for years now.

We have heard that one of the reasons why this Bill has come up in this House is that there is a similar law in the Western Region. Frankly speaking, last year when the old Premier was comparing the taxes in the East with that of the West, I said that it was wrong to do a thing because another man has done the same thing. I am not condemning the Western Region Government, but I am saying that the Eastern Government need not copy

the West. To tell us that because any law exists in the West it should be made here is wrong and childish.

**Mr Agba:** Point of Order. Standing Order 32 (5):

“Members shall not make unseemly interruptions while any Member is speaking”.

There is some sort of meeting going on near here.

**Mr Umoh:** I am surprised that the Premier of a Region and the Attorney-General . . . (*Interruptions*). I would like to say that we should not copy anything that is not good for the people of this Region even if we find that it is done by another Government.

**An hon. Member:** But you are a member of the Action Group. Why did you not stop the Western Government.

**Mr Umoh:** I am a member of the A.G. but I am in the Eastern Legislature and cannot influence the Western Legislature. I hope that my contribution to the debate will influence this Government to withdraw this obnoxious Bill.

The Commissioner for Ogoja made a statement that the majority of the people in any particular clan need not prevail over a minority. If the majority of a people elect a chief traditionally it would be wrong for the Government to deny him recognition. I feel that the Government should leave this question of chiefs to the people. If Government persists in electing chiefs for the people, let it be sure that it is wasting its time. If this Bill is passed it is only going to cause a revolt among the people of this Region. I am only sorry that you have used my hon. Friend, Mr Affiah, to be the instrument of this obnoxious Bill. I support the amendment by the hon. E. O. Eyo.

**The Premier (Dr M. I. Okpara):** I was surprised that after the explanation of the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice this Bill should still not have a smooth passage. It is not really an entirely new Bill as the Minister has so ably pointed out. It is an old law which we have found cannot operate in the Region because of certain loose ends in the law and it is to tighten up those loose ends that this Bill is brought back to this



[THE PREMIER]

Legislature. In 1956 when my Friend, the Chief Whip of the Opposition, was with us and when my Friends the hon. Achara, Umoh and Akpan were on this side of the House with us, they voted for this Bill. They voted that chieftaincy matters should be taken out of the jurisdiction of the courts. This is all that this Bill seeks to do. What happened in 1946? Our noble leader Dr Azikiwe ably challenged the Deposition of Chiefs Law. In 1945, there was an amendment to the Appointment and Deposition of Chiefs Law but no mention was made here about the deposition of any Chiefs, and besides the country then was not self-governing and all these spurious Chiefs who are now rising up here and there did not rise up then. It is to stop people creating illegal Chiefs or illicit Chiefs. It is to stop this that this Bill is brought to this House.

I think what hon. Achara wanted to do was to stir up public feeling in favour of his argument by talking about the Appointment and Deposition of Chiefs Law of 1946, which Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe opposed. I want to leave this House in no doubt whatever that that is an entirely different Law and it has nothing whatsoever to do with this one. (*Opposition Members: Read the Law*). Laws of Nigeria, 1948 Cap. 12 page 202. It is very long. In 1956, as the Minister of Justice has said, we came to this very hon. House and passed a law excluding the Law Courts from having jurisdiction in chieftaincy matters. The very first Chief we recognised was questioned in the Court of Law and the Opposition won and vitiated the will of the Legislature. The case now is: Is this Legislature supreme in the Eastern Region or is any other extraneous body supreme? What is supreme? The Legislature or the Law Court? (*Government supporters: Legislature; Opposition Members: The Law Court.*) There is no doubt in the mind of anybody that this Legislature is supreme.

The purpose of the Bill is to tie up all the loose ends and the learned Minister of Justice has ably presented the Bill that will make this possible. The law we are really replacing was the Law that was presented by our leader here, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe but it was thwarted by clever Lawyers. Now we have another clever lawyer that makes this thwarting impossible.

We hope that when this Bill is passed those who are not recognised as Chiefs will go and find some other jobs to do. In view of this, Sir, that similar Bill passed through this House in 1956, I feel that criticisms levelled at it now are belated, if I may say so. The question of breaking the traditions of the people does not arise. Clearly, in clause 4 of the Bill there is provision there for an inquiry to be set up. If the Minister is satisfied that there is no trouble we recognise the chiefs. For example, if we want to recognise Chief Nnong Udo, and there is no trouble, we recognise him, even if he is an Action Group. That is precisely what we want to do. The Second-class Chiefs were not being elected or selected throughout the Eastern Region. Hon. Members will recall that even when the House of Chiefs met on the 8th January, there were many Action Group Chiefs there. Do they think we had not the power not to recognise them? We have the power but it is against the policy of the Government Party. We do not want to bring chieftaincy matters into the arena of politics. Let us leave the Chiefs alone.

As I said, Sir, in clause 3, it says:

“Where the Minister is of the opinion that no dispute exists as to the person entitled to be a chief or to be appointed a chief, he shall advise the Governor in Council accordingly.”

When there is no dispute, we recognise and that is how we had those Action Group Chiefs here, otherwise they would not have come here at all. No dispute, we recognise you; but where there is a dispute, then Clause 4 applies:

“Where the Minister is of the opinion that a dispute exists as to the person entitled to be a chief or to be appointed a chief, he may make such inquiry as he thinks fit”;

and it is on the basis of the inquiry that the Governor in Council is advised and the Governor in Council makes his decision at his discretion. I do not see anything here that is undemocratic or that violates the customs and traditions of the people. Government does not proceed to recognise any Tom, Dick and Harry; Government only recognises the Chief who has been selected by his people. That



is all we have done so far and that is what we intend to do. And we are determined to make sure that politicians do not dabble in chieftaincy problems. Is it not strange that since 1956, as the hon. Attorney-General said, a law passed by this legislature has been completely vitiated by clever political lawyers until it is meaningless. We know that after this Bill has been passed the problem will end.

Look at the present unsatisfactory state of affairs: Government recognises a Chief after due inquiry; then the Opposition sets up its own Chief and says: "the other man is Government Chief; this one is Opposition Chief". Which Government in the world will accept this most intolerable position. In several places in the Region we have mushroom Chiefs vying with the accredited and recognised Chiefs by the Government. I am afraid that any Government that fails to take the sort of action we are taking today is not worthy of its name.

My hon. Friend the Chief Whip of the Opposition is fond of quoting the Minorities Report. May I draw his attention to page 24 paragraph 44. May I, Sir, with your permission read it:

"... The ultimate sanction for the office of Chief must, we agree, rest with the Government; no sovereign power could tolerate local potentates who were irremovable and irresponsible..."

That was the Report of the Commission which you set up. In other words, even that Commission says that we should have the right, after due inquiry, to recognise or to remove.

There is no Government in the world that does not have the sort of power we are seeking in this Bill. Mention was made of the Oguta chieftaincy dispute, that of Arondizuogu and the ones of Kalabari and Nembe. We are thinking of the whole Region as one and we do not want chieftaincy disputes to waste our time and energy. Those who are recognised as Chiefs should act as Chiefs and those who are not recognised as Chiefs should go back to their trades. If they are traders, let them go back and trade; if they are fishermen, let them go back and fish. Let them leave off going about to masquerading as recognised Chiefs. We are not going to tolerate that.

I would like to wind up, Sir, by calling the attention of the Opposition to what has

happened in parts of Calabar Province. If you will remember, Sir, they have admitted here today that they have set up all sorts of Chiefs in their area. I would advise the Opposition that those Chiefs who are not recognised by Government should, in their own interest, step down, and give chance to the constituted authority of the clan or village to exercise his authority without molestation. I would also like to draw your attention, Sir, to the fact that the Opposition, quite a number of them, have threatened not only the Region but this hon. House that if the Chiefs they appointed are not recognised, there would be trouble. I think the Police will take note of that. The trouble will be between the Opposition—the trouble-makers, and the Police as soon as this Bill is passed into law.

Finally, it is very strange that the Opposition, made up mainly of Action Group members have the effrontery to criticise this Bill that is better in many respects than the very Bill they passed in the Western Region. Why have they not got the guts to criticise their colleagues of the West. In the Western Region, you cannot even criticise any appointment. If you criticise, you go to jail. When we were touring the West, we criticised their Law and they sent a most insulting letter to us.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** And what happened?

**The Premier:** We continued to criticise it. I criticised it throughout the whole of the Western Region. I want to wind up by saying that in a simple Bill like this I do not see why there should be much controversy. What we want is a peaceful Region. If a clan can recognise a Chief and the Government says: do not play politics with this recognition, what is wrong with that? This is precisely what we have done in Oguta, Arondizuogu, Nembe and Kalabari. It is a pity that Chief Amachree has just died. The very people who opposed him went and swore an affidavit in 1943 or 1944 that he was the Amanyanabo of Kalabari without opposing him at that time; because the Action Group started playing politics in Kalabari they said he was no longer the Amanyanabo. They then were asked to come and give further evidence on oath before an inquiry, and they all ran away. They did not want to do so because they could have been trapped!

Finally, I wish to wind up by asking hon. Members: Do you want chieftaincy problem to be decided out of courts? (*Several hon.*



[THE PREMIER]

*Members: Yes).* Then you should support this bill.

**The Minister of Local Government (Mr P. O. Nwoga):** I beg to move: That the Question be now put.

**Mr Speaker:** This appears to be a hotly debated Bill and if you grant me the indulgence, I think it is my duty to prevent this House from giving the public the impression that it is your desire specifically or otherwise to muzzle the minds of Members. Although under Standing Order 35 (1) a Member can move closure, it still grants the Speaker the right which reads:

“... unless it shall appear to the Chair that such motion is an abuse of the rules of the House or an infringement of the rights of a minority...”

That is the impression that I do not want you to give.

**Mr A. J. Ekpe (Opobo Division):** I think this Bill is a violation of the principles of Fundamental Human Right and the principles it violates are freedom of expression, freedom to criticise the appointment of a Chief, or to ask that a Chief who is not popular with his people should be removed. Therefore, my submission is that this Bill is trying to trample underfoot the very thing which we are fighting for—freedom of expression. This Bill intends completely to sweep away the tradition of freedom to make and unmake Chiefs of popular choice. My point is that this Bill is trying to introduce the type of legislation common in the days of Colonial administration. The Commissioner for Ogoja has mentioned the case in Uganda. If you look at Clauses 9, 10 and 11 of the Bill you will find that it is analogous to the type of legislation one finds in the Indian Penal Code. It even means that if you call a man a Chief, or pose to do so, who is not recognised by the Government, you will go in for six months. I think the first person who stands any danger of being penalised under this Law is Chief Eronini and others because I always see them in feathers. (*Laughter*). It is characteristic. You remember, that most of the Chiefs who come to the House of Chiefs are seen wearing feathers and anybody who wears a feather contravenes the Law, because he is using a Chief's regalia. I do not know

whether the Attorney-General is taking note of this.

“After the Governor in Council has recognised a person as a chief, a person who—

(a) holds himself out as, or

(b) carries out the functions of,

a chief in the stead of the person so recognised, is guilty of an offence: Penalty, imprisonment for six months or a fine of one hundred pounds.

“11. A person who, in a manner likely to cause a breach of the peace, wrongfully—

(a) uses,

(b) occupies, or

(c) appropriates,

real or personal property attaching to a chief recognised as such by the Governor in Council is guilty of an offence: Penalty, imprisonment for six months or a fine of one hundred pounds.”

That is significant; the Attorney-General is a lawyer and we know what that means. In my own layman's view, I think a person who uses a feather or a cap worn by a Chief, even if that man is a wanderer, on any ceremonial occasion, is guilty of an offence punishable under this Law. I would like the Attorney-General to give us his explanation what exactly he means by this Law. It is characteristic of the Attorney-General every time he enacts a Law of this kind to put in certain loopholes.

Is it not a fact that recently an Interpretation Ordinance had been amended so that the Governor is now interpreted to mean “Executive Council”?

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** That is what it means. We do not quibble.

**Mr Ekpe:** The Executive Council is now going to use its discretion to appoint Chiefs. So, when we see “Governor in Council” we know that is the Executive Council. Why do you put the Governor in the forefront? The thing is that the Executive Council is an interested party in any chieftaincy dispute. I know the instance of the Ngo clan in Opobo Division.



**Mr Speaker:** I would not like it to be mentioned that the Executive Council is an interested party in any chieftaincy dispute. Rather, that contravenes Standing Order 30 (7) . . . You are imputing improper motives to the Members of the House.

**Mr Ekpe:** What exactly I mean is that the Government Party puts up someone, to be a Chief in any Division, who is not popularly acclaimed by his people.

For example, if a man is to be recognised as a Chief by the Governor, the Governor takes dictation from the Executive Council for the purposes of the Bill. That is where I feel that the Treasury Bench is directly or indirectly interested in the recognition of any particular Chief. If he happens to hold a divergent view from the politics of the Government Party he cannot be recognised. That is exactly what I mean.

Another point is that there is a particular case in Ngo clan in Opobo Division, a clan made up of 14,000 people. From time immemorial the Ngeri Family had been the Clan Heads, but simply because the Ngo town people happen to hold a different political opinion from that of the Government party, the Administrative Officer in charge of the Division had to invite someone from somewhere else to the meeting of the Clan Heads to take the place of Chief Ngeri. It happened that Chief Ngeri consulted a lawyer who addressed a letter to the Administrative Officer, but up till now no reply has been received. Now, this Bill has come, and it is going to strengthen the hands of the Administrative Officer. Chief Ngeri has the support of his people but they cannot query the wrong recognition. Therefore, this Bill is very, very obnoxious and it is not deserving of a Socialist Government. It should be rejected and I want to support the amendment that this Bill be read in six months hence.

Also this Bill is full of bad faith and introduces the type of legislation which we are all fighting against. It completely sweeps away the tradition of making and unmaking popular Chiefs who are their people's choice. Besides this Bill intends to illegalise legality. We have been told that Government legalises illegality, but have never heard that Government illegalises legality. This is a new one and it is the first time I have heard that. I feel

that this Bill is full of bad faith especially where it says that . . . "chieftaincy disputes are not to be entertained by the courts, even by way of the orders which have replaced the prerogative writs of *certiorari*, *mandamus*, prohibition and *quo warranto*." Is it in consonance with democratic rights in any civilised country? In a Federal Constitution the Supreme Court has the right in determining chieftaincy disputes. That is a fact. It is only in the unitary system of government that you have Parliament to be supreme.

The court can set aside any enactment of the Legislature and this Bill is against the principle of Fundamental Human Rights which is embodied in the Constitution and therefore the question of the dispute arising from two contending parties to become chiefs should certainly be referred to the court of law. The court should be the final arbiter in a matter like this and that is why I interpret an element of bad faith in the concept of this Bill.

The Bill is also discriminatory. It will make it impossible for a person who enjoys the confidence of his people but who happens to hold a divergent view from that of the Government party to be a Chief or to be recognised as a Chief. It will also be impossible to query the recognition of a wrong person as a Chief. That is why we feel very strongly that in order that Government should escape blame it should leave this matter subject to a court decision wherever there is a dispute. I support the amendment and we wish to press this matter both inside and outside this House.

**Mr S. T. Akpan (Eket Division):** I have one or two points to make in supporting the amendment. The Bill to my mind is sacrilegious. The Bill is meant to recognise Chiefs but at the same time the Bill delegates an unlimited power to the Minister to determine a dispute which cannot be challenged in a court of law. The Premier referred to the amended law on the appointment and deposition of Chiefs No. 20 of 1945. That was the law that we opposed at that time, although it was a better law than this one which the N.C.N.C. Socialist Government is introducing in this Region. My point is this. I want to compare two provisions, one in the old law and the other in the new Bill. May I quote.



[MR AKPAN]

“Upon the death, resignation, or deposition of any Chief or any old Chief the Governor may approve as a successor of such Chief or old Chief as the case may be any person appointed in that behalf by those entitled by Native Law and Custom”.

My point is “by native law and custom”

“So as to appoint in accordance with that native law and custom and if no appointment is made before the expiration of such interval as is usual under the native law and custom the Governor may himself appoint such a person as he may deem fit and proper to carry out such duties incidental to his big office as it may be necessary to perform”.

That was the first provision in the old law which we protested against. But in the new Bill no provision is made for the recognition of the existence of native law and custom. If anything at all is mentioned about the will of the people it is haphazardly mentioned. Due respect is not paid to the native law and custom in the new Bill. I will go further, Mr Speaker, Section 2 reads:

“In the case of a dispute the Governor after due inquiry and consultation with the persons concerned in the selection shall be the sole Judge as to whether any appointment of a chief has been made in accordance with native law and custom.”

No such provision is made here in the new Bill and yet that was the law that we opposed and called obnoxious. All that is said in the new Bill is that if the Minister is of the opinion that a dispute exists as to the person entitled to be appointed a Chief he may make such inquiry as he thinks fit. That is an unlimited power. There is no respect to the custom of the people.

In my area this Bill cuts across our own custom. It is true this Bill is quite nice in the eyes of the people who have never had traditional Chieftaincies but it is unfortunate that we should find ourselves in a weaker position than they are. For these people, the Government can create any persons as Chiefs for them but

not for us. Nothing is written into this Bill so that native law and custom of the people will be respected and strictly followed before the Minister ultimately comes in and this is very unsatisfactory, because what happens at the moment is for some people to put themselves up as Chiefs and to try to enlist the support of those who are in their own political party.

In my area, it is a tradition that a Chief does not make himself. When he is about to be made a Chief he even runs away. But now people project themselves forward to be made Chiefs and the Government comes to recognise such people. So that if I may bring up an example to you, in my own Division, there are some Clan Heads who had already been Clan Heads for some time now and they are not at all to be recognised as Second-class Chiefs. But of late, for political reasons, there is a section of a clan in my Division where some few N.C.N.C. leaders in that particular section happened to lead a faction which never was the case since time immemorial. What happened then was that they forced their way through at the time of the appointment of Second-class Chiefs and a young man who never was a Chief and never aspired to in the past in strict . . .

**The Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies):** I rise on point of explanation. The splitting of any Clan in Eket Division into two was not of the making of the Government of the Eastern Region. All that Government had to do was to approve the list of Clans submitted by the Eket people themselves to the Government. It would therefore be unfair to accuse the N.C.N.C. Government for having been responsible for the splitting of any Clan in Eket Division.

**Mr Akpan:** You are 100 per cent correct. I am telling the Speaker that Oniong is one Clan which a group of N.C.N.C. political leaders split into two. Then a man projected himself as Clan Head of the new section and what happened, he was supported and automatically became a Second-class Chief. You are quite right because the names were submitted to you. But I am saying how this kind of thing is splitting our own society. You will be surprised to hear that the case has gone to court.



**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr D. A. Nnaji):** Point of Order. Standing Order 40 (1).

“Mr Speaker or the Chairman, after having called the attention of the House, or of the Committee, to the conduct of a Member, who persists in irrelevance, or tedious repetition either of his own arguments, or of the arguments used by other Members in debate, may direct him to discontinue his speech”.

He is using arguments used by others. He should be discontinued.

*Question put. House divided.*

*Ayes 12 Noes 59.*

**Division No. 2**

Mr S. O. Achara  
Mr J. A. Agba  
Mr S. T. Akpan  
Mr H. U. E. Edelduok  
Mr A. J. Ekpe

Mr C. A. Abangwu  
Mr O. U. Affiah  
Mr D. S. A. Agim  
Mr D. E. Akilo  
Mr H. U. Akpabio  
Mr I. U. Akpabio  
Mr D. O. Aligwekwe  
Mr P. U. Amaefunah  
Mr J. W. E. Anaba  
Mr R. O. Anoke  
Mr N. L. P. Apreala  
Mr M. C. Awgu  
Mr E. Chidolue  
Mr A. O. Chikwendu  
Mr E. A. Chime  
Rev. O. Efiang, C.B.E.  
Mr E. Emole  
Mr U. Enyi  
Mr E. U. Eronini  
Mr J. E. Eyo  
Mr J. O. Ihekwoaba  
Mr I. U. Imeh  
Dr S. E. Imoke  
Mr R. O. Iwuagwu

**Mr Speaker:** Will the hon. Member take note of this Standing Order.

**Mr Akpan:** I know that but, I am speaking for my people. The case is in court. Here is a traditionally installed Clan Head; who has been by-passed and an N.C.N.C. man has taken over. The case is now in court and when this law is passed the case is dead. That is an extraneous element in our society, so, for this reason and on behalf of my people, I am strongly opposed to this Bill and, therefore, I support the amendment.

*Ayes*

**2.15 p.m.**

Mr J. A. Etuhube  
Mr M. U. Etuk  
Mr E. O. Eyo  
Mr O. B. Nalelo  
Mr M. N. Yowika

*Tellers for the Ayes*

Mr A. G. Umoh:  
Chief I. I. Morphy.

*Noes*

Mr J. U. Nwodo  
Mr P. O. Nwoga  
Mr J. H. E. Nwuke  
Mr M. U. Obayi  
Dr A. N. Obonna  
Mr M. E. Ogon  
Mr C. A. Okafor  
Mr J. O. Okeh  
Mr G. E. Okeke  
Mr P. N. Okeke  
Mr O. Oketa  
Mr G. C. Okeya  
Mr G. I. Oko, M.B.E.  
Mr E. P. Okoya  
Dr M. I. Okpara  
Mr K. J. N. Okpokam  
Dr W. N. Onubogu  
Mr P. A. Onwe  
Mr N. O. Onwudiwe  
Mr M. N. Onwuma  
Chief A. N. Onyiuke  
Rev. M. D. Opara  
Mr E. W. Udonkim  
Chief R. O. Ukuta, M.B.E.



Eastern House of Assembly Debates

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[Recognition of Chiefs Bill: 2R]

5 APRIL 1960

[Adjournment]

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Noes—continued

Mr S. E. K. Iwueke  
Mr M. A. Idoko  
Mr D. A. Nnaji  
Mr D. O. Nnamani  
Mr V. A. Nwankwo  
Mr N. Nweze

Mr J. O. Umolu  
Mr P. O. Ururuka  
Mr L. O. Uzoigwe

Tellers for the Noes:

Mr K. Kiri  
Mr W. Abengowe.

*Under paragraph (3) of Standing Order 47, Mr Speaker forthwith declared the Bill to be read a Second time and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.*

Committee: *Tomorrow.*

(2) The 1960-61 Eastern Region Appropriation Bill—*Supply.*

*Deferred until Tomorrow.*

(3) The Native Courts (Interim Provisions) Bill—Second Reading.

*Deferred until Tomorrow.*

(4) The High Court (Amendment) Bill—Second Reading.

*Deferred until Tomorrow.*

(5) The Magistrates Courts (Amendment) Bill—Second Reading.

*Deferred until Tomorrow.*

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved: That this House do now adjourn. (*The Minister of Finance, Dr S. E. Imoke*).

*Adjourned accordingly at twenty-five minutes past two o'clock p.m.*



EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 6th April, 1960

The House met at Ten o'clock a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(1) The Recognition of Chiefs Bill

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee)

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2.

**Mr E. O. Eyo** (Uyo Division): I rise to move the amendment standing in my name: "To add the following definition: 'Chief' means any member of a tribe or clan or local community whose authority and control in that behalf is recognised by such tribe or clan or local community".

Yesterday, when the hon. Attorney-General was replying to the point I made he tried to draw attention to the fact that a Chief is defined in our Constitutional Order in Council. But, Sir, may I make this point, that all that the Order in Council says is that for the purposes of this section "Chief" means any person who is for the time being recognised as a Chief under the Recognition of Chiefs Law, 1956, as from time to time amended or any Law repealing that Law.

The point is that the Order in Council merely gives effect to the 1956 Law which sets out clearly the definition of the word "Chief". And here I would ask the hon. Attorney-General to consider very carefully the advisability of retaining that definition. Furthermore, I would like to draw his attention to the Classification of Chiefs Law, 1959 where Government also attempted to define the word "Chief".

Section 2 of the Law says: "Chief means any person who is for the time being recognised by

the Governor in Council according to the Recognition of Chiefs Law, 1956 as amended from time to time.

In other words, all along, Government has accepted this definition of Chief as set out under the Recognition of Chiefs Law, 1956. It will be a great pity if any attempt to repeal the 1956 Law does not define who a Chief is. The Bill does not provide for this definition, namely: before you can hold out yourself to be a Chief you must either be a member of the tribe or clan or local community whose authority and control in that behalf is recognised by such tribe or clan or local community. Unless we provide for that definition in Law, what is there to stop anybody (take for example the office of the Obong of Calabar) what is there to stop anybody in Calabar contesting or holding himself out to fill the office of Obong? Anybody from any part of the Region resident in Calabar can conveniently contest the post of Obong of Calabar. But if this definition is retained this man will certainly realise that unless he is an Efik, he cannot ever hope to be the Obong of Calabar. I feel we must retain the definition especially in urban areas where we have the stranger element and do not forget that the first regulations which we objected to provided for Chiefs to be elected in the urban areas. In Calabar, we have twenty-five wards, and Government in the first instance, suggested that Chiefs should be elected through the ballot box to represent the wards. Now, if we did not fight against that Government would have been able to put that through, thereby enabling Ibo traders to become Chiefs in Calabar.

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** Standing Order 52. I am of the opinion that the mover of this Motion who has given notice for about 25 amendments is merely out to filibuster and waste the time of the House and when it is considered that the Leader of the Opposition and Government have agreed that this House should adjourn *sine die* before Easter I think I would appeal to you to use your discretion as to whether these amendments should be allowed or not.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** Wonderful Government, new N.C.N.C. Government!



**Mr Speaker:** Hon. Members, the quoted Standing Order says:

“In respect of any motion, or in respect of any Bill under consideration either in a committee of the Whole House or on report, Mr Speaker, or in a Committee the Chairman, shall have power to select the new clauses or amendments to be proposed, and may, if he thinks fit, call upon any Member who has given notice of an amendment to give such explanation of the object of the amendment as may enable him to form a judgment upon it”.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I took the trouble to get the Clerk of the House to cyclostyle copies of the amendments and every Member of the House is in possession of it. I think I am helping Government by bringing these amendments, but if I may go by the attitude of the Minister of Finance, it looks as if Government is not even prepared to give us the opportunity to challenge the clauses. After all, we are here to put across our views. If we are not allowed that privilege then we can as well pack up and go. (*Several hon. Members: Pack and go!*)

Mr Chairman, I was developing my argument to support the retention of the definition of the word “chief”, and unless we define by Law who a Chief is, Government is going to face a lot of trouble about this question of chieftaincy. And I thought when the Minister was moving the Second reading of the Bill yesterday, the whole purpose of bringing up a Law to give recognition to Chiefs is to enable Government to know whom the real chiefs are and then recognise them.

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Justice (Mr D. A. Nnaji):** Standing Order 30 (4)—

“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 E. O. Eyo:** Until somebody understands that he cannot be a Chief unless he is a member of a tribe or a clan or a local community, where his own authority and control in that behalf is recognised by that clan, tribe or

local community, it is not enough to say that a Chief is a person recognised by Governor in Council, under the Recognition of Chiefs Law. The Recognition of Chiefs Law should specifically define who a Chief is. Sir I beg to move.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice (Mr M. O. Ajegbo):** I beg to oppose the amendment as put up by the Chief Whip of the Opposition. We would have agreed to see to this if he had taken this step yesterday and criticised the Bill clause by clause rather than wasting the whole of yesterday. In fact, there would have been no objection to the amendment from my own point of view. The point is that he wasted the whole of yesterday and we cannot waste the whole of today again. I have given careful consideration to this amendment and I must say we cannot agree. The best idea, I think, is to transfer the definition of the Constitution Order to the new Law. If that will satisfy you, I am prepared to do that. In that case, I would define Chief to mean anybody who for the time being is recognised as a Chief under this Law and as from the time amended under the Regulations of the Chiefs Law. If you agree with that, we are quite prepared to do that.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** It is a pity all the Attorney-General said is that if I had not been somewhat stubborn yesterday, Government would have accepted this amendment. If I gave any impression of stubbornness yesterday, I am very sorry. Afterwards if we come here to make laws for the Eastern Region, the fact that if I happen to be stubborn should not weigh on the mind of the Minister.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** On point of correction, that is not what I said. The point is that if you had adopted this approach yesterday, we could have gone on much better and we would not have thought of the objection to the amendment. We are here to make laws but the whole yesterday, you were here trying to do a different thing. I am saying that this is not acceptable to us. We are quite prepared to meet you by defining a Chief as laid down in Constitution Orders. We do not accept what you have just proposed. He is there, as a person who is



recognised by Government as such. If you are satisfied with that we are quite prepared to go on.

**Mr A. J. Ekpe** (Opobo Division): I had thought that the learned Attorney-General was going to give the definition of Chief. As this Law stands at the moment, there is no definition of the word, "Chief".

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** A Chief is a person recognised by Government as such.

**Mr Ekpe:** That does not mean a Chief, as anybody can be recognised by Government; and even a school boy can be recognised as such and he becomes a Chief! What we are trying to do is to assist Government to point out this defect because I know that this is an oversight. There can be no law on the Recognition of Chiefs without defining who a Chief is. I thought the learned Attorney-

General was going to be generous enough to the Opposition for the first time to accept this amendment. Why is it that the amendment as suggested by the Chief Whip of the Opposition is being refused? I had thought you would give the reason why you do not want to accept the amendment.

According to this law, it has no definition. Lifting the provision of the Constitution Orders in Council does not do anything at all. In fact, the Order in Council does not define a Chief. It simply refers to the Recognition of Chiefs Law, 1956 and the Recognition of Chiefs Law, 1956 has defined who a Chief is. All we are trying to do is to request Government to lift the Recognition of Chiefs Law in the 1956 Law to the present one. It is a very simple matter. I think it was an oversight and so we are requesting the Attorney-General to reconsider the matter without any prejudice.

*Question put. Committee divided.*

*Ayes 11. Noes 59.*

**Division No. 3.**

*Ayes*

Mr S. O. Achara  
Mr J. A. Agba  
Mr H. U. E. Edelduok  
Mr A. J. Ekpe  
Mr J. A. Etuhube

**10.25 a.m.**

Mr M. U. Etuk  
Mr E. O. Eyo  
Mr O. B. Nalelo  
Mr M. N. Yowika

*Tellers for the Ayes*

Chief I. I. Morphy  
Mr S. T. Akpan

*Noes*

Mr C. A. Abangwu  
Mr O. U. Affiah  
Mr D. S. A. Agim  
Mr D. E. Akilo  
Mr H. U. Akpabio  
Mr I. U. Akpabio  
Mr D. O. Aligwekwe  
Mr P. U. Amaefunah  
Mr J. W. E. Anaba  
Mr R. O. Anoke  
Mr N. L. P. Apreala  
Mr M. C. Awgu  
Mr E. Chidolue  
Mr A. O. Chikwendu  
Rev. O. Efiang, C.B.E.  
Mr E. Emole

Mr N. Nweze  
Mr J. U. Nwodo  
Mr P. O. Nwoga  
Mr J. H. E. Nwuke  
Mr M. U. Obayi  
Dr A. N. Obonna  
Mr M. E. Ogon  
Mr C. A. Okafor  
Mr J. O. Okeh  
Mr G. E. Okeke  
Mr P. N. Okeke  
Mr G. C. Okeya  
Mr E. P. Okoya  
Dr M. I. Okpara  
Mr K. J. N. Okpokam  
Dr W. N. Onubogu



Noes—continued

Mr U. Enyi  
 Mr E. U. Eronini  
 Mr J. E. Eyo  
 Mr J. O. Ihekwoaba  
 Mr I. U. Imeh  
 Dr S. E. Imoke  
 Mr E. Ita  
 Mr J. M. Ito  
 Mr R. O. Iwuagwu  
 Mr S. E. K. Iwueke  
 Mr M. A. Idoko  
 Mr S. O. Masi  
 Mr D. A. Nnaji  
 Mr D. O. Nnamani

Mr P. A. Onwe  
 Mr N. O. Onwudiwe  
 Mr M. N. Onwuma  
 Mr V. K. Onyeri  
 Chief A. N. Onyiuke  
 Rev. M. D. Opara  
 Mr E. W. Udonkim  
 Chief R. O. Ukuta, M.B.E.  
 Mr J. O. Umolu  
 Mr P. O. Ururuka  
 Mr L. O. Uzoigwe

Tellers for the Noes

Mr K. Kiri  
 Mr W. Abengowe

Clause 2 agreed to.

Clause 3.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** The next amendment is just a matter of drafting. In Clause 3 (2) I beg to move to leave out the word "that" and to insert the word "such" in order to enable me to move the next amendment. So that the whole clause will read "After the receipt of such advice" as is mentioned in subsection 1. That is the purpose of this amendment. The subsection at the moment reads: "After the receipt of that advice" but we think it would have been better if it reads: "After the receipt of such advice" as is mentioned in subsection 1. I beg to move to leave out the word "that" in line 1 and to insert the word "such".

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice (Mr M. O. Ajegbo):** I do not see what difference it would make to insert the word "such" instead of "that" in the context. That can only refer to Clause 3, paragraph 1, and nothing else.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** If he is sure of what he has just said then we can leave it as it is.

**Mr Ajegbo:** I am quite sure.

**The Chairman:** Do you withdraw, Mr Eyo?

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** Yes, Sir, I withdraw that.

*Amendment by leave withdrawn.*

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** May I move an amendment to Clause 3 (2) line 1 to leave out the word "may" and insert the word "shall". This is what we regard as being very fundamental. If the Minister tenders advice to the Governor in Council that there is no dispute, why do we use the word "may"? ... The point is that it is in the interest of the locality to have a Chief recognised for them and our view is that when once the Minister tenders his advice to the Governor in Council, that it should be mandatory on the Governor in Council to recognise somebody in the area as a Chief. If we leave it as it is it may well lead to a situation in which the Minister tenders advice and for one reason or the other the Governor in Council may not be inclined to recognise anybody from that area. And so there will be chaos and so in some areas there will be no recognised Chiefs. Our view is that if there is no dispute and the Minister so advises the Executive Council, it is not the question of leaving it in the air; the Governor in Council should recognise the person entitled to be a Chief.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** We oppose the amendment. There may be circumstances where the Governor in Council may not agree with the Minister. So, if my hon. Friend agrees, we will leave it as it is. We should not make it obligatory on the Governor in Council to recognise.

*Question put and negatived.*



**Mr E. O. Eyo:** Well, I do not know what will be the Government's attitude here . . .

**Mr Ajegbo:** I think we are prepared to drop the words "in his discretion".

**Mr Eyo:** I beg to move in line 2 to leave out the words: "in his discretion".

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** May I move in line 2 to leave out the words: "a person" and to insert the words "the person so entitled". That is obvious in view of what the hon. Attorney-General has just said. The position is that, where the Minister has advised the Governor in Council that there is no dispute, in other words, there is only one claimant to the post of a Chief, there can be no question of the Governor in Council appointing a person. I think, Government, when it comes to make up its mind as to accord recognition, it will be to the person who is so entitled since there is no dispute. We do not know what it means to say: "recognise a person". I beg to move to leave out "a person" and to insert "the person so entitled".

**Mr Ajegbo:** Where there is no dispute, the Minister recommends to the Governor in Council a person. That person must be one of the members of the community and nobody else.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I do not agree; there is only one man holding himself out to be the Chief of the area; no dispute whatsoever.

The Bill as it stands says that in that case the Governor in Council may recognise a person. I understand that he may recognise a person so entitled to which there will be no criticism. He is the only one man.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** Clause 3 paragraph (2) says:

"After the receipt of that advice, the Governor in Council may in his discretion, recognise a person to be a chief."

We have only one particular person here. "a" should be left out and "the" inserted.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I agree.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Clause 3 as amended agreed to.*

*Clause 4.*

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I beg to move in Clause 4 (1) line 2 to leave out the word "may" and insert the word "shall". I hope the hon. Attorney-General will give consideration to this. The Minister is aware that there is a dispute and it is his duty to conduct an inquiry; we would like it to be mandatory to him to conduct this inquiry. There is a dispute on and this dispute must be gone into before Governor in Council can recognise a Chief for that area. We would have liked the law to compel the Minister to conduct the inquiry. What we are opposing is a situation in which the Minister may be so lazy as not to do anything about the dispute. Perhaps the main purpose of the Government is to try to reduce all disputes to the minimum. When once there is a dispute we want in the interest of the people concerned that the Minister should do something about it. We want to compel him by law to conduct the inquiry. We do not want to have the word "may" there. If it is there, he may or may not conduct the inquiry. Our view is to make it mandatory on the Minister to conduct this inquiry.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** Clause 4 paragraph 2 makes it mandatory on the Minister to make an inquiry. Paragraph 2 says after such inquiry as is mentioned in subsection (1) . . .

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** After the inquiry; that is if they have decided on one. You are proposing in that section that if there is a dispute the Minister may or may not. That is our own interpretation.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** That is not correct.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** If the hon. Attorney-General is serious to make it mandatory I think the proper word to use is "shall". He was saying that under subsection 2 that the intention there is to make it mandatory on the Minister. We cannot accept that. That may



[Mr E. O. Eyo]

mean that the Minister will use his discretion whether to conduct an inquiry or not. It is only after he has made up his mind to conduct an inquiry that subsection 2 applies. But what if he refuses to conduct the inquiry?

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** There are three stages in this Law. First of all a dispute is communicated to the Minister, then the Minister makes such an inquiry as he thinks fit. That is sub-paragraph 2. After making the inquiry he reports to the Governor in Council.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** Supposing he does not make the inquiry?

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** He will not report to the Governor in Council.

*Question put and negatived.*

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** Mr Chairman, I beg to move in line 2 Clause 4 (3) to leave out the words "in his discretion" in view of the previous amendments.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** I am afraid it is here that the Government has in mind that if there is a dispute the report goes to Governor in Council and it is decided on its merits. As a matter of fact certain facts are taken into consideration.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I think what the Minister has to do is to report the findings of the inquiry.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** Government is not bound to accept the report of the inquiry.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I was not suggesting that. But where you have a Minister reporting back to Executive Council and then we are told that the Executive Council is acting in its discretion, we do not just understand it. The Minister is one of the members of the Executive Council. Now all he does is to submit the report to the Executive Council and we cannot see what else it could be if a Minister submitted a report to the Executive Council. Executive

Council must take a decision. We are not saying that the Executive Council must accept the report. One of your Ministers submits a report, you either accept it or reject it.

*Question put and negatived.*

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** Mr Chairman, I beg to move under Clause 4 (3) line 2 to leave out the words "a person" and insert the words "one of the persons involved in such a dispute as mentioned in subsection 1". Our contention is that the recognition by the Executive Council must be in respect of one of those people contesting. We may have 2 or 3 people contesting. It may be the Minister is conducting an inquiry as I have mentioned before. Our view is that the recognition must be in respect of one of those people who were contesting.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** A situation may well arise where all the people who are involved in the dispute are not entitled to contest and one finds they are false claimants.

*Question put and negatived.*

*Clause 4 agreed to.*

*Clause 5.*

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I have no amendment to that clause but I want an explanation from the Attorney-General. In paragraph 5 (a) we have "required by local customary law". We do not understand what that means. At present our local customs have not been codified and I think we used to have "required in accordance with local laws and custom". I hope you will not come back to define what is meant by "local customary law". If I may draw attention to the old Laws of 1930 and 1948, the exact wording has been "in accordance with native laws and custom". I am referring to the 1948 Laws. Would it not be better if we adopted that the "Governor in Council may withdraw recognition from a Chief recognised under native laws, if the Governor in Council is of the opinion that that withdrawal of recognition is in accordance with native laws and custom", rather than say "as required by local customary law".



**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** We are giving the Law a trial.

*Clause 5 agreed to.*

*Clause 6.*

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I rise to move under Clause 6 (2) line 1 to leave out the words "but subject to subsection (3)". We are coming to contest very seriously the retention of subsection (3). May I say that we are not opposed to any legislation which would exclude from the Law Courts any interference with a decision of the Governor in Council with regard to recognition and withdrawal of recognition. We are prepared to concede that to the Government because we can not see any way out. But the Law as it stands drags in other matters and I want the hon. Attorney-General to direct his mind on this. I repeat that what we are in fact conceding is the question of the Governor in Council reserving to himself the right to grant recognition and to withdraw recognition without any interference from any quarters. We are not prepared to concede that a Chief who has been recognised cannot go to court. We do not want anybody to go to court in respect of any matter relating to the Governor in Council granting recognition or withdrawal of recognition, whether or not he has been recognised. Under the present circumstances it will be wrong to say that nobody should go to court on this issue but just because this man has been recognised by the Governor in Council and then what others have been precluded from doing, the Law allows him to do. All we are saying is that once we preclude anybody from going to court it should be everybody.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** In the 1956 Law which my hon. Friend the Chief Whip of the Opposition helped to pass, we have in section 6:

"Provided that any Chief who has been recognised under the provisions of this Law shall not be precluded from taking action in a court of competent jurisdiction for the

recovery or delivery of such property and related damages."

Government is at present building a house for the Oba of Lagos. Suppose the Oba dies and there is a dispute as to the Obaship and one of the contestants goes into the house and stays there and Government decides that "A" is the right claimant and not "B" who has taken possession of the house. Is he telling the House that "A" will just sit back and fold his arms and will not go to court to recover the lost property. The intention here is that if the house is meant for the Chief of the area or if a landed property is reserved for him and a false man goes into it, the Law will enable him to go to court in order to recover his property.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** If I may reply, I think the Government is trying to stop what the Attorney-General has just narrated to the House. Under clause 11 of the Bill, it states:

"A person who, in a manner likely to cause a breach of the peace, wrongfully—

- (a) uses,
- (b) occupies, or
- (c) appropriates,

real or personal property attaching to a Chief recognised as such by the Governor in Council is guilty of an offence: Penalty, imprisonment for six months or a fine of one hundred pounds."

Now, who is committing an offence? If he is being tried, why not provide it under this Bill? In the first instance, he must have committed an offence. Why not provide it under this Bill without asking this old man to go to court again.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** The offence goes to the Magistrate but we know that a Magistrate cannot interfere with matters of real property. He has not the jurisdiction. So we have got to draw that distinction.



[MR AJEGBO]

The trouble with them is that the only two lawyers they have, have disappeared and they cannot help him.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I do not think I need any lawyers to help me.

*Question put and negatived.*

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I rise to move to leave out in paragraph (a) line 1 all the words after the second "the" and insert the following words "recognition or withdrawal of recognition of a person as a Chief". We regard this as being very fundamental. May I repeat again that what the Bill seeks is to preclude from any court having jurisdiction to interfere with a decision of the Governor in Council with regard to the recognition or withdrawal of recognition of a person as a Chief. That is all that concerns the Government. But it drags in a number of other things and I quote:

"Accordingly, but subject to subsection (3), a court shall not have or continue to have jurisdiction whether that jurisdiction is original, appellate or by way of transfer, to entertain a civil cause or matter instituted for (a) the determination of a question, or issue, relating to the selection . . ."

May I submit that the Governor in Council under this Bill is not concerned with the selection of a person as a Chief. Setting aside of an appointment—the Governor in Council is not concerned with that. Installation—the Governor in Council is not concerned with that. Recognition—yes; withdrawal of recognition—yes. Deposition—no. In fact they are providing under this Bill that the Governor has the power to depose. All that we are saying is that the Governor in Council has the power to withdraw recognition but when they come to talk of deposition there is no Deposition of Chiefs Law in the Eastern Region. I thought the Premier made the point yesterday when he made it quite clear that he was not discussing legislation for deposition of Chiefs.

May I, while addressing you on the question of selection, draw your attention to the Regulations that have been made by Government.

I refer to the Regulations in connection with the selection of Second-class Chiefs. These Regulations have been implemented by Government. It is stated that to qualify for selection as a Second-class Chief the person to be selected must be a member of that clan.

Regulation 4 provides that where there are village heads or other generally accepted Chiefs the Administrative Officer may on his discretion invite them to identify or select the Second-class Chiefs. What if the Administrative Officer fails to do this? What if the Administrative Officer ignores this Regulation and instead sends out a private invitation to local councillors or district councillors without any reference to the Chiefs and without even letting the public know that they are called upon to select Second-class Chiefs? Is the Government serious over the suggestion that in any such event nobody at the local level has the right to challenge that act of the Administrative Officer? It has nothing to do with the decision of the Governor in Council because it is still at the local level. I want to appeal to the Attorney-General to consider this aspect because it is a very serious issue. Where one of the contestants feels that he has been cheated in the process of selection I think it will be most unfair to provide a law which states that he has no remedy. We are saying that we agree with the Government that once the Governor in Council has recognised a person to be a Chief or when once the Governor in Council has withdrawn that recognition that the specific act of the Governor in Council cannot be questioned in a court of law. But that is a different thing from saying that if at the local level everything is done haphazardly that those who are interested in the issue should be prevented from having recourse to the law. That is my point.

I now deal with the appointment—I do not really know what is meant by appointment—I think what is meant is that when a Chief has been recognised and the Minister appoints him, say, President or Traditional Member, or a District or Local Councillor it has nothing to do with the aspect we are considering. Surely the Minister has not the power to



appoint somebody a Chief. The question of appointment—why not make it clear? There is no provision for appointment as First-class Chiefs under the Recognition of Chiefs Law. And may I draw the attention of the Premier to that. (*The Premier: I am not interested*). I do not see why the Premier should not be interested since the Governor in Council has the right to appoint these First-class Chiefs. Any act of the Governor in Council in respect of this chieftaincy matter should not be questioned. And, of course, if it is a question of appointment nobody will have the right to interfere.

And now to installation. What has the Governor in Council got to do with installation, or the Minister for that matter? If a group of people got together and decided to instal somebody in the local area, and the man is not a Chief, is the Government suggesting that those people who are interested in the matter cannot go even before the Native Court and then file an action in Court seeking the Court to restrain these people from their act?

Deposition. Of course, there is no such thing as deposition. All that the amendment seeks to do is that all acts done by the Governor in Council in respect of recognition or even appointment and withdrawal of recognition should not be questioned. We should leave out the question of selection, installation, suspension and abdication.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** The first point I want to make is that this paragraph is in the 1930 Chieftaincy Dispute [Preclusion of Courts] Ordinance, and it is amazing that from 1930 to 1960 my hon. Friend has not seen anything wrong with it. In 1956, the same words appeared, and incidentally, he was one of the people who passed the Law—he was the Government Chief Whip. He saw nothing wrong with it then. To refresh his memory, recognition is a final act, and we do not want any Judge to enquire into acts leading to the recognition. Everything incidental to recognition must be taken away. That is the whole purpose of the Law, and drawing our attention to the regulation for the appointment of Second-class Chiefs is just drawing a red herring over the trail. The point is that this House wants

chieftaincy disputes, of whatever nature, to be removed from the Court, so that we may have time to do something else. We do not want to allow the Court to enquire into installation, into appointment, and then deprive the Governor in Council the power of recognition. Recognition is a final act. We want to make it quite clear, beyond any shadow of doubt, that the Court shall have no power to enquire into chieftaincy disputes.

**Mr A. J. Ekpe (Opobo Division):** I really do not follow the Attorney-General. I think the fundamental point in the whole discussion is that Government recognition should not be queried in any Court of law. We have accepted that. Withdrawal also should not be queried. That is accepted. But at the local level, when a person comes up from the village head to be a clan head, that is where Government shuts the door, and that is where the whole of our argument stems from. We are saying that if there are people who are quarrelling for a position as a clan head, ever before Government recognises the clan head, these people should be left in a position to handle the thing themselves so that they finally arrive at a decision. Afterwards, the wrong person can claim to be a clan head and recognised by the Government. The Government will be causing more trouble in that area. Besides, closing the door of the court to a man like this is, as I said yesterday, an offence against fundamental human rights. Also, it is an offence against the rule of law, because this is directing people to commit a breach of the law. When you close the door of the court against contestants in a dispute like this, you are urging people to go underground and use some other means of violence in order to achieve their end. I know that is not the aim of the Government, but certainly by introducing this Bill they are indirectly going to it.

Mr Eyo made a very interesting point indeed, and I had thought that the Attorney-General was going to redraft the Bill, so that deposition should not come in at all. There is no question of deposition at all in the Eastern Region. None of our laws says anything about deposition. And then the question of abdication. How does that come



[MR EKPE]

about? How does abdication of Chiefs concern the Government. What Government knows is recognition and withdrawal of recognition. Why should Government bother itself with abdication and all the rest of it? I am requesting the Attorney-General to advise the Premier and the Treasury Bench for a short adjournment so that they could give a deeper thought to this amendment.

**The Chairman:** I think I have the power under Standing Orders to reject any claim for a Division which I think is unnecessary, but if you think you have a strong point, I do not mind; I think you may press for a Division.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** We do not intend to obstruct Government business at all, but I

think it is only a parliamentary process. We of the Opposition feel very, very strongly on the matter.

**The Minister of Finance:** The Opposition felt very strongly on this very point yesterday and we had a Division on it. So I think it is a waste of the time of the House to press for a Division.

**Mr Ekpe:** This is the Committee stage and it is our place to make necessary amendments. In fact, we could completely change the face of the Bill, no matter what we said when we were discussing the principle of the Bill. So I do not see the point of the Leader of the House.

*Question put. Committee divided.*

*Ayes 11. Noes 59.*

**Division No. 4.**

*Ayes*

Mr S. O. Achara  
Mr J. A. Agba  
Mr H. U. E. Edelduok  
Mr A. J. Ekpe  
Mr J. A. Etuhube  
Mr M. U. Etuk

*Noes*

Mr C. A. Abangwu  
Mr O. U. Affiah  
Mr D. S. A. Agim  
Mr D. E. Akilo  
Mr H. U. Akpabio  
Mr I. U. Akpabio  
Mr D. O. Aligwekwe  
Mr P. U. Amaefunah  
Mr J. W. E. Anaba  
Mr R. O. Anoke  
Mr N. L. P. Apreala  
Mr M. C. Awgu  
Mr E. Chidolue  
Mr A. O. Chikwendu  
Rev. O. Efiang, C.B.E.  
Mr E. Emole  
Mr U. Enyi  
Mr E. U. Eronini  
Mr J. E. Eyo  
Mr J. O. Ihekwoaba  
Mr I. U. Imeh  
Dr S. E. Imoke  
Mr E. Ita

**11.30 a.m.**

Mr E. O. Eyo  
Mr O. B. Nalelo  
Mr M. N. Yowika

*Tellers for the Ayes*

Mr A. G. Umoh  
Chief I. I. Morphy.

Mr V. A. Nwankwo  
Mr N. Nweze  
Mr J. U. Nwodo  
Mr P. O. Nwoga  
Mr J. H. E. Nwuke  
Dr A. N. Obonna  
Mr M. E. Ogon  
Mr C. A. Okafor  
Mr J. O. Okeh  
Mr G. E. Okeke  
Mr P. N. Okeke  
Mr G. C. Okeya  
Mr G. I. Oko, M.B.E.  
Mr E. P. Okoya  
Dr M. I. Okpara  
Dr W. N. Onubogu  
Mr P. A. Onwe  
Mr N. O. Onwudiwe  
Mr M. N. Onwuma  
Mr V. K. Onyeri  
Chief A. N. Onyiuke  
Rev. M. D. Opara  
Mr E. W. Udonkim



*Noes — continued*

Mr J. M. Ito  
 Mr R. O. Iwuagwu  
 Mr S. E. K. Iwueke  
 Mr M. A. Idoko  
 Mr S. O. Masi  
 Mr D. A. Nnaji  
 Mr D. O. Nnamani

Chief R. O. Ukuta, M.B.E.  
 Mr J. O. Umolu  
 Mr P. O. Ururuka  
 Mr L. O. Uzoigwe

*Tellers for the Noes*

Mr W. Abengowe  
 Mr K. J. N. Okpokam.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** Clause 6 (2) paragraph (b): I beg to move to leave out all the words after the word "the" and insert the following words "Governor in Council with regard to the recognition or withdrawal of recognition of a person as a Chief".

As far as we are concerned, it is only the Governor in Council who is empowered by law to take a decision with regard to the recognition and the withdrawal of the recognition of a Chief. And it is all very well for the Minister to say that he lifted this from the 1930 Act. Before he lifts a thing he must be very careful. I think the whole purpose of the Bill is to provide for the recognition of Chiefs. When we begin to say that a person cannot go to court to set aside the decision of a person who is not entitled by law to make such a decision, I cannot understand the argument. Who is this "other person"?

Has the Governor any power with regard to the selection of any person as a Chief? Has he any power with regard to the appointment of any person as a Chief? Has the Governor any power with regard to the installation of any person as a Chief? The Governor has no powers to take any such decisions. All that the Minister has to do, under the Classification of Chiefs Law, is to appoint persons as First-class Chiefs. The clauses of the Bill are very much opposed to the whole principle of the Bill. We want to know exactly why he is stopping people from going to Court. Can the Governor take a decision with regard to the selection of a person as a Chief? The answer is "No". If the Governor does take such a decision is it right to provide by law that somebody should not go to Court to challenge the decision? I hope the Attorney-General

will let us know exactly what we are providing for.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** Subsection (b): you will find that under the selection of Second-class Chiefs regulations the Governor can select a Chief for Port Harcourt on the recommendation of the Premier. So that the Governor has a hand in the question of appointment. And in subsection (c) you find that the District Officer can appoint or select. We do not want loopholes; that was why we inserted "the Governor or other person". "Other person" may be a District Officer. He can conduct selection; he can select under the Regulations. We are making a comprehensive Law. We say "a declaration to set aside the decision of the Governor". We have tried to tighten the ropes to make sure we do not have to go to Court again and find out that one word has been left out or so. If in the process of operating the Law we find that it works hardship or that part of it needs amendment, we shall amend. The Opposition should give us time to try the Law. This Bill was published a long time now; but Mr Eyo had not even the courtesy to give us notice of his amendments in good time to enable us to appreciate some of the things he said. We should pass the Bill and if there are some defects we shall certainly come back for amendment.

*Question put and negatived.*

*Clause 6 agreed to.*

*Clauses 7 and 8 agreed to.*

*Clause 9.*

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I beg to move to leave out in line six the word "six" and insert the word



“three”. We are making an appeal to the Government. It is not enough to indicate that in other parts of the world if you do this you will be hanged or you go to prison for life. We are concerned with “after the Governor in Council has recognised a person as a Chief, a person who—(a) installs or purports to install, or (b) allows himself to be installed as a Chief in the stead of the person so recognised, is guilty of an offence”. Are we saying that this man has done something for which he should be jailed? What we are asking Government is to reduce the penalty. I think the position is normally three months or £50 fine.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** This is maximum punishment. It might be necessary to remind my hon. Friend that in the West they have two years, so that we are very liberal here.

*Question put and negatived.*

*Clause 9 agreed to.*

*Clause 10 agreed to.*

*Clause 11.*

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I beg to move amendment in line 6 to leave out the words: “real or personal”. If I may draw the attention of the learned Attorney-General to the definition of “property” in Clause 2, “property” includes all regalia and other things, of whatever nature, attaching to a Chief by virtue of his chieftaincy. That point is very material from our own point of view. Where the clause goes to introduce the question of “real or personal” property which has not been defined, I think that the moment we say “property” it includes all regalia and other things of whatever nature. Otherwise we are providing for anybody who may occupy a real or personal property attaching to a Chieftaincy. This is not by virtue of his chieftaincy. I do not think the Government is right and we want to make sure that what we really mean is his property attaching to him by virtue of his chieftaincy.

**Mr Ajegbo:** We oppose that. When we talk of real property, we talk of land or fixtures, that is, things attaching to land. It may well

be that the Chief has a land or property attaching to chieftaincy.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** Are you saying that under this clause, when you talk of real or personal property attaching to a Chief, that that goes along with the definition under Clause 2 and that this is by virtue of his chieftaincy?

**Mr Ajegbo:** Oh yes. We are not concerned with the private property of the man. We are only concerned with property from land or personal property attachment to a Chief. That is if the community has say, a house built for a Chief—things pertaining to the chieftaincy. The man may have his own private property but we are not concerned with that. It is this property attaching to the chieftaincy that we are concerned with.

*Amendment by leave withdrawn.*

*Clause 11 agreed to.*

*Clause 12 agreed to.*

*Bill to be reported.*

(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)

*Bill reported with amendments: as amended read the Third time and passed.*

*Sitting suspended at 12.10 p.m.*

*Sitting resumed at 12.40 p.m.*

## (2) The 1960–61 Eastern Region Appropriation Bill

*Considered in the Committee of Supply  
(Progress 4th April).*

(SECOND ALLOTTED DAY)

(In the Committee)

### Head 424.—Judicial

*Question again proposed: That a sum not exceeding £132,610 for Head 424—Judicial—stand part of the Schedule.*



**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** I am glad to note that quite a number of hon. Members spoke on Head 424—Judicial. I want now to reply to some of the remarks which were made on it. I shall begin my remarks with the statement that Judicial is one of our non-Ministerial Departments. I would like to point out that it is not all the aspects of the Judicial that I control. For instance, the Chief Justice has his own staff—Magistrates and Judges—and I do not interfere their disposition. He knows the list of the people, where a particular Magistrate should be posted and whether a particular area needs one or more Magistrates at any time.

Hon. Eronini has asked that there should be a Judge at Owerri and he made one unfortunate remark that one Judge should be removed from Onitsha and posted to Owerri. This looks like robbing Peter to pay Paul. Onitsha is a big township and has a conjection of cases. However, I promise my hon. Friend that I shall discuss the matter with the Chief Justice and if he agrees, arrangements would be made to post a Judge to Owerri.

Hon. Ihekwoaba said that there should be a Magistrate at Orlu. I think he has made a good point there because when I was in practice, I really thought that Orlu should have a resident Magistrate. This is not entirely my responsibility, I can only make some suggestions to the Chief Justice and if he agrees then we shall have that carried out. Mr Agba spoke of the need of Ogoja Province to have a resident Magistrate, Mr Eyo, that Uyo should have one resident Magistrate, Mr Okeh wants one for Ahoada and Chief Morphy supported Mr Agba. I shall discuss this matter with the Chief Justice.

Hon. C. A. Abangwu made a request that there should be an increase in the number of Magistrates and he made a point that in some of our Courts, for instance in Nsukka, one finds that the 1958-59 cases are still not tried by the Courts. That may be so but here I must say that lawyers themselves must be more active in their work. I have been told that there are instances where cases are outstanding because when these cases were called the lawyers were not there. While we are trying to help by making increases in the number of

Magistrates, we shall also ask lawyers to be a little more vigilant. I will assure my hon. Friend, Mr Abangwu, that I will take this matter up with the Chief Justice and ensure that no cases will be left for more than one year.

I then come to Mr E. O. Eyo who wants a resident Magistrate for Uyo and Mr Nwankwo who wants one more Magistrate to be posted to Abakaliki. I will do my best to make representations to the Chief Justice to see whether he could post one more Magistrate to Abakaliki. I must say, however, that this is subject to the availability of funds.

In any case I agree with my learned Friend Mr Abangwu that the need for more magistrates is real and we shall see what we can do about it. We have a new Chief Justice but before he can recommend increases I think he will have to make a survey of the staff requirements.

Mr Abangwu suggested also that we should have special Magistrates to deal specially with appeals. I do not think the number of appeal cases at the moment justifies the creation of special courts for appeals. If such a situation were to arise, we should certainly deal with it.

Mr Agba complained that when a Judge of High Court went to Obudu he had no Court house to hold his session. We do not build Courts for prestige purposes. If the Judges do not go to Obudu every time there is no need building a Court there. As I said before these Courts are not built for prestige purposes.

**Mr Agba:** I was asking about Magistrates Court and not Court Judges.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** Mr Agba made a point that when a Judge of the High Court went to Obudu he had no court house to hold his session. I have not received any complaint from the Chief Justice to that effect.

Hon. Abengowe asked that a new High Court be built at Aba. The Chief Justice will go round and see what increases in Court buildings and staff are necessary and make his



[MR AJEGBO]  
recommendations to me and I shall look into them.

*Question put and agreed to.*

### Head 425—Eastern Regional Legislature

*Question proposed: That a sum not exceeding £169,650 for Head 425—Eastern Regional Legislature—stand part of the First Schedule.*

**Mr G. C. Okeya** (Owerri Division): My contention about this Head is that the posts of Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Government Chief Whip and the Leader of the Opposition and the Clerk of the Eastern House of Assembly should be shown as statutory in the Estimates. I say so because this is in accordance with what is obtaining in England. In the memorandum on the Draft Estimates page E 164, the reason given is that the Legislative Houses Law of 1959 does not make statutory provision for these posts. In view of these I still argue that the law under reference was made in 1959 and in that year these posts were shown as statutory in the Estimates. I humbly submit that an amendment be made in the Legislative Houses Law of 1959 so that these posts by provision may be statutory. I am making this recommendation so that the Government may consider its incorporation.

**Mr M. N. Onwuma** (Aba Division): May I take this opportunity to thank the staff of the Legislature from the top to the bottom for the time they have devoted to duty especially now that we have two Houses. They have done a lot of good work. The Reporters are reporting, as far as heckling can allow them, as accurately as possible. So they deserve the congratulations of this hon. House.

I see that the overtime for the Reporters is still as it has been in the past. I am now asking that it should not be like that forever. The overtime has been £50; now we have two Houses and I think it should be increased because the work has also increased.

Secondly, I think that anybody who is on a static salary for years and years is likely to be discouraged. Therefore, I would like to suggest to this hon. House that the Sergeant-at-Arms deserves more than £400 per annum.

I am not giving the exact figure, but I am just suggesting that he deserves more than £400 because of the excellent work he performs. The other time I had to raise a Point of Order, and the subject was with some other business of the House. But he was out somewhere checking somebody who was infringing the regulations of this House and he was not there at the time. In view of all that I have said any further increase in his salary should not be considered too much.

I will also ask the Government to kindly increase the amount allocated for Parliamentary Association, Hansard Society, etc., and I would like to ask Government to increase the number of parliamentarians who go abroad every year. Not only from the Treasury Bench, but also from the floor, including Commissioners, Parliamentary Secretaries, Front Benchers and Back Benchers as well as Members of the Opposition. This will thus help to improve our behaviour in this House and our contribution to the debates.

I do not move the amendment standing in my name.

*Amendment by leave withdrawn.*

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I wish to comment on a few items under this Head. First of all, you will observe that the Government has decided to increase the salaries of Members from £800 to £840. May I say that the usual practice is not for Government as such to decide on salary increases for Members. The usual practice is for the Committee of the House to meet and then make representation to the Government. I would not like the Government to think that it is being somewhat generous. If we come here to state any claims it will be very embarrassing to our Ministers. May I ask: As from what date will the Members be drawing this new salary of £840? I understand that Government is generously offering this because in the Western Region Members are earning £840. If that is the basis, is it not true that Members in the Western House earned this salary as from January 1952? Is it not likely that in the past Ministers have been providing more for themselves and for their Parliamentary Secretaries than for Members of this House? If it is because they suddenly realise that



Members of the Legislature in the Western Region are earning £840 a year and so they want to equate us with the Members of Western House, we are not going to say "thank you, Sir". We then have to discuss some other matters relating to this increase.

Is it true that last year the Government proposed this increase and had to drop it on the pretext that the Opposition walked out? (*Government Bench: Didn't you walk out?*) If we walked out what has happened since then? They refused to pay Members these increases last year on the pretext that we walked out. My view is that since Ministers who pretended to have let-go 10 per cent of their salaries claimed back this 10 per cent retrospective to a given date, will we be asking too much to say if we are going to have an increase at all, that our increase must be in relation to the date our Ministers recouped? After all we all contested election. We are not here to beg the Government for increases. We all contested elections but it is just so fortunate that some of our Friends happened to find themselves in the Government Bench. We do not envy them. If they think they are entitled to £3,000 a year because their counterparts in the West draw £3,000, then we floor Members will also put forward our claims. And we are saying that if there is any question of considering our increases that they should be retrospective to the last General Election in the Eastern Region. We are not asking for anything more than that.

I leave that and come to the question of consolidated transport allowance. Here again, we are not begging. The Government has accepted the proposition that in order to enable Members of the House to do their work effectively they are entitled to transport allowance of some sort. How they managed to arrive at the salary of £140 per annum I do not know. But is it not true that any Member of the House with a small car running around his constituency has to pay from £20 to £25 a month to foot his bill with the U.T.C. and some other firms? I am not talking about those who have got big cars, but those with small cars. And if the idea behind the question of paying consolidated allowance to Members is to enable them to keep their cars in running order, then we ask the Ministers

to tell us how they arrived at the figure of £140. Is it not true that our Ministers have a basic allowance of £55 a month? (*Government Bench: And so what?*) They give £660 for themselves and offer Members £140. Both should be related. A Minister takes an advance from the Treasury to buy a car, the same for Parliamentary Secretaries and for floor Members. Why is there some generous arrangement made to enable Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries to pay this advance within 2 years while floor Members are just left in the cold. I will give you the figures. A Minister spends £1,300 to purchase a car. Within two years he draws as basic allowance the sum of £1,320 and that conveniently repays his advance. Then he is free and he has his own car for nothing and continues to draw the basic. Now, floor Members of the House obtain £1,000 advance, some £1,200. For how many years will a Member of the House be drawing £140 in order to repay £1,200? What is the position of the Parliamentary Secretaries? They draw £46 a month as basic allowance; that is £552 per annum and within 2 years they are in a position to repay their advance. Are we asking too much when we suggest to the Government or our Ministers to consider those of us who are so unfortunate to become only floor Members?

I am asking Government to consider some sort of arrangement whereby floor Members of this House will be able to draw a consolidated transport allowance which will enable them to pay their car bills. After all, in Ghana Members of Parliament draw a house allowance of £20 a month. I am surprised that while the members of Government are helping themselves they should forget those of us on the floor of this House. A very modest estimate is that Members should be given at least £20 a month to enable them to pay their car bills.

Now I come to the position of the Government Chief Whip. I understand he is now on £1,680 per annum but not on full time job. It is surprising to hear that the post of the Government Chief Whip is not a full time job. As a matter of fact the Government Chief Whip is a Minister in a way. He has certain subjects assigned to him and in fact he is the connecting link between the Premier and the Government back benchers. It would be



[MR E. O. EYO]

unreasonable to appoint a Government Chief Whip who takes up a private job somewhere and there is no justification in paying him £1,680. In the interest of the Government party I would like the Government to consider first of all the salary of the Government Chief Whip. He is on a higher level than Parliamentary Secretaries and we must insist that Government should bring the Government Chief Whip to Enugu, house him here so that he will do the work for which he is paid.

Whilst thanking Government for deciding to help Members by paying 50 per cent of their hotel bills in Enugu, may I still say that we are entitled to a Flat in Enugu. In Lagos the Federal Government builds Flats for Members of the House of Representatives. It is all very well saying these Members can stay in hotels, we are going to pay. It is not so much the paying of hotel bills that matters as the fact that Members of the House must be housed in a place that will enable them to do their work efficiently. I do not think Members who happen to lodge in the Atlantic or Dayspring hotel really feel that they are in an environment which will enable them to do their work well. So we are putting forward a claim to have Flats built in Enugu for Members of the House. I know some people will begin to envy Members but then every five years there is an election into this House and everybody will then have an opportunity to be elected and consequently to enjoy and share in most of these things that we are asking for now. Government should therefore try to build Flats for Members of the House so that Members will have a place that will measure up to the dignity of Parliamentarians.

I support the suggestion made by Mr Onwuma that Government should afford Members of the House opportunities to travel. Anything Government can do in this regard will be very helpful. I understand there are some Members of the House who have not even visited all the Regions of Nigeria, let alone overseas countries. Government should make provisions to enable Members to travel outside the country. Government should also make some arrangements to send Members to other Regional Houses of this country in order to give them an opportunity of seeing for

themselves how debates are conducted. It is essential to allow floor Members of the House to go abroad at Government expense to see how debates are conducted in the House of Commons or in the Parliament of Northern Ireland. Maybe Australia will be expensive; but what of places like Ghana or Sierra Leone or India, Ceylon and other places. If Members are allowed to see Parliament at work in other countries I think it will help to raise the standard of debate in this House.

I hope the Minister of Finance and the Premier will come together today when the House rises and work out how much they are owing to Members of the House on the subject of £840, with effect from March, 1957. We should be grateful if this money would be made available to Members before the House adjourns *sine die*. We request Government also to consider the increase in transport allowances to Members.

**Mr V. K. Onyeri** (Port Harcourt Division): I think that anything worth doing at all is worth doing well. I cannot do myself the justice of the mind if I do not give out the figures in the new dispensation as proposed by the Government without having to expose the Members of this House to the outside world. If indeed it is the idea of the Government that they actually realise the sufferings of Members of this hon. House, then they should see to it that Members have their own entitlement. I do not grudge the Ministers, Commissioners and Parliamentary Secretaries. They are entitled to their own emoluments and other perquisites of their offices, but let me say that we, the floor Members of this hon. House are not coming here to increase our own salaries. The Ministers must know that many Members here suffered equally with them when they contested the elections. In fact let me refer to some of these figures. Previously, I was earning £800 per annum and I paid tax on that of about £37. Now with an increase of £40 proposed by the Government, about £3 6s 6d, we are being called upon to give back to the Government about 8s 4d every month as tax. In effect we, the floor Members of this hon. House are not paid anything but are being called upon to pay extra tax to the Treasury. I am appealing to the Government to have a second thought over these things. About a year ago both Members and Ministers



suffered, and they are expected to pay back their car advances within two years—Parliamentary Secretaries and Commissioners have to pay back within two years their car advances of about £1,500. Why should they not equate these car advances? It is not for me to tell them what they will do, but they know the salaries of Members. You will observe that it is half always—Ministers, £3,000; Parliamentary Secretaries, £1,500; then Members of the House, £800. Equate these figures. Ministers receive basic allowance of £55 every month; Parliamentary Secretaries, £42. Why is it that Members should not be paid about £23 every month? They want us to come to this House and expose ourselves as beggars of money. If I may say so, I will tell them that I am prepared to serve without even receiving any remuneration in this hon. House. We do not want to impress the people outside that we come here to parade ourselves as money mongers. Let them do justice to whom justice is due.

I have to pay my warm compliments and congratulations to the Speaker and Members of his staff for the able way they have risen to our demands in this hon. House—at times we had put them to certain embarrassments, but they have endured all these things. But we are asking you, Mr Speaker, to see to the points raised by hon. Members in this House. Particularly, I wish to comment on the Serjeant-at-Arms. I have been a Member of the Federal House, and I know that our Serjeant-at-Arms has the personality that can be presented anywhere in the world. I do not see the reason why this man should not be above £600 a year.

With these few remarks and observations, I support.

**Mr J. A. Agba (Ogoja Division):** I would like to say that all of us in this House contested election in order to be eligible as Members of this House, and to be Members of this House we are really entitled to some sort of remuneration. But I just want to say a few words in this matter. I would ask Members—in fact all previous speakers in this matter—not to give the impression to the outside world that what they earn from Government as ordinary floor Members of the House should be a sort of compensation for the election they contested.

If we are entitled to some remuneration—as we really are—then we should pursue the point and ask for it without mentioning election campaign. We know that the Ministers, the Commissioners and Parliamentary Secretaries did not have any special qualification in order to become what they are.

They did not pass special tests in order to become what they are, but having become what they are by virtue of what one hon. Member has said already—a stroke of fortune—they should be given their entitlement. But while getting their own entitlement they should have due regard also to others who are ordinary floor Members of the House. When I say ordinary floor Members I do not mean that these people do not possess ability or do not contribute to the debates of the House or have no plans to suggest to the Government with regard to what they should do, as those people who are Commissioners and Parliamentary Secretaries and Ministers. If you look at it from another point of view you may find in the long run that some of these so-called floor Members of the House are by far more capable, more intelligent and more far-seeing than those men who are Parliamentary Secretaries, Commissioners, much less to talk of the Ministers.

**The Minister of Finance:** On point of order. Standing Order 30 (5).

**Mr Chairman:** Standing Order 30 (5):

“It shall be out of order to use offensive and insulting language about Members of the House.”

**Mr Agba:** With due deference to your ruling, I think yesterday I called attention to that Standing Order and I really made it clear that the stipulation in that Order is “Members of the House” and not a group of persons.

We do not ask for these amenities because we contested election and I really want that point to be emphasised. We are the representatives of the people of the Eastern Region and we do not want to give any impression for any one moment that the amenities we get in the House, what we ask for to enable us to perform our functions as Members of the House and as servants of the Region, are by any means to compensate us for the elections or whatever



[MR AGBA]

expenses we might have incurred in our election campaigns.

That idea I would really like to drive out, otherwise I do not see any reason why a Minister should be on £3,000 a year as his salary, plus other amenities allotted to him as a Minister and an Executive Member of the Government of the Region: free house, everything else; needless naming all. As well as this, I would like to say that if you look down on this Head 425 under Ancillary Charges (Sub-head 2) you will find that the Government has put down here "Upkeep of Speaker's and Government Chief Whip's Houses and Grounds." Why I want to call your attention to this special item is that Government knows fully well, as the Chief Whip of the Opposition has said already, that the Government Chief Whip is not resident in Enugu, and as far as I know the Government has no intention of bringing him to live in Enugu. Why this provision for the upkeep of his house and ground? It boils down to what I said some time ago that while we are scrambling and making serious multiplicity of suggestions to the Government as to the ways by which we can bring revenue into the Region we must also bear in mind that it is one thing to have the money and it is another thing to use it with good discretion. "Upkeep of Government Chief Whip's House and Grounds"! Where is the Government Chief Whip's house? Are they thinking of keeping up his house at Ihiala? (*An hon. Member: Does he mean Government Chief Whip?*). Yes, I thank the man that has given me the correction. I mean the Government Chief Whip. He has a house, I think somewhere in Ihiala. Are they keeping up the house and the ground there? If they have another person here for whom they intend this money to be used it should be stated, otherwise I look upon the whole thing as a sort of fictitious business.

Another point I would like to present to you is this. While saying it I do not want to give the Government Bench the impression that the Speaker, who deserves the remark that I am going to make, is partial. I know that where there is a group of two or three together there is always a Judas—all sorts of misconceptions and the rest of it. I do not want to give

that impression. I must say that at this stage we have to come down to congratulate the Speaker, meantime the Chairman, on the good performances in conducting the debates of the House. My saying so is not an attempt to bribe the Speaker; I am saying what comes from my own heart.

In conclusion, I say that, with all candidness, I am not given to flattery and it is not my nature to go on praising a man, but the efficiency, the good performances of a man should be brought into notice, and I have said again and again that remunerations should be in conformity with the efficiency and the performances of a man. In saying so I am associating myself with the views already expressed concerning the Serjeant-at-Arms. I think he is an ornament to the House. He is a blessing to the House and he is a pride to the House of the Region. As such, he deserves every reward for his good performances. The salary so far given him is worth being reconsidered, and the Government will do well to convert the man's salary from this financial year to something reasonable, something in conformity with the performance of the man in the House.

**Mr K. J. N. Okpokam** (Ikom Division): I wish to place on record my gratitude to the Government for the first step they have taken to bring relief to the floor Members of the House. (*Interruptions*).

**The Commissioner for Ogoja Province** (**Mr M. E. Ogon**): Standing Order 30 (5). Will you offer the speaker some protection? The Member is irritated by the angry Members of the Opposition.

**The Chairman**: Mr Okpokam has my permission to speak and I think you had rather cheered him up than discourage him. (*Hear! Hear!*).

**Mr Okpokam**: What I was saying was to thank the Government on behalf of every Member present in this House for the very fine relief they have brought to all Members in respect of the cost of accommodation in Enugu while attending meetings of the House. It is certainly very true that we Members pay very heavy bills in hotels, especially during long meetings. What the Government has



done this year is really worthy of praise by everybody in this House; and I feel it is my duty to thank Government on their behalf. But, I feel that Government could still do something more than they have done already. It is true that we suffer a lot of inconveniences by perching here and there in Enugu township. There are very few hotels and there are more than eighty Members of the House. The hotels cannot accommodate every Member. So we have to stay with our friends and relatives in the town. This is really very great inconvenience, for respectable Members of Parliament as we are. Again, consider sanitary conditions in the town,—a lot of hustles and bustles in the town. Members have to prepare their speeches and read their papers before they come here to talk. I think that Flats for Members is the best solution. Members of this House should be accommodated in proper quarters). (*Interruptions: With their wives?*) Well, possibly with their wives! They can exchange views, and study their notes and so on, and really look responsible before people so that when they come down to town it will be really to visit friends. There are some things that men always would not want other classes of people to see. (*Interruption: give example*). Well, I do not know why Members of the House should be trying to force words into my mouth before I ever say what I mean to say. There may be Members of the House, who may like to eat garri in the morning. People think that he who is on a salary of £800 should eat something better. So you would like to eat in a private place. You would not like everybody to see what you eat or what you drink. (*Interruptions*). So this is one of the examples I can give.

Apart from this, I happened to have the opportunity of visiting Western Germany in 1953 and I had the honour there to visit West German Parliament. There, every two Members of Parliament have an office to themselves, and they have a clerk who attends to all their typing and all their services. So that if you want to make a speech you only draft it in pencil and the typist types it out for you. Shortly it is ready before you. We expect all these things to come into this country some time. I do not expect they will come all at once, but they should come gradually. So

I think time has come when we should begin to make plans. After all, it is only next October that we should be independent.

Members have expressed very strong opinion about the question of salary. I agree that it is good to pay a man very well but the only thing about Members of the House is that nobody fixes their salaries for them. Whatever salary they receive people say they have given themselves that salary. That is exactly what it is. If they are given £20 people say they have given themselves £20. If they earn £900 people say they have given themselves £900. That is the only point that makes Members sometimes shy to ask for something more for themselves. But all the same I had hoped that our Government would take account of the expenses they know the Members run and do something to encourage them. I do not know whether it will be out of place for Members to ask. Since Members of the House buy from the same market as civil servants and other persons, why not, when the Mbanefo Commission recommended increases ranging from 10 per cent to 15 per cent, on salaries, Government consider it wise for Members of the House to have this increase in pay too? (*Interruptions: It is for civil servants. You are not included*). It is only 15 per cent increase and I think our very wise Minister of Finance can still balance his Budget even if he pays that. It is a shameful thing when Members of the House ask for increases in pay for themselves.

**The Minister of Finance:** Point of Order. Standing Order 40 (1)—tedious repetition.

**Mr Okpokam:** I would not like Government to give deaf ears entirely to all what the Members of the House have asked for but at the same time, I would not like Government to run into bankruptcy.

**Mr A. G. Umoh (Enyong Division):** I just want to associate myself with the sentiments expressed by Mr Onwuma with regard to the staff of the Eastern House of Assembly. There was a time when it used to take about two to three years for us to get the *Hansard*—the Report of the Daily Proceedings—but today I



[MR UMOH]

have taken notice how quickly we get the *Hansard*—everyday without fail. I feel that this is due to the efficient work done by the staff of this House and I just wish to extend my congratulations through you to the staff.

I must say that while we are asking for certain amenities in this House, people who do not appreciate the position of the Members of the House might find it difficult to understand. At this juncture, I think it is necessary to ask who a Member of the House is that he should claim so much dignity. Certainly, if you talk of me as Umoh, I do not see the reason why I should want more recognition than any other person outside, but when you realise that I am speaking here on behalf of the two hundred thousand people of Enyong Division, there is every reason why they should make room for me before a Permanent Secretary or anybody else who is not a member of this House. The dignity of the Members of this House stems from the people they represent and it is very annoying for two thousand people of Enyong Division in me, to come to stay in the Catering Rest House only to be told there is no room because a civil servant is living in a chalet. Members experience much difficulties about lodgings in this town. I feel I should use this opportunity to say that Members of the House should be saved from as much difficulties about accommodation as possible. We did not experience this difficulty when the Clerk of the House was helping to do the booking. Now, I understand there is a bit of technicalities about booking with the Corporation. I do not want to point an accusing finger but I just want to say that it does appear as if we should do more than send a telegram to the Corporation when we want a place in the Catering Rest House or we will get any place. So, I would wish the Speaker of the House to ask the Clerk of the House to take up again the duty of booking accommodation for Members of this hon. House.

The next point I would like to mention is about the debate in this House. Very often we have spectators from other parts of the world in the galleries. I want to say that the behaviour of some of our Members seems to belittle the House. I would also like to say that some District Councillors behave better than many Members of this House. It will

help the dignity of this Parliament if Members will try to behave better than they do now.

I would like to end by associating myself with the statements made by other speakers calling for a little bit more help to Members of the House. Yes, a Member of the House is on £800 per annum—i.e., £66 13s 4d *per mensem*. If he has got two children, he pays £5 7s 6d as tax and that leaves him with about £62. If he has got a car advance of about £1,000, he pays back about £29 per month; then what is left for him is £33 approximately.

I would like our Ministers to appreciate that while nobody is jealous of their being Ministers, Commissioners or Parliamentary Secretaries, they do not qualify any more to be Ministers or Commissioners or Parliamentary Secretaries than the floor Members here.

**The Minister of Commerce (Mr J. U. Nwodo):** We raise very serious objection to this question of referring to Ministers' salaries and conditions of service in such way. We do not quarrel with Members in adducing arguments that they are justified to have their salaries and allowances increased. We have made it clear in this House that our offices are offices of the State. My office is not owned by me as an individual; anybody can be a Minister; but as we are sitting here as Ministers of State representing the whole of the Region just as Mr Umoh is justified in claiming to represent Enyong Division, there should be dignity, respect and decorum in addressing us as Ministers. The immunity of the House should not be used as an opportunity to abuse Ministers. This is no Local Government Council.

**The Chairman:** The Minister of Commerce was making an interruption and I think he is perfectly right in doing that. (*Mr Umoh rose*). Will you sit down until he has finished. This is a point of interruption. You will still have to continue.

**The Minister of Commerce:** Thank you. Mr Chairman, the point I was making is that if Members, in adducing reasons for the increase of their salaries and allowances continue with tedious repetition of equating them with conditions of service of Ministers, it does not befit this House nor promote their argument. We are Ministers of the Eastern Region.



It is the office which we occupy for the services we render to the people of the Eastern Region, just as Mr Umoh is a member for Enyong Division; but the argument that Mr "A" draws this and that allowance is untenable and it belittles this House... (*Interruptions*). I know my view might not be palatable to him. Another point is that the Ministers of the Eastern Region are not drawing anything more than their counterparts are drawing anywhere in the Federation. When they talk of the basic car allowance do they know that in the Western Region the Ministers are drawing £78 per month? (*Interruptions*).

**The Chairman:** I think I have sometimes remarked in this House that the office of a Minister is a very important one—an office of responsibility and dignity—and it seems to me that some hon. Members are rather a bit careless in their speeches with reference to Ministers. If you allow me, I would rather say that the office of Ministers is one which should be very highly respected. I would rather say that some Members are desecrating the office of Ministers. When you refer to Ministers you should remember that they are the most important people in the State and they ought to be people with some dignity and respect no matter what you may think of them individually. As people representing the State I would rather like Members to refer to them with some respect and dignity.

**Mr Umoh:** Mr Chairman, you have just seen an example of what I meant when I referred to the conduct of Members which detract from the dignity of this House. As far as I am concerned a Minister would be known more by his dignified behaviour than from...

**Several hon. Members:** We cannot have this.

**The Minister of Commerce:** If he were appointed a Minister I will respect him.

**Mr Umoh:** Mr Chairman, I do not intend to ignore your ruling. I was only trying to say... (*Interruptions*). I am not going to have this. I am not going to have scoldings from anybody here. I am entitled to make my speech in this House. What I mean is that they will be treated as Ministers and given due respect if they behave properly as Ministers should, but if they choose as Ministers, to

behave like school children they are not entitled to any respect in this House...

**The Chairman:** Hon. Members, I am so very sorry for this heavy tumult. I do hope you will not behave in that way anymore so as to make it possible for me to use my powers under the Standing Orders. It is not the way that hon. Members should speak in this House no matter how irritated you are. One quality of a statesman is the ability to be patient enough and never to be irritated at all. I shall take note of people who will speak in that way and they will have little chance of speaking in this House.

**The Premier (Dr M. I. Okpara):** May I now reply to some of the points made by some hon. Members. Hon. Eyo wants allowances of Members to be back-dated to 1957. I regret that this is not possible and would bring this hon. House to a lot of disrepute if it were carried out. As a matter of fact, the suggestion is impossible as they want salaries to be back-dated to three years. I do not expect any hon. Member to make such suggestion in this House. We put in the Estimates salary of £840 per Member following representations made by the Leader of the Opposition and the Government Chief Whip that it was the views of hon. Members that they should not be remunerated less than their counterparts in the Federation; for example Members of the Federal House get salaries of £840 per annum...

**Chief I. I. Morhpy (Ogoja Division):** Point of correction. The Leader of the Opposition delegated two of us, Mr Achara and myself, to meet the Government Chief Whip. We did not ask that we should be given £40 increase. What we asked was that our consolidated allowance should be increased by £100 and not that our salary should be increased.

**The Premier:** It is right to say that Members wanted this £40 to be paid as part of their consolidated allowance.

But after very careful consideration Government felt that it was far better to add to the £800 being paid to Members to bring their salaries to what obtains in other Legislatures of the Federation. The question of basic salary that is paid to Ministers, Commissioners, and Parliamentary Secretaries should not in



[THE PREMIER]

any way be compared with what is paid to hon. Members. After all Ministers, Commissioners and Parliamentary Secretaries are part and parcel of the Executive arm of the State. They are part and parcel of the Government of the country and their job is full time, whereas hon. Members are free to engage in many other walks of life. As a matter of fact, many of them here who are not Ministers or Commissioners, or Parliamentary Secretaries are teachers. Hon. Umoh, for instance, receives double salary, partly from this House and partly through the voluntary agency via the Ministry of Education. As a matter of fact, he has already received the 12½ per cent Mbanefo Award that is paid to voluntary agency teachers. (*Mr Umoh: I have not.*) That is also the case with other hon. Members.

I would like to end this question of allowances by saying that when the other Governments of the Federation begin to pay Members £2,000 per annum, we shall do the same here. If they begin to give them consolidated allowances of £500 per annum, we shall do precisely the same thing; but at the moment our hon. Members' conditions are no less favourable than those of their counterparts in all the other Governments of the Federation. I do not see why we should be the first, especially, after we have refused paying increases to super-scale officers and with very much support of the House. Why should we be the first to seek this back door increase?

I deprecate in the strongest terms the use of the words "helping themselves" as used by the hon. Chief Whip of the Opposition, that Ministers are helping themselves; Commissioners are helping themselves; Parliamentary Secretaries are helping themselves. There is no question of anybody helping himself. What is given them is what they are entitled to, and what are being given to Ministers, Commissioners and Parliamentary Secretaries or those who hold analogous posts in other parts of the Federation. To come and confuse the House by saying or insinuating that Ministers are helping themselves is really most unfortunate and I hope that is the last time we hear that here.

As I said, the East is no more guilty than the West or North or the Federation or any

other part of the world. There is no part of the world where Ministers are not paid, or where Parliamentary Secretaries are not paid, or where they are paid the same salaries as Members of the House. So Members should be a little bit reasonable in the statements they are making here. How can a floor Member who is perhaps a Licenced Buying Agent, a contractor or teacher, Doctor, or trader, expect to be paid the same salary as Ministers who are full-time public servants of the State. I hope these ridiculous statements will be abandoned from now on.

The Chief Whip of the Opposition went further to wonder why the Government Chief Whip is not a full-time servant of the State. May I remind him that when he was a Chief Whip of the Government here, he was not a full-time officer.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** I object to that. I was doing it full-time.

**The Premier:** He was at that time the Chairman of the E.R.D.C.; he did not resign and yet he regarded himself as full-time Chief Whip. As a matter of fact, he was also the Deputy Speaker, Government Chief Whip, Chairman of the E.R.D.C and a member of several other Boards. (*An hon. Member: He was getting £6,000 per annum.*) I do not think that anybody is arguing with the explanation of the Opposition Chief Whip that in many other parts of the Commonwealth, the Chief Whip is usually a full-time servant of the State, but in this Eastern Region at the present time he is a part-time servant of the Government.

Some hon. Members, the Government Whips and, I think, hon. E. O. Eyo, have expressed the wish that they would like some parliamentary Flats—we must change the name now, we cannot call them Legco. Flats, we must now call them either parliamentary Flats or something like that. I must say that we are now giving this very careful study, but in view of the fact that the E.R.D.C. is about to build a modern 100-bed Hotel in Enugu, we shall re-examine this question to know whether these Flats are necessary or whether hon. Members will take over the Catering Rest House when the E.R.D.C. Flats are completed. I can promise hon. Members that the matter is being given due consideration.



The Chief Whip of the Opposition also went to some length to wonder why Parliamentarians do not travel more. Well, as a matter of fact, they do. Many of us have made full use of the opportunity of going to Westminster or Canada or other parts of the Commonwealth under the auspices of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. But it has happened that when the Chief Whip of the Opposition was invited last year to go to Australia he refused to go.

**Mr E. O. Eyo:** Why should I go there during the elections?

**The Premier:** I now come to what Mr Agba said. I think really he was unfair to Ministers, Commissioners and Parliamentary Secretaries. We all cannot be equal. There is no equality in this world; somebody must be a little bit ahead of one. Naturally, we have some brilliant minds on the floor; we have also some excellent minds on the Government Bench. It just happens that some have to be Ministers and others have to be on the floor. Even if all the Members of the Opposition were part of the Government and we had one Party Government with one Party system in this House, we all could not possibly be Ministers, Commissioners and Parliamentary Secretaries. I hope that Members will from now on respect the Ministers, Commissioners and Parliamentary Secretaries because they are bearing really very heavy burden. Members only come here to criticise, talk about their constituencies, give us water, give us roads and then go away. Somebody has to bear the burden of implementing your demands.

I think you have already dealt with the point that Mr Umoh mentioned. I would only like to say that naturally a Minister's post is a very high one. It is the highest in the land and it is usually envied a lot. All cannot be Ministers, and I would only like to wind up by way of advising the Members of the Opposition that the first step of being a Minister is to be . . . (*Laughter*).

**Chief Morphy:** May I draw your attention to Standing Order 77 (11):

"When several such amendments are proposed to the same Head of Expenditure

they shall be called in the order in which they appear on the Order Paper and each amendment shall be disposed of before the next is called, and debate on each amendment shall be confined to the sub-head or item which is sought to be reduced."

**The Chairman:** Hon. Members, for the sake of peace, good Government and of this House, I am compelled to say that we should close. I shall now put the question. You will remember that you are Parliamentarians and that you are sportsmen. All should be done in good faith and in good humour.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*And it being 2.15 p.m. the Chairman interrupted the business and left the Chair to report Progress and ask leave to sit again.*

(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)

Committee report Progress. To sit again Tomorrow.

(3) The Native Courts (Interim Provisions) Bill—Second Reading:

*Deferred until Tomorrow.*

(4) The High Court (Amendment) Bill—Second Reading:

*Deferred until Tomorrow.*

(5) The Magistrates Courts (Amendment) Bill—Second Reading:

*Deferred until Tomorrow.*

## ADJOURNMENT

Resolved: That this House do now adjourn. (*The Minister of Finance, Dr S. E. Imoke*).

*Adjourned accordingly at twenty-five minutes past two o'clock p.m.*



EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 7th April, 1960

The House met at Ten o'clock a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Construction of Road—Ikom-Obubra

21. **Mr J. W. E. Anaba** asked the Minister of Works, when will the construction of the road from Ikom to Obubra which the Government promised the people of Ikom and Obubra some years ago commence.

**The Minister of Works:** I know of no promise made some years ago. However, this time a year ago Government decided that a road connecting Ikom and Obubra and eventually Calabar would open up a large fertile area of the Region for development. An Executive Engineer from my Ministry is presently engaged on the survey of this road.

**Mr Ekpe:** How soon will the survey be completed?

**The Minister of Works:** That will be done as soon as possible.

Tarring of Ediba-Obubra Road

22. **Mr J. W. E. Anaba** asked the Minister of Works, when will the tarring of the Ediba-Obubra road commence; is the Minister aware that as long as this road remains untarred, the evacuation of palm produce will be impeded.

**The Minister of Works:** The hon. Member will know that work on tarring this road commenced three years ago but was soon abandoned as contractors failed to do the work properly, partly because no survey or soil tests had been carried out. The road has now been surveyed and contract documents which incorporate higher specifications are being drawn up and it is hoped to invite tenders within a few weeks from firms capable of doing this work quickly and efficiently.

Electricity

23. **Mr S. N. Alo** asked the Minister of Works, when will the supply of electricity be extended to Ndiagu, Iyokwu and Kpirikpiri wards in Abakaliki Urban town in view of incessant requests by the people of those wards.

**The Minister of Works:** The question of electricity distribution to parts of a town already having a supply is a matter for the Electricity Corporation of Nigeria to whom I have accordingly referred it. In due course, a further communication will be addressed to the hon. Member in writing.

Water Supply

24. **Mr S. N. Alo** asked the Minister of Works, why the metered rates per 1,000 gallons of water in private non-domestic premises at Abakaliki cost one shilling more than in any other town in the Region.

**The Minister of Works:** Metered rates have been up to the present time fixed in relation to the actual cost of producing water at each individual Urban Water Supply Undertaking. To all intents and purposes, you require exactly the same number of staff to produce 40,000 gallons per day as 400,000 gallons per day. It will be seen, therefore, that the bigger the undertaking the cheaper the supply. Moreover, in a big undertaking, there are more rate-payers including industrial and commercial users, which tends to reduce the rates for the ordinary rate-payer.

However, Government has recently decided that as from 1st April, 1960 the rates will be standardised irrespective of locality. The hon. Member should refer to the Eastern Region Government Notice No. 32 of 1960.

**Mr Speaker:** Hon. Members, before we go into Committee I have a few remarks to make. I am sorry that the Leader of the Opposition and the Opposition Chief Whip are not here. I gave the matter serious thought last night, and after reading portions of the *Hansard* this morning, I have been distressed by what transpired here in Parliament yesterday. Like an old schoolmaster, it had been and still is, my principle to appeal to the child's good nature before imposing any



punishment upon him. The same thing applies, to some degree, to adults: otherwise you would harden a man instead of bettering him. Therefore, I would like to appeal to your moral senses before I invoke the numerous powers given me by Standing Orders. Standing Orders enjoin you to hear the Speaker in silence: so also commonsense, decency, good breed, courtesy, and education enjoin you to hear the Premier of the Region in calm and silence. After all, he is the Head of the State and he is the expository of Government policy, which afterwards is final. I want to make it quite clear that there should be no interruption when the Head of the State is speaking. Commonsense teaches us that we must hear him in silence in whatever he says, no matter how unsavoury or unpalatable it might be. We must give him the silence that he deserves when he is telling us about the views of Government; similarly his Ministers. I do not like the insinuating remarks often made about Ministers and I would like each Minister to be heard in silence; so also is the Leader of the Opposition, the Government Chief Whip and the Opposition Chief Whip. After all, these are very important men to the Government and it is our duty to hear them in silence. The Ministers are the Heads of the State and whether we like it or not, officially and unofficially, they occupy a very important status. I would not like any Member to make disparaging remarks on them either by false allegation or by inaccurate information. It is ourselves that we hurt when we do this. We do not only hurt ourselves but we also hurt the whole country and the standard of our debates because the *Hansard* is read everywhere in the world. So I would like to appeal to you very strongly that Standing Order 40 gives me enormous powers to discipline Members but I have always felt it would be a disgraceful thing to ask a Member to discontinue his speech or to ask him to withdraw or to suspend him or similar punishment. And that is the reason why, like an old schoolmaster, I am warning you now, because it will eventually be like a Judge who would pass judgment because it is his duty to do so and he must do it. It would be a terrible thing and I would be sorry to take any serious step against any Member who misbehaves. There is too much heckling and interruption from both sides of the House and I call upon Members to

discipline themselves. If you think that by heckling you are running down the other Member, you are not only degrading yourself but you are showing that you are from a bad breed. You have the opportunity to criticise and you are given that opportunity. You should not take advantage of Parliamentary privilege to say what you like. At times, Members rise up to speak when they have not the permission of the Speaker. These Members should not be surprised when they are asked by the Speaker to walk out of the House. I would like to say that this House should be well-behaved. Let us learn to be gentlemen. When I visited Westminster Parliament I did not observe that anyone heckled or interrupted Mr Macmillan when he got up to speak. And that is the method I want adopted here. The behaviour of Members in the House has wounded my heart since last night and I would not like such things to continue.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### (1) The 1960-61 Eastern Region Appropriation Bill

*Considered in the Committee of Supply (Progress 6th April).*

(THIRD ALLOTTED DAY)

(In the Committee)

##### Head 426.—Public Service Commission

*Question proposed: That a sum not exceeding £16,900 for Head 426.—Public Service Commission—stand part of the Schedule.*

**Mr S. O. Achara** (Okigwi Division): On a Point of Order. Standing Order 77 (11): I would like to have your ruling. I would like to know at what stage Ministers get up to reply to points raised. Should it be before the amendments have been moved or after? I would very much like to have your ruling on this matter.

**The Chairman:** The procedure is that after the Minister has spoken on the Head, then debate on the general principles follows, and lastly come those who have listed their names for amendments to sub-heads and items.

**Mr Achara:** It is all right, Sir.



**Chief I. I. Morphy** (Ogoja Division): Mr Chairman, I do not move the amendment standing in my name on the Order Paper.

*Amendment by leave withdrawn.*

**Mr Achara:** Sir, I do not move the amendment on the Order Paper.

*Amendment by leave withdrawn.*

*Question put and agreed to.*

#### Head 427—Ministry of Agriculture

*Question proposed: That a sum not exceeding £662,920 for Head 427—Ministry of Agriculture—stand part of the Schedule.*

**The Minister of Agriculture (Mr P. N. Okeke):** I am very conscious of the honour that was done to me by the bestowal of the portfolio for Agriculture. It is a Ministry that has its impact throughout the Region. One's mind immediately turns to the Agricultural Division, with its great responsibility for improving and developing our agricultural potential. But the Ministry is also responsible for other important activities. The Forest Division has a duty to see that our forests today contribute to the wealth of the Region. It has an even greater responsibility—so to plan exploitation that our sons and grandsons will have timber enough for their needs; for despite the wonderful advances of science in the production of synthetic materials, it is still true to say that the world demand for timber has never been greater. The Veterinary Division does all it can to see that our animals keep healthy and that we eat sound beef. The Produce Inspection Division by preserving the standards of our export crops maintains the demand from overseas. And the Fisheries Division, though small, may yet produce results of the greatest value to the well-being of our people.

I have listed the different Divisions of my Ministry because, from its very title, people tend to forget how wide a field it covers.

Before highlighting certain items of expenditure, I will first touch on revenue. The hon. the Leader of the Opposition saw signs that

unsatisfactory producer prices are bringing about a drop in production. I have no reason to believe this. There is undoubtedly an increase in local consumption which is a tribute to the way Government has increased standards of living. I should also add that railings of palm oil to the Northern Region almost doubled between 1955 and 1958, the latest date for which I have figures available. There is also the increased consumption due to the local manufacture of soap. The hon. Gentleman also referred to a steady decrease in produce prices since 1954. This is an exaggerated way of putting his point. Prices were higher in the 1954 buying season than they are today. But there has not been a steady decrease. From 1956 to 1958 palm oil prices were the same although kernels dropped by a little over £1. In 1959 and this year, while palm oil has had to suffer a drop in price to a level that means a subsidy on operations, the kernel price is higher than it was in 1958. It would not be out of place for me to refer here to the fact that our overseas market is suffering competition from soya bean oil and lard, both produced in the United States. This is a situation that this Government and the Federal Government are keeping very much in view.

Again on revenue, hon. Onwuma felt that more money could be earned from Agricultural Sales. In the main, this revenue arises from the sales of improved agricultural material—cocoa pods, palm seedlings, citrus and so forth—and fertiliser. My Ministry does not wish to do more than break even on the cost of materials. To put prices higher would discourage people from buying those very things which go to increase productivity and the national income. In the end, greater prosperity means more tax revenue. I note with pleasure that hon. Ekpe, on the other hand, agreed with the line taken by this Ministry in the dissemination of the results achieved in our farms. He further advocated subsidies, but there is a hidden subsidy because we make no attempt to pass on to the farmer any part of our large overhead costs.

Perhaps the most significant feature of the Estimates is the provision for various International Co-operation Administration projects. I.C.A., as it is known in this world of initials, is an organisation run by the United States



Government. It provides technical assistance in two ways. Firstly, it offers fellowships in the States. Three of the young men in the Ministry are, or soon will be enjoying these. The bulk of the cost is paid by I.C.A. Secondly, I.C.A. is prepared to send experts here for two or three years. Their salaries are paid for us but we have to meet their local allowances. The very essence of such schemes, however, is that we must also provide one of our own men to work side by side with the American. Thus a short visit has a lasting value. There will be five schemes with an Agricultural bias operating in the Region, four wholly our own and the fifth a Federal project to which we will contribute. An expert in poultry production has already arrived. To come are experts in animal husbandry, soil conservation and Extension Method. Animal husbandry needs no explanation. As for soil conservation, we all know the yawning ravines that day by day eat into our hillsides and deplete our most cherished resources, our land. The United States with the terrible experience of its dust bowl, has built up a wealth of knowledge that we are fortunate to be able to draw upon.

I am sure that this is a message of hope particularly for the hon. Members for Udi, Awka, Orlu and Onitsha. By mentioning these Divisions, however, this House must not assume that I do not know that other areas are also affected. But I trust that at last we are seeing the beginning of a soil conservation service. Soil conservation, is an act of faith. Results do not come overnight. I appeal to all hon. Members to use their best endeavours to overcome apathy or overt resistance to such schemes and to urge the people whose heritage is the land to co-operate with my Ministry.

And lastly, Extension Method. We have well over a hundred Agricultural Assistants in the field and would certainly like to treble them. Our Agricultural School exists for this purpose. We hope that this expert will teach both the new entrants and the existing staff the most modern techniques so that they can present in the most forceful way all that they have learnt.

The Federal project to which we are contributing sounds dull besides these others.

Agricultural Statistics; Figures, what dull things you may say may be, but statistics are bricks with which the modern planners build the state. This project will be of inestimable value to our Ministry of Economic Planning. We do not know, for example, such an apparently simple thing as how much palm oil we do produce. We know how much is exported and that is all. But is our export trade likely to be endangered by increased local consumption? Is local consumption increasing in proportion to the population increase or is it increasing more rapidly because standards of living are rising? We do not know. And we can only direct and guide the economy of our Region with this and other similar information.

Before leaving this subject of external assistance, I am happy to say that Her Majesty's Government is to supply us with a land use planner.

And this brings me to another important aspect of the Ministry's work. Soil surveying and land use planning. This work is designed to show the potential of our Region for different crops. So much land in such and such an area is good for cocoa, and so forth. So we avoid hit or miss methods. It will please hon. Akilo to hear that our Colonial Development and Welfare Scheme for the Do-Anambra area is well advanced. The soil surveyor is now in the field and analysis is proceeding at our newly established Research Centre. I have been assured that the Federal Director of Surveys will give priority to the air photography of the Aro-Bende area. This is an essential preliminary to a soil survey there.

Unfortunately, last year's dry season was too cloudy to take the pictures. And then, the possibility is being explored of getting an international agency to help with a similar survey in the Ikom area. Similar investigation will be made in other areas as our capacity to undertake them permits.

Hon. Members cannot help having noticed our information stand outside this Chamber. As you will know, for several years past there have been colourful agricultural shows at different centres in the Region. These are affairs paid for locally without a penny of



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Ministerial support. But the Ministry naturally makes a big display. It has increasingly been felt that this side of our work should be expanded. It supplements the Extension work to which I referred earlier. Consequently, an Information Section of the Agricultural Division has been set up with a very experienced man in charge. The equipment has been provided for in the Development Programme. It is my hope that more and more people will become aware of the great advances that can be made, often with only very little expenditure to lead to a richer and fuller life. Incidentally, this section is intimately concerned with planning our pavilion for the Lagos Independence Exhibition.

We are all convinced that the productivity of this Region could be increased by the use of machines. But these can only be used economically on large farms. It is no use investing in a tractor if your land is cut up into little parcels, half an acre here and two-thirds of an acre a mile away. Any large-scale scheme for mechanisation might have to be preceded by a redistribution of land. Old titles to the land would be wiped out so that after redistribution each man would be secure in his tenure. Now, that raises many legal and social issues. It can be done. It has been done in East Africa and we may well feel it necessary to do something like this here. But there is probably no other sphere of activity in which it is more necessary to hasten slowly. Meanwhile, the Ministry has made real advances in another way. In Yenagoa and Enugu Provinces, for example, several hundred acres have been leased from willing villages, cultivated mechanically and then rented out to local farmers by the year. This is a very popular scheme and there are more tracts of land being offered than the Ministry has the means or the capacity to accept. Small beginnings you may say, but of great promise. Already our rice industry has benefited.

The hon. Ekpe will doubtless receive this information with gratification. I can assure him that I am giving very close and urgent attention to the whole problem and I do not exclude grant aided farm settlements as suggested by him. Nor, however, can I fail to keep in mind the failure of our first experiment in this field—the Bamenda Cross River Calabar scheme. That was grant aided. Each settler

received £60. But the scheme did not succeed and very few of the settlers ever repaid their grants. The hon. Chikwendu was clearly aware of this past history when he rather advocated the Government itself embarking on large-scale agricultural production using paid labour. All authorities, however, are in general agreement that Governments themselves are very poor executants in commerce.

And this brings me to plantations. The progress that has been made during the last decade in the establishment of a plantation industry is truly remarkable. There are now about 36,000 acres of plantation in this Region compared with less than 7,000 ten years ago. One plantation alone employs about 1,300 of our people. I can assure this House that Government intends to make great efforts to expand this sector of our development. The Government particularly hopes that there will be a big expansion in cocoa.

I wish to assure hon. Akilo that the prospects of the cashew industry are very much in our minds. I cannot agree with him that man cannot devise a machine that will decorticate the nuts better than is done by manual labour. Nor do I agree with him that there is no room for such a machine. Nevertheless, every effort will be made to discover methods of exploiting every product of the cashew tree. When this House rises I hope to enquire on the future of our cashew industry.

Before passing on to the other Divisions, I would like to say something about the Provincial Farms. Some people think there are not enough; others think there are too many. There are, in fact, five and as hon. Chikwendu said they perform a vital role. How many times have I heard people say "Enough of experiments, get on with some real farming." By this I take it that the Ministry should direct the activities of its trained agriculturists towards the large-scale production of food and export produce. Do this, and you let hundreds of thousands of our peasant farmers stagnate with outmoded methods. Do this, and I assure you that the overall production of food will not keep pace with the natural increase in population. The farms devise and test different methods of cultivation. Those that are promising are tested and retested under field conditions in various experimental stations



throughout the Region and then passed on to the farmer. Different varieties of seeds are produced and distributed. To take a homely example, I invite Members to cast their minds back just ten years and recall the puny pale tomato then available. And now think of the fine fruit that you can buy anywhere today. And how was this achieved? By experiment. It is on the farms, too, that we carry on our work on fertilisers. We all know that fertilisers can increase production. Equally, we know that to date they have not caught on. There are a variety of reasons for this and it is only on the farms that a solution can be found. I will not burden hon. Members with other examples of the work done on the farms and will confine myself to agreeing that in the end there should be many more of them.

Turning now to Forestry, I am very happy to say that for once we have no staff problems. Almost all the reserves have been carefully assessed and schemes for their exploitation worked out. These have to cover many decades. Plans have to be made for reafforestation which will only come to fruition generations ahead. This work will continue. At the same time, the Division has to ensure that those who lease our forests comply with all the terms of their leases. I am able to assure hon. Ekpe that all the minor forest reserves are being exploited commercially as is also the Cross River group. It is only the remote large reserves that are not yet being worked although there are active negotiations in hand for this to be done. While on this subject, I would like to stress that the Government has no intention of dereserving any sizeable portions of the reserves. Our forest estate is barely large enough to provide a reservoir of timber for the future. It would be an act of treachery to generations unborn were we to sell our heritage for a mess of pottage.

Hon. Ekpe referred to fishing at Opobo. Fisheries present a most exciting prospect. I do not wish to raise false hopes particularly remembering the failure of the Colonial Development Corporation venture at Port Harcourt. But nevertheless, I believe that the beginning of a small sea-fishing industry is in sight. It will be a year or so before we can be certain but the first results are most encouraging. Last year we commissioned out two trawlers,

a big one from Scotland and a smaller one which was built at Opobo for something over five thousand pounds. Our results show that one vessel ought to be able to make well over fifty pounds profit for each trip out to sea. It may be difficult to maintain this rate of profit throughout the year because the Opobo bar may make exit to the sea impossible during the rains. A possible solution to this problem would be to base our vessels on Bonny at that time and service them with the ice needed to preserve the fish by a fast launch using the Andoni flats route. There are many snags but today a ton of fresh fish a week is being sold in Aba. Soon there will be six times this amount because a commercial operator based on Victoria has our permission to land fish in this Region. He wishes to make use of our Opobo installations particularly because, in a month or two, our own ice plant will be working. We have another ice plant available for installation if needed. These developments have made it desirable to suspend action at Jamestown. The funds originally intended for building a fishing station there will be diverted to Opobo. If the industry flourishes, as I hope, then the Jamestown project might well be revived because a subsidiary station will be needed. To sum up, we can view the situation with cautious optimism.

While there are these hopes for a sea-fishing industry, the importance of inland fish ponds will not be overlooked. In all of this, I would like to stress how difficult it is to get staff. When the Secretary of State's adviser on Fishing was out here last year he was able to offer us no early prospect of any officers to fill our vacancies. Equally, it is a field that has not so far proved very attractive to our own youth.

There will be no change in the policies of the Produce Inspection Division. It has had to expand its activities and there are now five stations and over eighty sub-stations throughout the Region. Its aim is all the time to help to preserve the standards of our export crops and therefore our reputation in the world markets.

It is a matter of regret that the activities of the Veterinary Department are bedevilled by staff shortages. We seem to be no nearer



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 towards the establishment of a Veterinary School, since it has not been possible to recruit a Principal. Indeed, we have only two qualified men to serve the needs of the whole Region. That is why close attention cannot be given everywhere all the time. I would not like to let this opportunity to pass without paying a tribute to the work of the Veterinary Assistants. It is not seldom that I hear words of praise for their work. I would also like to mention some other unsung workers in this Division—the Hides and Skins Inspectorate. By tact and persuasion, this very small body of men has managed to increase greatly the number of hides suitable for export. Throughout the debates in this House two things were uppermost in the minds of hon. Members—mechanisation and increased plantation investment. I thank all hon. Members who have offered helpful suggestions and constructive criticisms on the Ministry of Agriculture. I share their anxiety about the place of agriculture in the economy of this Region. To achieve our objective in the field of agriculture I call on hon. Members, educators and all leaders of thought and opinion in this Region to join us on a call for an agrarian revolution. It was achieved in other countries. It can be achieved in the Eastern Region. Our farmers must change their methods but this can happen through examples set by all of us. The greatest wealth of this Region is its soil. The answer to our economic ills is rapid mechanisation of our agriculture. This will increase our agricultural output per man and liberate labour for factory work. Before we can hope to embark on intensive mechanisation certain initial problems must be solved. It must be borne in mind that owners of foreign capital are not running charitable institutions for the benefit of under-developed areas. They too are actuated by profit motive. Modern agricultural machinery is expensive. We must assemble much of our capital internally. The nature of land holdings is scattered ownership of small areas which renders mechanisation impossible or too expensive. This problem is being energetically tackled by my Ministry. Unless the problem of land consolidation is solved, agrarian revolution cannot take place in many parts of the Region. To this end my Ministry recently sent its most Senior Officer in the Agricultural Division to Kenya, East Africa to study the problem of land consolidation. His stimulating report is now

before the Government for study and may yet revolutionise our system of agriculture. On this subject my Ministry will soon prepare a white paper setting out in detail the problem and how to solve it. Due to the nature of our politics, genuine Government Schemes for the benefit of the people are misinterpreted. The sensitiveness of our people over their land must be carefully studied before proceeding with any scheme no matter how laudable.

If we succeed in selling to our farmers our idea of land consolidation and subject to availability of fund we shall establish mechanised mobile units manned by trained operators to assist our farmers in clearing and planting. But until our people are taught to appreciate the importance of agriculture, Government effort alone will for long be like a drop of water on the ocean. That is why I appeal to hon. Members to join in the new crusade in agriculture in their respective Divisions, so that in another decade, we may double our acreage of plantations of cocoa, oil palm, rubber and above all our food production for our increasing population so that in a free Nigeria which we all look forward to in October, 1960 this Region will play a leading role in the field of Scientific Agriculture.

Finally, I ask for the indulgence of the House to mention one thing which while not directly the responsibility of my Ministry, is very much in the minds of all of us—Loans. For several years no loans have been made by the Eastern Regional Development Corporation. However, after careful consideration and consultation with the Government that Corporation will now make £100,000 available for new loans. The past history of its loans programme has not been altogether a happy one. Far too many people have received money only to bilk on its refund. I wish to take this opportunity to warn all those that it has been decided to pursue them with the utmost vigour. I know, too, that not a few people frittered their loans away on cars and other luxuries without spending a penny on the project for which they got the cash. This will not happen again. Every application will be assiduously checked and only the most viable projects proposed by men of known probity, integrity and resource will receive aid. The Corporation will not be stampeded into distributing this money tomorrow. It



may take months of investigation before any loans are made at all. While people may have heard that earlier applications were approved early in 1956 in principle, they must not now assume that they just have to sit down and wait for the gold to fall on their laps. They will have to reapply and their projects will be reconsidered anew. Before leaving this point, I would beg people not to direct their applications to my Ministry. That will only delay matters because the loans are made by the Corporation and not by the Government.

**Mr A. O. Chikwendu** (Bende Division): I wish to comment on the Produce Inspection Division of this Ministry. In the first place I have to commend that Division for the high quality of the palm oil produce. I will here repeat what I said during the debate on the Speech from the Throne, that the Minister of Agriculture should, in consultation with the Minister of Commerce, ensure that they secure increased prices for our produce in the World market. Similarly I will appeal to them to persuade the Marketing Board here to pay increased producer prices. It is only from the sale of palm oil and palm kernel that the people in the country make their money. Many of those whose parents are farmers will agree with me that the cost of labour in the rural areas is very, very high. Nowadays they pay casual labourers from two shillings to four shillings a day and many of them can ill afford it. The only means by which they can find money is by the sale of palm oil and palm kernel. So I am appealing to Government very seriously that they should consider paying increased prices for these products. I feel that it is time that a Nigerian was made to head this Department of Produce Inspection. I understand that the Chief Officer will soon be going on retirement and at the moment there are two Deputy Officers, one an expatriate and the other a Nigerian. I understand that the expatriate Chief Deputy Officer was rejected by the Western Region and after being rejected by the Western Regional Government he came over here to be catapulted to the post of Chief Deputy Officer. As a matter of fact the people who have a thorough knowledge of produce inspection work, from my own personal investigation, feel that the man does not know produce inspection work very well, and that the Nigerian Chief Deputy Officer is very thorough in the subject. They said that

this Nigerian Deputy Officer has been an ex-Marketing Officer and that he has attended what they call Summer Conference in London, remained there for one year and acquired very, very good experience indeed. All that we are saying is that this Nigerian should not be superseded by the expatriate officer who appears not to know his produce inspection work very well.

I am appealing to Government now to pursue vigorously their proposal to establish a Cocoa Plantation in Bende Division. The land is there and the soil is good; I do not know why there should be delay. The sooner they start the operation the better. There is no question of land dispute at all in Bende. Come over please: the land is there; you will have the land; get ahead with the operation and we of Bende Division will give you as much co-operation as is required.

As I said before I commend indeed the efforts of the Produce Inspection Department of this Ministry.

**Mr S. G. Ikoku** (Enyong Division): I would not have said anything on this Head were it not for the Minister's speech. I must say that it is about time the hon. Minister of Agriculture put his foot down and refused to come and read to this House vague explanations drawn up by his Ministry.

For example, he has told us that the drop in export tonnages of our palm produce has been caused by increase in local consumptions. How did they arrive at this? And later on in his speech he admitted that his Ministry has not got figures of how much palm oil is produced in the Region and how much is consumed in the Region. How then could they have arrived at the conclusion that the drop in export tonnages was due to an increase in consumption? This does not help us. We are trying our level best to make a decision which will help us progress economically, and we cannot keep peddling such views that are hopeless and useless. The first thing we have to do, if we want this agricultural revolution called for by the Minister, is to clear our thinking of all the cobwebs which have beset us for the past generations, and this is a good example. I want to remind you that last year when this same



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problem of a drop in export tonnages in palm produce came up, the Ministry, that is the permanent staff there, gave the explanation that it was due to old age on the part of our palm trees—senility of our palm trees. That was the explanation they gave. Twelve months after, it is due to consumption—a clear proof that they just do not know what they are doing; and they just get up and write down certain things and pass to the Minister and ask him to go and read. I am in no way giving the impression that the Minister merely reads what he is told. When they say that the drop in export tonnages is due to increase in consumption the Minister should call for figures and if they refuse to supply the figures he should reject that idea. That is why I think it is about time the Ministry had a Statistic Division.

**The Minister of Agriculture:** I never admitted that there was a drop in export of palm kernel. In fact there is no drop. If you look into the Estimates under the taxes you will find there is no drop. I refer you to page E 16, Regional Indirect Taxes, Head 402, Sub-head 3—Produce Purchase Tax. In this we are estimating £1,100,000; for 1959-60 it was £1,040,000—an increase of £60,000. And therefore in my speech I never admitted; but what I said was that there has been increased consumption due to the railings of palm produce to the Northern Region; throughout my figures I never made any admission that the export of palm produce has fallen, and if you refer to the Estimates you will see that actually there has not been any drop, rather there is an increase.

**Mr Ikoku:** I thank the Minister. But I like to make it clear that his explanation just does not hold water. The Draft Estimates in your possession were prepared before the Minister of Finance made his speech. The Budget Speech is therefore more up to date than the Estimates in your possession. If you turn to page 5 of the Budget Speech, you find in the third paragraph the following:

“Other Regional revenues include various indirect taxes, licences and fees. Most important among these is the Produce Purchase Tax which I estimate will yield £1,100,000. This is slightly less than the revised estimate for the current year.”

I picked the Minister up on the point that while there has not been a reduction in the rates of produce tax, a drop in the yield of tax can only mean a drop in export tonnages, and that point was never challenged. And that is precisely the position.

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** On point of explanation. Even if my speech is quoted, the figures stated are for all produce, not just for palm produce alone.

**Mr Ikoku:** Yes, admittedly, they are for all produce, but can the Minister give us the breakdown for all produce?

**The Minister of Finance:** I am sorry, I cannot.

**Mr Ikoku:** Well, he cannot! The point is that that figure has been only small, but it includes an increase in the export of cocoa. This bolsters the point of what I say, that the drop in the export of palm tonnages is considerable.

**The Minister of Finance:** The figure, as pointed out by the Minister of Agriculture, last year, 1959-60, was £1,040,000. The present Estimates show £1,100,000; so that there has been actually no drop.

**Mr Ikoku:** Is the hon. Minister of Finance withdrawing paragraph 3 of page 5 of his Speech?

In any case the point I was trying to make is that it is about time the Minister of Agriculture had what you may call Statistics Division to make a close study of these problems in order to give the Minister a view which can be supported by facts. We have the impression that the Ministry is guessing: one year it is old age of the palm tree, another year it is the railing of oil to the Northern Region, etc. That will not help us. If we are going to do any economic planning, any concrete development of our agriculture, we must base it on the position as it is and not just on surmise. Another example: We have been given the view by the Minister this morning that he does not support increased prices for our palm produce on the ground that increased prices will not allow the purchase of other goods and services which go to increase productivity.



Which are these other goods and services the purchase of which will be blocked if the prices of palm produce are increased?

**The Minister of Agriculture:** I am sorry hon. Ikoku misunderstood me. What I was referring to was the sale of seedlings to farmers; that it is the policy of my Ministry to grade these even with the cost of production. In other words, we do not intend to sell these seedlings higher to the farmers because that will decrease productivity which we all crave for. That was what I said. It appears he did not understand me. I will give him a copy of my speech afterwards!

**Mr Ikoku:** Probably, I did not understand his speech, but it were better the Minister spoke rather than recite. May I ask what is the aim of our agricultural research? The Minister has devoted a lot of space in his speech to telling us of the various activities which are being carried out. In this connection, he mentioned the I.C.A. What really is the aim of agricultural research? Is it research for the sake of research or is it an attempt to expand agricultural production? Because if it is the latter—that is, an attempt to expand agricultural production, I think I see many things wrong with our research. The first thing wrong with our research is that we have not got a sizeable Agricultural Extension Scheme. It is by way of this Extension Scheme that we can actually transmit the results of research to the people. I maintain, Sir, that what the Region wants is how to graft new and better methods to our own existing forms of production. That is what we need. It is a very good thing for the technique of poultry farming in the United States to be carried out here and our people informed or educated on it but the big question, as far as I am concerned, is: what are the chances of our own farmers here in the Eastern Region applying this technique? I think the Minister of Agriculture should concentrate on this question and not just on research. I have said that we do not want research for the sake of research.

The second aspect is that I sincerely believe that the sources from which we are getting our research knowledge are, not very helpful to this country. If we want to acquire the

techniques of other countries, surely, I think it is wise that we understudy countries with economic problems more akin to ours. In this respect, Sir, I think successful poultry farming in India will be more helpful to the Eastern Region than successful poultry farming in the United States of America. Agricultural problems in India and the under-developed countries in general are more akin to ours.

There is the question of agricultural resettlement. What has been done? Where are we understudying this agricultural resettlement? Is it in Britain or is it in the United States of America; where the problems are strictly not like ours? I have spoken to the Minister of Agriculture privately and I have advised him to go to countries like Israel. That is where he will see schemes like ours being undertaken. Whenever they think of overseas, they think in terms of London and Washington. He should stop swinging between London and Washington. That is the trouble with this Government. These two countries—Britain and America—are very advanced countries. Their problems are quite distinct from ours. Agricultural problems in the United States are not and can never be agricultural problems here in the Eastern Region, and when our Minister decides to go overseas to understudy, he should go to the right places. In this connection, I notice that the Minister has mentioned a study on Land Consolidation in Kenya. What is the relation between land problem in Nigeria and land problem in Kenya?—quite distinct problems. In Kenya, you have the question of White Settlers grabbing land. We have no such problems here in Nigeria. What is this officer going to study in Kenya? I am very much in support of the idea of not only the expert in the Ministry of Agriculture travelling but the Minister himself going out to see how these things are done in other countries. I insist that they should go to the right places—places like Israel, South-East Asia and India—and see how they are doing and stop this American business. It does not help us.

**The Chairman:** We have about 21 Heads more and I will be happy if Members will try not to speak very long. Probably, I should call upon those Members who have amendments to make as contained in the Order Paper and



[THE CHAIRMAN]

by the time they shall have finished we shall have exhausted discussion on the various Heads.

**Mr V. A. Nwankwo** (Abakaliki Division): I am only asking for two things under this Head for the people of Abakaliki. The people of Abakaliki have been doing very well in the production of rice and I feel that Government should have done something to encourage these farmers to do more than they are doing now. The experimental farm, of course, has done very well in producing rice in Abakaliki but one question is: what is going to happen about the land that has been already exhausted? This rice plantation is only done on swampy area and when a special portion has been farmed for more than four occasions, the land gets barren and there is no more good manure to yield food as before. What is going to be done to improve this soil? Even if the land is allowed to lie fallow for two or three years before it is cultivated again, it yields very little as it has been very much exhausted. They should learn how to keep this land useful when it comes back for farming.

Another point is the question of trying to teach farmers the method of using machines; but these machines are so costly that they cannot even be used in rural areas. Before going to the rural areas you must have good motorable roads whereby these big machines must have to ply and, even if you get to some distant areas from townships, the problem must be different because the machines will not be used in the bush where there are not suitable soil for the plantation. Therefore, I am asking that these types of machines should be looked for—i.e., the large ones that the farmers could buy in groups and thus be able to improve their productivity. Ordinary hoeing will not do the work. The parcels of land that have been used for more than two or three occasions are very difficult to be ploughed again with ordinary hand hoe.

Another point I would like the Government to consider is the question of introducing other cash crops in Abakaliki. I wonder why Abakaliki is still not being investigated or surveyed for other cash crops such as coffee,

cocoa, etc. We have different types of land in Abakaliki. We have some reserved areas and some other parts like Ngbo which I think will yield very much and are suitable for the cultivation of cocoa and coffee. Every part in Abakaliki Division should be surveyed by the Agricultural Department to find what else should be produced instead of allowing the people to go on producing rice that in time to come we may not have land enough to produce other crops. I would also like the Ministry of Agriculture to see that the people understand the use and method of planting citrus fruits in many areas. Some farmers have been to experimental farms and bought different kinds of crops, such as oranges, etc., but others have not been taken about these new farms to see what encouragement is given for the plantation crops. I have seen many farmers who have bought these things from the experimental farms but these things died away the next season because proper care was not taken about them. I am now asking that field workers of this department should be keen on visiting these farms to see these crops that were bought from them do not die away so that other people will be encouraged to buy more. I would also ask that they grow trees in Abakaliki which yield timber and firewood.

I would again ask the Ministry of Agriculture to confer with the Ministry of Commerce on the question of trying to encourage and educate the farmers to form Co-operative Societies because by this they will be able to farm very big areas and get bigger yield per farmer. In Abakaliki, farmers work individually and there is no encouragement. It is necessary to make the natives understand the benefits of Co-operative farming.

**Mr A. J. Ekpe** (Opobo Division): I would like to thank the Minister of Agriculture for his exhaustive reply to the points raised the other day about fishery in Opobo Division. I hope the Minister will be enthusiastic to help in the development of that project.

I have one or two more points to raise and I hope the Minister will take note of them.



The first is the rehabilitation of palm trees. As I said last year, some of the palm trees are really so old and the rate of production so low and yield so poor that it is very urgent indeed to rehabilitate them so that in future we may have good yield. We all know how difficult it is to convince farmers to go and cut down the whole palm trees. They think they are going to lose and I would like the Minister to do his best to convince them to cut down some of these old palm trees. In fact it requires a great deal of effort on the part of the Agricultural Assistants to convince these people and these Agricultural Assistants are not enough in the Division to go to various villages and encourage farmers to rehabilitate their palm plantations. It is on this point that I would ask for more field overseers who would engage in propaganda work in the rural areas among the farmers. I think that is a very important step which should be taken by the Minister.

About the development of cocoa, I would like to draw the attention of the Minister to the existence of large acres of forest in the Ndoni area which should be experimented for the cultivation of cocoa. The people here do no farming on the land because most of them are fishermen and so most of the forest areas are not used at all. So it will be good to start a cocoa plantation there because the soil is very good for the growth of cocoa. It will be necessary to take some of the experts of the Ministry of Agriculture there to survey the land in this area. The same case applies to Etche and other places. These areas have large acres of land which belong to the community and I gathered from the people of Etche that they have approached the Minister for the survey of their land for the purpose of cultivation of cocoa and that a senior officer of that Ministry has seen the place but up till now nothing has been heard about the results of the inspection. I would like the Minister, as soon as this House is over, to try to be mobile and go to these areas and see things for himself. Some of these forests could be utilised for the development of cocoa and some other food crops and help to cut down unemployment.

I must say that I am very dissatisfied with the demonstration farm in my Division. I remember one day when I went out with an

Agricultural Assistant and we were talking about this demonstration farms; we concluded that they are no use. Look at some of the cassava they grow. They are no better than my own on which I use no fertiliser. There is no demonstration value whatsoever and if you ask the Government how much is used in maintaining these farms you will see that they cost about £500 to £600 a year. How do you expect a farm maintained at such a high cost to appeal to farmers who spend few pounds to raise better yield of crops. I do not see the value of this. If the Government wants to start plantation farming they should embark on such crops that will in the long run make good yield. All I would rather like to see is the encouragement of school farming. There is something wrong with some of the youths leaving school these days. Immediately a boy leaves school or passes Standard VI the tendency is to go to the township to look for clerical job. If we establish better school farm, they will realise that it is not a bad thing to work on the land. Our economy depends on the products of the land. Nobody should be afraid or ashamed to cultivate the soil. That is why I would like a great deal of encouragement to be given to school farming.

The Leader of the Opposition said that the Minister should travel to places like Israel and see what is going on in their field of agricultural development. As everybody knows, the basis of our economy is agriculture and the Minister of Agriculture should be a far-travelled Minister. He should go to places where he could get experience.

I do not know whether the Minister of Agriculture is investigating the development of tobacco in our farms. I gather that tobacco can grow very well in some sections of the Region. Here again I would like the Minister to take that up. Chief Morphy has told me that I should raise the matter of the development of cocoa, soya beans and groundnuts in Ogoja. He said that on the border between Ogoja and the Northern Region, soya beans and tobacco and groundnut are doing very well there. So, I think the Minister will like to take these into consideration, and see what can be done.

**Mr J. O. Ihekwoaba** (Orlu Division): I am happy that I am called upon to say a few words



[MR IHEKWOABA]

here. It is unfortunate that the Minister has not said anything about quality and quantity of produce this year. This was omitted in the Speech from the Throne and the same omission was made during the Minister's speech. May I say that some people feel that this Ministry exists only on paper and not in field work. I suggest strongly that Government experimental farms such as the ones in Umudike and Nkwerre-Ohia should be established in every Division in this Region. This will make it possible for some of the people who have nothing to do in their areas to be engaged in farm work. They should learn these new farming methods.

It appears to me that most of the farmers do not know the modern way of planting palm trees and cocoa and yet we have numerous officers in the Agricultural Department. When I visited some areas last time, I found that most of the farmers do not know that palm trees are being planted; they feel that these trees are only planted by God and they depend upon the natural resources without making any efforts themselves. So I am appealing to the Minister of Agriculture to establish these experimental farms in every Division and have the farmers well taught in planting palm trees. I am happy to know that the Minister in his speech said that agriculture is the basis of our economy in this Region; if this is so, what effort has the Government made in order to improve the situation? May I say that Agricultural Officers should go from village to village to teach the natives how to plant palm trees. This is very essential; if you look at our present palm trees, you will see that they are growing too old. These should be replaced by planting more. These natives do not know that they can buy palm seedlings from Agricultural farms at the rate of 4d each, plant them, and in course of two to three years, they grow up to replace the old ones. This is what I feel should be the work of these Agricultural Officers. They should go from house to house and from village to village and teach the people that when they harvest their cassava or yams they can replace them with palm seedlings. These in the course of four or five years, will begin to yield fruits.

Another point I want to raise is about palm produce prices. Since three or four

years ago, there has not been any increase in the price of palm produce. The public would like to know what is the present world market for palm produce. Our people understand that the world demand for palm produce increases every season, but here the price is in a stand-still since three or four years now. We do read all kinds of newspapers, even overseas papers, etc., and we know that the price of palm produce in the world rises and falls from time to time; but in this Eastern Region the whole position is in a standstill. We want to know why.

**Mr E. O. Eyo** (Uyo Division): Because it is N.C.N.C. Government!

**Mr Ihekwoaba:** At the same time I want to mention that the produce buyers of this Region want this Government to supply them, or sell to them through the Produce Officers testing apparatus. As most of these indicators are not being sold locally, we want the Produce Officers to provide or sell them to the produce buyers in order to get very good quality oil and then sell to the Government.

Last time I said something about these Produce Officers; they need some encouragement. In as much as they have begun to do the right work, they should be up-graded in rank and salary so that they will not engage in bribery and corruption.

**Mr S. O. Achara** (Okigwi Division): The Minister made reference to proposals to undertake examination of the problems surrounding the Cashew Industry in this Region. Much as that is re-assuring, I think he has not gone far enough. There are only three places in the world where cashew is grown on plantation basis. India is one, East Africa is another and the Eastern Region of the Federation of Nigeria is another. I understand that the Government of India is not willing to let out the secrets of the processing of the Cashew Industry, so that we have the difficult problem of finding out how to process the cashew nuts.

I further understand that the world price of oil which is the objective of this plantation crop is at the rate of £460 per ton. It is



not enough for the Ministry to advise farmers to carry the cashew nuts and sell them to the Manager. That is not the aim of those who originated this great and promising industry as far back as 1952. I would like the Minister to undertake a tour to India with a view to finding out how cashew nuts are processed. I also would suggest that on his way to India it would pay him if he was able to halt somewhere in East Africa to find out from the Government of East Africa what is done about this industry. Several farmers have planted large acres of cashew and the plants have started to yield; when a farmer takes the trouble of carrying several hundreds weight of cashew nuts to Ajali all he is able to get is 3d per pound. Even there, the stocks which the E.R.D.C. bought last year have not been fully utilised because after the frying and all the other things connected with the processing of the kernels they found that the cost of 1s per small package was too high for the average man to buy, with the result that the stocks bought the year before last are still there. It is unfortunate that the only one man who has any knowledge whatsoever about the processing of cashew nuts was given the boots some years ago here. This is very unfortunate indeed. I refer to one Mr Bruce who was for many years in the service of the Indian Government and was the only link between what is done with cashew here and the farmers. I do not know what possibilities there are for the Government to recall this expert. I would like the Minister to survey the possibilities of getting out this man even if it means getting him on contract and at higher salary than he was paid before. It was due to instability which was a feature of the E.R.D.C. in the past five years that brought about the unfortunate departure from this country of this man. I would like him to come back. I understand if good terms are offered him he will be willing to come back to continue the good work which he had started before he was dismissed.

We have referred several times on the floor of this House to the problem of poultry diseases in this Region. I do not know really what the Ministry is doing about this problem. It is not enough to get up and reply to Members speeches by saying: The Ministry will investigate; the matter will be referred to Agricultural Officers. That is not what we are after. We

want the Ministry to find out what drugs will be used to treat these poultry diseases and when those drugs are ordered we also want the Ministry to post out enough of Veterinary Assistants to teach the villagers how to use the drugs. It is not enough to post one Veterinary Assistant to be in charge of four or five large Divisions. It is impossible for one Veterinary Assistant to take charge of Owerri Division, Orlu Division, Okigwi Division and Bende Division at the same time. He cannot do anything at all. I would like the Minister to begin by posting two Veterinary Assistants in the larger Divisions of this Region and make sure that enough of drugs are supplied them to treat the poultry diseases so that they in turn will go to the villages and teach the poultry farmers how to treat their poultry in the event of outbreak of diseases.

I would like to thank the last speaker hon. Ihekwoaba for raising this very vital question of palm produce prices in the Region. I want to say that this matter is above politics. For the past four years there has been no increase in the prices paid to palm produce traders in this Region and as the last speaker pointed out they have known that there is no fall in the world market of palm produce prices. They read newspapers—both Overseas and Nigerian. They know that the world prices are high enough and that the Marketing Board of this Region has deliberately refused to encourage them by way of adequate prices for their produce. I would like the Government to approach the Marketing Board and make sure that the prices of produce in the forthcoming season are revised. We have nothing to offer these people by way of rural industry. The only thing on which they have existed for many years is palm produce, palm oil and palm kernels. Lowering the prices of these two commodities every year is being very hard on the people. After all, the ultimate aim of any good and responsible Government is the welfare of the people and this Government can only lay claim to being good, adding to its stock of goodness, by increasing the prices of palm oil and palm kernels.

The last point deals with the nature of our land. Year in and year out farmers continue to farm on the same piece of land. This year they plant cassava, the next year yams, the



[MR ACHARA]

other year cassava and the next year yam and so on. What we find now is nothing but pure sandy waste and there is no other reason that we can attribute to the rising cost of living as far as the farm products are concerned than to the poor quality and yield of our soil. The Minister should please make desperate effort to find what means we will introduce to make our soil fertile enough for the farmers.

**The Chairman:** May I call upon the Minister to reply so that we can get to something else.

**The Minister of Agriculture:** I would like to refer briefly to the criticisms of some of the Members.

Mr Chikwendu has asked for increased price being paid to our producers. Earlier on I made it clear that presently, the Eastern Region Marketing Board is subsidising palm oil. In fact our operation now depends on subsidy on palm oil. But on palm kernel there is a little profit made by the Marketing Board, and one has got to consider the Marketing Board as a union. I made that clear in my speech and I think that the Licensed Buying Agents who are here should be able to investigate this.

I think, I have cleared the point Mr Ikoku raised over the drop in our export. I think it is now clear to him that there is no drop in spite of the fact that there is increase in the raling of palm produce in the Eastern Region. We have been able to keep pace with our export of palm produce in the Region. Mr Ikoku asked what is the aim of Agricultural Research. The aim of Agricultural Research is to improve productivity and I think as far as the Ministry is concerned, this objective is being fulfilled. He talked of having private research extension in the Region but he should appreciate one of the main difficulties facing the Minister of Agriculture, and that is the problem of land. Before you can translate some of the ideas researched from the Ministry to the farmer, the nature of our agriculture in this Region makes it very difficult for the Ministry to achieve much and that is why the Ministry is keen on the issue of land consolidation and I hope hon. Members will co-operate. If any Division can agree to this question of land consolidation, that is, by getting the people in the village to pool all their land together and

then redistributed, it will make it easy for us to pass on most of the researches learned from the Ministry to the farmers. But when you have scattered buildings here and there, it makes it very difficult for the Agricultural Officer and our extension workers to do much.

Mr Ikoku also advised the Minister to go to Israel to study methods and then to South East Asia. I want to assure him that by the 29th of this month, the Minister will be on his way to Israel and when I come back, with the permission of the Premier, I intend to tour other parts of the world to see things for myself.

I resent the idea that the Minister of Agriculture has come here to recite. I think Mr Ikoku should be in a position to know that I am not of the type who will just come in and recite whatever others have said. I think I have been a back-bencher for a long time for him to appreciate this point.

Mr Vincent Nwankwo talked of encouraging rice farmers in Abakaliki and increasing farming facilities. I can assure him that if the land in Abakaliki is good enough for rice surely, I think what he should do is mechanised production of rice on a large scale; perhaps to feed the whole country and that would be nice! Every Division will not be suitable for the production of every type of product and I think as far as Abakaliki is concerned it is getting its share of our extension methods and mechanisation. He also urged the Ministry, in co-operation with the Ministry of Commerce, to encourage co-operative farming. I am sure that it is not enough to come into this House and project certain views that will be difficult to implement. The hon. Gentleman knows that with the system of agriculture in this Region and with the system of our land tenure, it is impossible to introduce co-operative farming in Abakaliki. But if he assures me that it will be possible to introduce it, I will ask him to organise and my Ministry will co-operate.

Mr Ekpe talked of rehabilitation of old oil palms. I would refer him to page E 48 sub-head 28 of the Estimates. There, there is a provision for the rehabilitation of natural palm grove. A sum of £100,000 has been made available under this sub-head for the rehabilitation of our oil palms. I think that is a modest beginning.



Mr Ihekwoaba talked of encouraging the Licensed Buying Agents. I think I should make it clear to the hon. Member that it would be difficult to help the Licensed Buying Agents because the Licensed Buying Agents are not prepared to help themselves. The Eastern Region Marketing Board made a very modest allowance to the Licensed Buying Agents; but what happened? Because of the cut-throat competition among African Licensed Buying Agents they failed to do well. This commission was given out to the private producers. Of course, we do not have to quarrel with it in the Ministry but that is the reason why most of the Licensed Buying Agents are complaining. I understand that every effort has been made by his Association to get the Licensed Buying Agents to work together but it has not been possible to get them to work together and due to excessive competition, the Licensed Buying Agents are not making profit. If he doubts this, he can meet me in my Ministry later on and we shall discuss it with Members of his Association because I have got representations made by members of the Licensed Buying Agents Association and because of this competition some of the members of that Association have threatened to resign or have resigned. So that it would not be fair to put all the blame on the Ministry when the Licensed Buying Agents themselves are responsible.

**Mr Ihekwoaba:** Government employed the wrong people in the business.

**The Minister of Agriculture:** I did not hear him. However, it is not the policy of my Ministry to make produce-buying a sort of closed-shop affair for a few people. I think, like other fields of human endeavours, it should be open to those who satisfy the conditions of the Marketing Board.

Mr S. O. Achara once again talked of our perennial problem of the Cashew Nuts. I agree with him and as I said in my speech, when this House rises, I expect to investigate the future of the Cashew. I made that clear in my speech. I am in sympathy with people in many parts of the Region who, because of the campaign by the E.R.D.C., planted Cashew. I understand that many of them

cannot sell most of the fruits harvested and I am in sympathy with them. We shall do everything possible to see what can be done. Unfortunately, my information is that it has not been possible to get machines suitable for the extraction of the oil. But as he said, we shall investigate from East Africa and from India and perhaps from any other parts of the world to find a solution.

I do not intend to take much of the time of the House as most of the points made by Members have been clarified in my speech.

*Question put and agreed to.*

#### Head 428.—Ministry of Commerce

*Question proposed: That a sum not exceeding £128,340 for Head 428—Ministry of Commerce—stand part of the Schedule.*

**The Minister of Commerce (Mr J. U. Nwodo):** I would like to make the following observations on the Heads of Estimates of my Ministry.

I am glad to be able to report to the House that world economic conditions have been favourable to industrial development in this Region during the past year. There has been much progress. The policy of this Government in providing funds in the Development Programme for industrial and Commercial Development is bearing good fruit. I refer in particular to the Capital Budget Head 804 from which it will be seen that over a million pounds have been allocated in the Development Programme of which £680,000 will be spent this year. This has been a year of opportunities and we have never had so many overseas industrialists visiting this Region and making enquiries about starting new industries here.

I would like to say that it is the basic principle of sound economic planning that sufficient funds are allocated to development which is productive. By productive I mean those schemes which will increase the purchasing power of the people of this Region. For this reason, Government is now laying increasing emphasis on expenditure on agricultural development on the one hand and industrial development on the other. We need industrial



[MR NWODO]

development in this Region for many reasons. It will bring wealth to our country and increasing skills to our workers, but most of all, it will provide employment for the hundreds of thousands of our young men who are leaving the primary schools and looking for jobs.

I wish to say without hesitation that, in my opinion, this Region is the best area for industrial development in Nigeria, if not in all tropical Africa. We have the natural wealth in agriculture and in mineral. We have the manpower—one of the most thickly populated large areas in any part of Africa. We have the technical skills, for our people have shown that they can pick up skills and acquire new techniques more quickly than the people of any other part of Nigeria. Finally, we have the enterprising businessmen, the traders and contractors who will be quick to assist new industries and profit by their presence. It is my intention to call a meeting shortly after the House, of the African businessmen with a view to persuading them to have a stake in some of the industries established in this Region. Our people are becoming investment conscious and I have no doubt in my mind that an appeal of this nature will be welcomed.

It is not perhaps realised how much industry is already at work in Eastern Nigeria. The Shell-BP. installation are now enormous; they will increase. There is the cement industry at Nkalagu which is doing well and which will shortly be expanding to produce 200,000 tons of cement a year. There are a number of other industries already working in Aba and Port Harcourt. I refer to Brewery, Tobacco factory and so on. The interesting point in these establishments is that they give employment to thousands of our people and most appropriately, Nigerianisation is being implemented by each of them in the same degree and speed as our Government Departments. But I would like to say that employment is not enough. Like the Nkalagu cement industry, one looks forward with optimism when older industries like these will throw off some of their shares to Nigerian public—for indigenous participation.

May I now draw the attention of the House to some of the industrial projects which are under negotiation or the factories which will

soon start production. In all these industries, as I shall now enumerate, Government has a substantial share.

First there is the Williams and Williams factory in Port Harcourt producing metal window and door frames. The big building is nearly completed and the factory should start production at the end of this month.

Next, there is the Nigerian Aluminium Ltd. Work on this factory for producing aluminium roofing sheets from imported aluminium coil, has already begun. But a much more important project is under negotiation. The company are hoping to start on Aluminium Rolling Mill for producing aluminium coil, etc. from the raw ingots. This is a one and quarter million pounds project which it is hoped will be started soon. The object of this Mill will be to serve the three factories for aluminium products which the Nigerian Aluminium Products Limited are setting up in the Western, Northern and Eastern Regions; and it may also serve other parts of Africa.

Next, there is the Glass Factory. This is another big project involving a capital investment at the start of £2,600,000. This Government will be investing in it, and also the E.R.D.C. The sand in the area near Port Harcourt is said to be most excellent for making glass. We are awaiting further reports of technical details before a start can be made.

Another very promising development is the establishment of a Bicycle Factory. We have two companies both seriously considering the manufacture of bicycles. There is the Raleigh Industry and there is the British Cycle Corporation, makers of the Hercules and Phillips bicycles. We welcome them both.

The N.E.M.C.O. Cement Factory at Port Harcourt is now on its feet, and the Printing Corporation will go into production in May. The Cinema Corporation, I am glad to say, has now gone into partnership with the firm of Nankani Cinemas. The new company which has been formed is called Nankani Cinemas (Nigeria) Limited. Lastly but perhaps the most important of all is the determination of the Government to pursue vigorously the establishment of the Iron and Steel Industry in Enugu. I do not think I can expatiate on



this more than what the hon. Premier has said. But this much have I to say: whatever may be our fate and fortune in this industry, we are going into it because it is the only basic industry which will certainly promote other ancillary industries for which there is already enough market in this country. I cannot at this stage give the House details of the negotiations that are going on and the careful examinations which are being made, but I can give this assurance that we are leaving no stone unturned to bring this industry to fruition. Mining, as hon. Members are aware, is under the Federal Government. Before the Kaine Commission, I made a point that the only alternative use of coal is the establishment of iron and steel industry. Our electricity is cheapest in the Federation and there are other ingredients namely, iron-ore and limestone, in sufficient quantity to justify the setting up of this industry. It is my intention to make an appeal to all parts of the industrial world for the immediate setting up of this industry in this Region. I have already spoken to Japanese Mission on this venture and I propose to carry out the campaign as intensively as possible. May I at this stage, pay tribute to the work of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund which has been helping us with feasibility studies or special surveys into many of these industries. Their help has been most valuable and is much appreciated by this Government.

I will briefly mention the other Divisions of my Ministry. In the Projects Division, the Ekulu Pottery has had a year of most satisfactory progress. The new Kiln is now being built and the output will be expanded. It has been demonstrated that the local pottery can be improved and sold on a commercial basis. The Aba Textiles are also doing well and are expanding steadily. Some mechanical equipment has now been brought into operation at the Aba Textile Centre. This is the first time in this country that such equipment has been used in conjunction with hand weaving; it has greatly increased the output of the Centre. The new Laboratory is now being built and should be completed by October this year. This will enable the Industrial Chemist to embark on the important investigations which must be made.

On Co-operatives, may I say that there are 1,317 various Co-operatives Societies in the

Region. It is true that about 939 of them are located in the former Calabar Province, but I am doing everything possible in my Ministry to encourage the formation of these societies in other parts of the Region. Staff are being posted to almost all stations in the Region, particularly in those places where the indication is that the people are keen to unite and form Co-operative Societies. Recently, we have posted Inspectors to Degema, Ahoada and Nnewi. When the eight Inspectors now undergoing training are available, this policy of posting staff to entirely new areas will continue. As hon. Members are aware, Government made a grant of £50,000 to the movement last year, and guaranteed overdrafts up to another £50,000, to encourage Produce Marketing. This enabled the societies to increase their purchases considerably.

The Trade Division is doing considerable work, in advising traders on the proper system of book-keeping. Many firms' accounts have been built up to the satisfaction and joy of the Managing Directors and proprietors that they are now able to ascertain their financial position in their business engagements.

I wish to draw the attention of the House to the new post of Industrial Promotions Officer, Group 6 which has been created. This is in recognition of the importance this Government attaches to the establishment of new industries in this Region. The need is for someone with a wide knowledge of the industrial world and business acumen and one who should conduct preliminary discussion on various industrial ventures and advise me properly and promptly.

Finally, I would like to say that we have a great future in front of us and I make bold to declare that the Eastern Region of Nigeria will one day be one of the greatest industrial areas of tropical Africa.

*Sitting suspended at 12.00 noon.*

*Sitting resumed at 12.30 p.m.*

**Mr I. U. Imeh** (Abak Division): I have just one or two observations to make on the Ministry of Commerce. Last year, I spoke very strongly on the policy of the Ministry of



[MR IMEH]

Commerce with particular reference to the Trade Division. This year, I have been sadly disappointed to see that the Trade Division of this Ministry has remained stagnant. It is very hopeless to see that the Trade Division still remains with only one Trade Officer and two Assistant Trade Officers since 1955. I should have thought that by now the Ministry should be large enough to expand its activities to other parts of the Region. It was the intention of this Ministry, I think, to post one Assistant Trade Officer each to Calabar, Aba, Port Harcourt, Onitsha and Enugu. But this Ministry started with two Assistant Trade Officers at Onitsha and Port Harcourt, leaving Enugu, Calabar and Aba—three large trading towns. There is no reason why Assistant Trade Officers should not be posted to these three big towns.

The Trade Officers are doing excellent work, I quite agree, but why ride a willing horse to death? The post of Principal Trade Officer has been frozen, if you will look at the Estimates. It was advertised, and I would like to know from the Minister why that post has not been filled up till now, and somebody has been acting Principal Trade Officer without any allowance. I am very strongly appealing to the Minister of Commerce to post at least one Assistant Trade Officer to Aba, one to Enugu, and one to Calabar. I find also that the Project Division is top-heavy with the heavy salaries of Industrial Officer and Industrial Chemist. I wonder what these two people are doing. They are actually doing nothing; they are dependent on other officers for information. If the money spent on them were used to provide Assistant Trade Officers, I think, something better should have resulted. I would advise the Minister that rather than keeping these people there their posts should be scrapped and able Africans, who can interpret the policy of this Ministry to the illiterate people who need their advice, employed. So that while the Principal Trade Officer is engaged on administrative work in the office, the Trade Officers will be spared to do supervisory work outside.

I have not seen the work of the Board of Trade. I wonder what this Board of Trade has been doing. It is supposed to advise the Ministry, more especially when we have these Trade Missions from every part of the world coming

into the Region. We have been told by the Minister a few minutes ago that we have Trade Missions visiting this country and that we have several industrial projects at hand. It is their duty to advise the Minister, and the Minister, I am suggesting, should always meet these Trade Missions with the members of the Board of Trade who are supposed to be trade experts. They should not be hand-picked men but trade experts as members of the Board of Trade and they should then be in a position to advise the Minister and hold free discussions with trade experts from other parts of the world.

Now I come to the amount earmarked for grants for rural industries. This is far too small. I am making this as an appeal that the amount should be increased, and I notice with very great concern that the pottery centres at Ikotobo, Etinan and Ikot Ekpene are closed down. The Government seems to concentrate on the Okigwi and Ekulu Pottery Centres. All we have and all we hear is nothing except something for these two pottery centres. I am calling upon the Minister to make a tour of Ikot Ekpene, Ikotobo and Etinan where these people, out of their own efforts, started something. I call upon the Minister to help these people.

I would like to say that industries should not be centred at Port Harcourt and Aba, for fear of invasion. Why do we centre all our industries at Port Harcourt and Aba? Industrialisation should be extended to other areas so that all, including the village people, may benefit from what the Government is doing. If the problem is that of transport then it is the duty of the Government to provide means of transport. Many people would like these industries to be established in their areas. Why should the industries be centred at Port Harcourt and Aba? They are very nice projects and I would like my people too to be benefited. It is not only when people live in big towns that they have to benefit from what the Government is trying to do.

And now a word or two on the Co-operative Societies Division of this Ministry. We in the old Calabar Province want more Co-operative Societies. We want more money for the expansion of the Co-operative Union



of Eastern Nigeria. If there is any project or any section of the Government Departments that brings immediate benefit to the people it is the Co-operative Societies in the old Calabar Province. You will note from the speech by the Minister that we have over nine hundred Co-operative Societies and I hope, as the Minister is encouraging the establishment of similar societies in other areas, he will continue to encourage those already in existence, particularly in the old Calabar Province.

It is interesting to note that the Minister of Agriculture has now earmarked something for loans. I will like the Minister of Commerce to earmark a certain amount for loans for small industries to our people. If we are not living in big towns to be able to benefit from the big industries, we in the rural areas should benefit from what we are able to do with Government financial help.

**Mr M. U. Etuk (Uyo Division):** I would like to thank the Minister for his statement with regard to his speedily proceeding with the question of establishing an Iron and Steel Industry in the Eastern Region. It is a worthwhile project. Last year when the Minister made a statement on this Head I think he gave a promise that he would do something to expand the Division of Trade. But we have come back this year to find that we still have one Trade Officer and two Assistant Trade Officers. It is agreed that in any country trade is the life-wire of the wealth of that country. The traders have so far expressed appreciation of the work done by these officers and are really benefited. They have been able to keep their books well and enabled the Assessment Officers to be able to assess them for their tax payments. Why not expand this Division in the best interests of the traders? It is really not good seeing one man resident at Port Harcourt coming to do work at Aba, Ikot Ekpene, Uyo, Calabar, round to Opobo, Degema, Okrika, and Bonny, and sometimes in a year after starting the traders on systematic book-keeping he may not be able to return to them again to see whether they are able to carry on what he has started, until next year and by the time he comes back either the traders are finding the book-keeping too difficult to get on with or they have actually forgotten; and ultimately the result of the work is actually

lost. I support the hon. Member who said that more Trade Officers and Assistant Trade Officers should be employed, and one should actually be stationed at Aba, one at Calabar and another at Enugu. Why I mention these important towns is because many traders seem to concentrate at those big towns. That does not mean that their services or activities could not be extended to other townships.

Again, many will agree that the masses benefit more on the co-operative system. There cannot be too many repetition in the demand that this society should be assisted because it is on that level that we actually bring relief to the masses. More money should be given to this society, so that credit may be available to the farmers in the villages to engage in their trade. We notice that there is still in the Estimates, Sub-head 1, Item 7: "Industrial Chemist". I hope the retention of this officer with a sum of £2,240 is not inhibiting systematic progress and expansion of the Trade Division; because actually I do not see the reason for retaining a Chemist when we have no laboratory. What is he working? What result has he produced so far? That money could actually be utilised to expand the Trade Division of this Ministry. I am not saying that chemistry is not good, or that the Chemist does not know his work, but how will you bring a man, you want the man to cut a palm tree, you just look at the palm tree which is all ripe, you do not give him machet, and he cannot get at it? This is exactly the position of this man here. If put in the office, he is a chemist, no doubt; but actually he cannot use his knowledge, and they grow rustic as years go by.

At Ikot Abasi Etinan, there is a pottery centre. I will invite the Minister to inspect this centre and see the good work done. So that this centre may actually benefit by the grant that is now being earmarked for rural industries. We have been going on, single-handed, handicapped by funds, so that all we ask Government to consider is giving grants to these centres, not only to Ikot Abasi, but to Ikot Ekpene as well, and not to concentrate all the money at Enugu and Okigwi. It is always argued that you cannot extend industry to rural areas because you have no power, no electricity, etc. How long will Government continue to put forward this as an excuse?



[MR ETUK]

And when we ask the Government to put electricity in these other rural towns, the reply is that it is not their concern; it is the Federal Government's. But I think the time has come, something must be done to be able to assist these rural people to come within the reach of social amenities through industry. I do not like making reference to Western Region, but it is rather praiseworthy that we should take a leaf from them. If the Federal Government cannot make available through the Electricity Corporation electricity to rural towns, I think we can invite private companies; and the inhabitants themselves will actually help to defray the cost of establishing the electricity powers in their towns. So I think the Government will consider, as an agent for the Federal Government, to do something about it.

**Mr S. N. Alo** (Abakaliki Division): I have just one point to make about this Ministry and that is about the Lead-Zinc in Abakaliki. For over 40 years now a Company has been staying there and nothing has come out of that mining. If the Government cannot achieve anything from the mining companies. I think Government should ask them to discontinue staying there, wasting the land for nothing. And if there is sufficient zinc the Minister should make it possible for the smelting of the mineral to be done at Abakaliki. After all, we in this country require plenty of zinc-lead and if this is produced that will be cheaper for us for building purposes, and other work in the country.

Another point I would want to make is to ask the Minister of Commerce to make a study of whether there is possibility of having any bye-products from rice husks which are lying in waste in Abakaliki town; and if any it will help to bring in more money to the farmers and other people of this Region.

**Mr J. A. Etuhube** (Ikot Ekpene Division): I rise to thank the Government for its gigantic programme to industrialise the Region. From the Government's statement here, we have several industries opening in the Region; but I want to appeal to the Government that these industries should be spread all over the Region because it is this question of concentrating development projects and certain amenities in some areas of the Region that has brought about great discontent. We have in my Division

what we call "Esop Ufon" Pottery in Ikot Ekpene. Time without number, we have appealed to Government to develop this industry and more or less Government has not hearkened to the demand of the people; and not only do we appeal to the Government now to bring about some kind of relief to the people of my Division, but also when Government is establishing bigger industries we expect at least Annang Province will have one.

**Mr J. M. Ito** (Ikot Ekpene Division): I want to make little observations on certain points. The very first point is the recent incident which took place here—when a delegation of Stockfish Union was sent to the Minister of Commerce from Port Harcourt, protesting against certain intrigue undertaken by these foreign firms.

**The Chairman:** I would like to remind the hon. Member that his voice is very low indeed because you find that in the *Hansard* that these people are not able to get exactly what hon. Members say and it is extremely annoying when one is reported otherwise.

**Mr Ito:** Many thanks.

I was saying that I remember that in 1950 while I was a licensed importer and exporter, I lost a great deal—a sum of £1,300 in stockfish trade. These foreign firms keep on importing stockfish in large quantities whenever we African traders import stockfish and by that we have to lose a great deal because when their orders arrive they always sell at very low prices, thereby causing us to lose a great deal. That is the point and I wish the Government to take step so that these traders might be helped. Our people are now suffering and when a man is trading on stockfish, or on other goods, he expects to get profit, but our people are losing from time to time. Fancy a man starting a trade with £1,000 and would go at the end of three years without anything. That is the fate of the stockfish traders. I feel the Minister of Commerce will take note of this and find a way to solve this problem. We are losing a great deal.

The second point I would like to say is in connection with the Nkalagu Cement Company. I have said sometime in this House that the people living in the remotest areas do not enjoy this our locally made cement and if there



is a way Government can help with a view to sending the cement into the remotest part of the country, I think it will do us good. I have suggested, I think last year, in this House that we appoint District Councils our sole agents so that the rural people in the rural areas will enjoy the benefit of this locally made goods.

The other point is about Raffia Industry. I am asking the Minister of Commerce to see into it and to come to our rescue by giving these people loans to continue. There are orders from Europe and America and these people up till now could not supply them and by so doing they are losing their reputation. I wish the Minister will take note of this and cause money to be available so that these people may continue to try.

Other speakers have said something about pottery industries and I wish to emphasise again that the pottery at East Ibibio Ikono, Enyong Division, Uyo Province, should be encouraged by way of grant.

**The Minister of Commerce:** I would like to start with the last speaker, hon. Ito. He raised the question of helping the traders on stockfish. I have recently had delegation in my office of stockfish traders in the Eastern Region and they raised the point of their difficulties in competing with the expatriate firms in this particular field of trade. As hon. Members know, trade is a concurrent subject, it is also external subject exclusively Federal subject and what I can promise is that I will take up the matter with the Federal Minister of Commerce.

On Raffia, this year I made a grant of £50 to Ikot Ekpene Raffia Industry; but before that, my predecessor in office had already approved or recommended a loan which, I understand, was made to Ikot Ekpene Raffia Industry in order to speed its production. I replied also during the Budget debate that the export quota of Ikot Ekpene Raffia is being studied in my Ministry with a view to seeing what utilisation can be made of that particular material.

On Nkalagu Cement, as hon. Members know, Nkalagu Cement Company is a commercial entity and it is not within my province to

dictate to the Nkalagu Cement Company where they should sell their products. It is a sort of commodity which already is selling like hot cake in the whole Region, and I think where the traders are keen and have the aptitude, they will find no difficulty in getting Nkalagu Cement Industry to list them as their sales agents. Various hon. Members have spoken about helping pottery industries in their various places. I realise their interest and whatever I can do in the ensuing financial year to help these local industries, I will do; but I would say that this is not to be done at the expense of developing the Ekulu pottery which is already becoming a viable proposition and Government has appropriated a large sum with a view to attracting an overseas interest which will develop this Ekulu pottery into a very big commercial venture. Already the products of Ekulu pottery and Okigwi pottery are being sold in all parts of the country.

Hon. Alo has asked what has happened about Abakaliki Lead-zinc. My answer is that there has been a drop in the world price for Lead-zinc and for that reason the Mines Development Syndicate has not been keen in pursuing this industry. We on our own part here in the Eastern Region have been in consultation with the Federal Government because mining is entirely under the Federal Government. Almost every year hon. Members see in the Estimates an Indent of £50,000 which this Government proposes to contribute towards the development of Abakaliki Lead-zinc. I refer the hon. Gentleman to Head 804, Item 4, in the Capital Budget. The question of using the Abakaliki rice straw is being studied in my Ministry and of recent I have had talks with overseas interest which intends to set up a company here which will utilise this rice straw in producing ceiling boards. If that proves to be an economic proposition, it will be welcome.

Hon. Imeh spoke about the Trade Division in my Ministry and suggested that it should be expanded. The importance of posting Assistant Trade Officers to particular places depends on the volume of trade in those areas. In Calabar, for example, I gathered recently that the U.A.C. intends to pull out because the volume of its trade there is wanting. I feel too that where the volume of trade justifies the posting of Trade Officers it must be considered.



[MR NWODO]

But I am just tied up by the funds made available by the Minister of Finance. When the volume of trade, as I said, justifies it, there is no doubting the fact that I can approach the Minister of Finance with confidence and demand the increase of the allocation and in consequence more Trade Officers.

As regards Industrial Officers, I did not say that they are doing nothing. If the hon. Member listened carefully he would have heard when I enumerated a lot of industries which are being attracted into the Eastern Region and he would agree with me that these Industrial Officers have been instrumental to this in one way or the other. They have been going through various applications and processing them and bringing to me salient points which will help me to determine the establishment of such industries in this Region. With reference to other Regions, I would say that our Projects Division has not expanded as it ought to. What happened recently was that one of the Chief Industrial Officers has taken appointment with the Federal Government so that virtually, at the moment, we have no Chief Industrial Officer.

I do not think that I have left any points untouched which hon. Members have made. The question of siting industries in a particular locality, I have explained, is due to economic survey which is supposed to have been carried out by experts.

This is one of the points on which the Leader of the Opposition had not followed other Members to complain and it is hoped that Members know the essence of siting an industry at a particular locality. Evidently this is governed by certain factors which are beyond my control.

*Question put and agreed to.*

#### Head 429.—Ministry of Economic Planning

*Question proposed: That a sum not exceeding £20,300 for Head 429—Ministry of Economic Planning—stand part of the Schedule.*

**Mr S. G. Ikoku** (Enyong Division): I would like to raise just three points here.

The first point is that it seems to me that the Government has the idea that the Ministry of Economic Planning will be a sort of an all

planning body; that is, it will handle all aspects of development—economic, social and otherwise. May I refer you, Sir, to the Premier's Speech as recorded in the *Hansard* of the 4th of April—at column 501, we have the following:

“The Ministry of Economic Planning will plan all aspects of our economy. The new Ministry of Economic Planning will be able to define objectives and targets which executive Ministries like Commerce, Agriculture, Education, Health and Works will endeavour to attain. Thus the new Ministry will not only be concerned with planning in Commerce but planning in other fields. Only through a co-ordinated plan setting out priorities can orderly and rapid progress result.”

I wonder whether it is entirely wise to entrust this new Ministry with this all-embracing form of planning. If this Ministry were entrusted with Economic Planning, industries and agriculture, the more manageable it will be for the staff than to bring in all sorts of troubles: health planning; social planning and the rest of it. It will be giving the new Ministry a little bit too much. I can quite appreciate the Premier's desire for a sort of single co-ordinating centre for all forms of development in the Region, but I would rather suggest that this sort of planning which he has in mind is the work of sub-committee of Executive Council. The Ministry of Economic Planning should not wander away into social, health and other sorts of planning.

My second point is that I hope that the provision of £20,300 for this Ministry is merely a token provision and that the Premier or the Minister of Finance will not grudge this Ministry any expansion, if and when the need arises.

Thirdly, I would like to tackle an idea and concept which seems to worry my mind. It has been stated often by the Premier and others that this Region must be industrialised. At the same time, it has been stated that agricultural development will be the basis of our economy and this has shown the idea that we must give priority to agricultural development and carry out an agrarian revolution. I think there is need for clear thinking



on this point. I do not believe that in our new programme for economic development, we should regard agriculture as prior or more important than industry. Firstly, because we have a very heavy population in this Region—it is about 721 people per square mile in certain parts, and we have very little land available for large scale mechanised agriculture. In fact, when the Minister of Agriculture spoke before recess, he did draw attention to that fact. Again, our land tenure system is a major obstacle which we will find very difficult to overcome. In order to allow large scale mechanised farming there will come the question of the cost of the machines.

The second consideration is that we are blessed with mineral resources, like coal, iron ore, limestone and mica and in view of the fact that the land is already very thickly populated, I think this Government should concentrate on the development of the mineral resources of this Region, in which case, industrialisation should be the more important and agriculture should come later. An important consideration is what is going to happen to the heavy population of the Region. If we are going to mechanise agriculture, it means drawing off a large number of people from the land and surely, if we are not going to reckon on industries, we are going to have a lot of difficulties as a result of agrarian revolution; and so I would like to take my seat confident that the Government while agreeing with the importance of agriculture will push ahead with industries; because in my own way of thinking and judging from the facts of the Region, an industrial revolution is a prior condition for successful agrarian revolution in the Region. It is the industries that will produce these equipment at lower costs. It is an industry that will sustain the heavy population on land and make it easier for the idea of rural resettlement to be easily accepted by the people. Nobody is going to leave his land because you preached to him the need for large-scale mechanised farming; nobody is going to leave his land until he has alternative employment. So I am just trying to raise this point for the sake of clarity and to make the point to the Government that they should press ahead with industrialisation, and agriculture will follow.

**The Premier (Dr M. I. Okpara):** May I thank the hon. the Leader of the Opposition once again for contributing to this Head of the Estimates. To take his first observation, he was wondering why this Ministry should be, according to him, an all planning body. As I said in the *Hansard* of the 4th of April which he has quoted, a lark cannot fly with one wing; a lark can only fly with two wings. If we plan only for industrialisation without considering social services, we might well find that our planning is so deficient in that respect that it will not work. After all, we should have trained minds eventually that will run these industries and the only places where we can get people trained are the universities and the various technical colleges. So that unless you have a co-ordinated plan with the Ministry of Education producing so many experts necessary for that particular plan, the Ministry of Health producing so many expert Doctors that will look after everybody, and then the other Ministries, such as Commerce and Agriculture and Works producing the manufacturing materials and the various utilities, you will find that your planning is top-heavy and possibly deficient in the very necessary element. That is why we want a Ministry that will, as I said, define the target. For instance, we want the Ministry of Education in five years to produce 500 Scientists; we want the Ministry of Health to produce 200 Doctors that we shall require in the next five years; we want the Ministry of Works to tar these major roads because we must have the roads that will carry the manufactured goods and agricultural products to the various spots and so on. It is only a Ministry, as I understand it, that is completely dedicated to this and doing nothing else so that it will be able to plan effectively. I do not think it is a mistake to include the social services because much as we are spending a lot of money on these social services now, and they happen to fall into some sort of disrepute in spite of that, we must not forget that they are still very essential. Unless you are healthy, you cannot manufacture anything; can you? (*Hon. Members: No?*) And you need to train these young boys and girls in the schools, colleges and so on; so that it is an all-embracing plan which the Ministry of Economic Planning will produce and which Executive Council will approve before implementation. I think it will be for the Ministry, as I said, to



[THE PREMIER]

set down what are the priorities; what we have to do first; whether it is Agriculture or Industrialisation.

The second point is that of the actual vote in the Estimates—£20,300. I assure him that it is really in the nature of a token figure. I do not quite know where I made this point, but I think I did make the point earlier on during this particular meeting of the House, that we want to start in a small way and expand as in other countries. I did make specific mention of one place called Puerto Rico. I can assure him that as soon as the need arises for us to expand this particular Ministry, I am sure that my Colleague, the Minister of Finance, will be quite happy to make the necessary arrangements.

His final point was that we should give Industrialisation priority over Agriculture. I think, by and large, we are all saying the same thing; but it is really difficult now to tell the Ministry of Economic Planning what to do. It will be for them to set down these priorities. If the Ministry of Economic Planning say that the priority should be Industrialisation, then it ought to be Industrialisation because that will be the recommendation of the experts. But if they say it should be Agriculture, then, I am afraid, if we really want the things to go on properly, it ought to be Agriculture. We are saying now that both Agriculture and Industrialisation ought to be given priority. There is something to be said for having both of them as priorities at the present time. If we had a famine in the Eastern Region we would know the importance of agriculture. You cannot manufacture shoes, bicycles and motor cars on empty stomach. The population—and it is now a teeming population—the population of eight million has to be fed and therefore I think that at the moment only the Ministry has to define the priorities clearly. The policy we are pursuing is the policy that accepts agricultural development and industrial development as priorities.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**The Chairman:** Hon. Members, the next Head is one which I know will cause much debate. I think one great asset of a Parliamentarian is the ability to criticise in the mildest

words. If he only uses harsh and hard words, then he is not a Parliamentarian and I will not accept that.

#### Head 430.—Ministry of Education

*Question proposed: That a sum not exceeding £7,287,600 for Head 430.—Ministry of Education—stand part of the Schedule.*

**The Minister of Education (Mr G. E. Okeke):** When a Minister of Education rises in this House, he can always be assured a good audience, for Education is a subject very close to the heart of every Eastern Nigerian and accordingly a subject that every Member of this House studies with a critical eye. Education also suffers from the scrutiny of other critical eyes, notably my colleague the Minister of Finance. The expenditure under the Education head of the Estimates is by far the largest of any Ministry and so, naturally, my colleagues in the Cabinet keep their critical eyes fixed very clearly on any proposals I have for expenditure.

The ever increasing cost of Grants-in-Aid is certainly a matter for concern. We estimated that even if we had not freed Standard II this year and if we had not announced any new concessions for Sixth Forms, if we had not added any new Secondary Schools to the assisted list, and even if we had not subsidised a teachers' Salaries Revision, the cost of Grants-in-Aid in 1960-61 would have been £.6 million more than the cost in 1959-60. As hon. Members know, we have, in fact, made considerable concessions and permitted substantial expansion. Standard II was made fee-free last January and the cost of that during the coming financial year is estimated at £375,000. We have cut the A.L.C. in Higher School Certificate classes by half; we have increased the rates of passage allowance for Voluntary Agency expatriate teachers in order to encourage more graduate teachers from overseas to serve in our Secondary Schools and Teacher Training Colleges; we have approved a 12½ per cent salary increase for all Voluntary Agency teachers and parents are not being asked to bear any part of it by way of increased school fees.

Now that the entire Junior Primary School system is fee-free with only modest fees being



charged in the Senior Primary classes, most people would say that Government has done enough for Primary Education for the time being. Greater emphasis is being placed today by both educationalists and the people generally on more Secondary Education and better quality Secondary Education. A decade ago each village tried to outdo the other in the excellence of its Primary School as His Excellency remarked in his Speech from the Throne. Today, however, all the wealthier rural communities are endeavouring to establish Secondary Schools of their own. This rivalry and self-help is in the best community development traditions of this Region, but it needs to be controlled and directed into the most profitable channels. We cannot permit new Secondary Schools to spring indiscriminately all over the Region regardless of the Divisions in which they are sited and regardless of the overall needs of Secondary Education. Every prospective Secondary School Proprietor tells the same story; he will put up buildings without seeking any capital grant from Government and that he will maintain a high standard of Education without seeking recurrent grants-in-aid. In fact, however, every community opening a new Secondary School does in its heart of hearts expect to be grant-aided after some years of operation. This is not unreasonable but clearly there is a limit to the grants-in-aid for Education that this Government can pay. Certain Divisions still have not enough Secondary Schools and, to my mind, it would be wrong to commit all our grants-in-aid to Divisions that have excess Secondary Schools before each Division in the Region has at least one. In the normal course of events, a newly-opened Secondary School may expect to be grant-aided in its fourth year. I learnt, however, that the Abakaliki and Awgu Divisions had no grant-aided Secondary Schools although each had one Secondary School that had been in existence for two years. Accordingly, I made an exception in those two cases and the Secondary Schools of these two Divisions were added to the assisted list one year earlier than is usual.

We are now approaching the stage where we have almost sufficient Secondary Schools for our needs. What we have to do is to improve their standard, for it is the quality of the Secondary Education which our children receive that determine the numbers of Eastern Nigerians who can secure entry to the Univer-

sity College, Ibadan, to our New University of Nigeria and to other higher educational institutions. A few years ago, West African School Certificate was regarded as an adequate qualification; today, everyone knows that without a good Higher School Certificate or G.C.E. Advanced Level a boy or girl cannot get into Ibadan or any of the better quality Universities overseas. Hence we are now doing all we can to improve the quality of the Sixth Forms and approval has been given to six more to open. Sixth Forms are expensive to run, for they need staff of the highest quality and much equipment. This was why we cut the A.L.C. at such Forms by half. When making allocation of capital grants, I have also done my best to encourage those schools with Sixth Forms. In a word, the lesson to be learned today is: Secondary Education is not enough, we must have better quality Secondary Education.

Turning now to Teacher-Training, most educationalists are now agreed that we have sufficient Training Colleges for our needs. It may be that some of the E.T.C.s should be converted to H.E.T.C.s; but the output from them is now more than 4,000 trained teachers a year. Accordingly, we are not allowing any more new colleges to open for the time being.

Our educational system attracts the increasing interest of countries overseas and we are now beginning to get substantial help from that quarter. The Commonwealth Education Conference was held in Oxford last year and every Commonwealth Government including this one was represented. As a result of this Conference, the British Government is going to give 500 scholarships a year to students from the Commonwealth to study in Universities in Britain. The intention is that they should be for post-graduate courses of study. Numerous applications were received from Eastern Nigerians and these have been passed on by my Ministry for the consideration of the Committee in London, that is, to make the awards. At the same time other Commonwealth countries stated they would be allocating 500 other scholarships for Commonwealth students.

The British Government also undertook to provide a number of free Teacher-Training



[MR G. E. OKEKE]

places in Teacher-Training Colleges in Britain for teachers from the less developed countries of the Commonwealth. This Government has asked for a number of places and I hope several of our teachers will be able to proceed there next October.

The British Government has also undertaken to accept financial responsibility for paying what amounts to an inducement allowance for certain key posts in Commonwealth countries. We have applied for five such teaching posts in Government Service to receive financial aid and I hope it may be possible later to expand the scheme to certain Voluntary Agency teaching posts.

The United States Government, through I.C.A. has also begun to help Education in this Region in a substantial and practical way. We have just completed building a number of new Handicraft Centres in various parts of the Region. The International Co-operation Administration, I.C.A. for short, has provided us with two Handicraft Instructors to supervise these newly established Centres. Both have come from Ohio University and I would like to say how much we in this Region welcomed the arrival of Dr Perry and Mr Miner. I.C.A. pay their salaries while this Government is responsible for their passages and local allowances within Nigeria.

C.C.T.A. (Commission of Co-operation in Territories South of the Sahara) has also begun to help us. This is an international organisation which arranges for different countries in Africa to help each other with experienced staff. We have the greatest need for an experienced Science Teacher to supervise Science Teaching in Secondary Schools, particularly in the Sixth Forms. Through the good offices of the C.C.T.A. the Federal Government of Rhodesia and Nyasaland has provided Mr Knottenbelt to serve in this Region for the first two terms of this year. This Government has to pay his passage one way only and to provide him with accommodation while in Nigeria. I must say that we welcome him here most warmly.

The African-American Institute which is a philanthropic body established by American businessmen with the object of encouraging good Afro-American relations is also doing its

best to assist us. Recently they voted one scholarship to be awarded to an Eastern Nigerian to study in the United States and they have a Teacher Placement Programme whereby they recruit graduate teachers in the United States for service in Voluntary Agency Schools in this Region. Some have already arrived here and I hope that more will follow.

Everyone recognises that as this country becomes more and more industrialised, so will the need for technicians increase. With this in mind Government is building a new Technical Institute at Port Harcourt at the cost of £150,000. Work is about to start and we hope that it will be opened in January next year for the first intake. Once again I.C.A. has come to our help and has promised to provide 4 of the Technical Teaching Staff. At the same time they will train Nigerians both on the job and short courses overseas to replace these American technicians when they return home.

There is very little left to say about scholarships. You will recollect that the new Scholarship Policy came into force a year ago. This provided for 100 University scholarships; 510 Secondary School awards; 204 Teacher Training awards and 102 Technical awards distributed on a District Council basis of equal number. The expenditure on Scholarships went up by over £100,000 a year. Certain District Councils that embrace large populations complained that a system which made awards on a District Council basis was prejudicial to their interests. Accordingly, we have stated that in future these awards will be made on a population basis.

Hon. Members will also recollect that Government scholars are now no longer bonded to serve Government on completion of their studies. They merely have to undertake to reside and work in the Eastern Region for five years. This has been warmly welcomed by our scholars. In brief, our scholarship scheme has been so successful that we now have sufficient qualified Nigerians to fill almost all the posts in the Public Service. By the time a scholar who enters a University for the first time this year returns to Nigeria a competition for such vacancies as exist in the Public Service is likely to be very acute. However, the need for trained and qualified people for



teaching in Voluntary Agency Institutions and for industry and commerce has probably never been greater. There is no doubt that the Secondary Schools and Teacher Training Colleges of this Region can absorb all the newly qualified graduates who come off their production line during the next five years. If, as we hope, industry and commerce expand in this Region, their needs for trained personnel will be insatiable. I hope, therefore, that our young men returning home from overseas will turn their attentions to jobs in teaching, in commerce and industry and realise that Government is not the sole nor necessarily the best employer.

**Rev. M. D. Opara** (Owerri Division): The only point I want to touch on this Ministry of Education is the leakage of question papers and loss of certificates in the same Ministry. Some time last two years, there was a very bad report of certain kind of leakage of Standard Six papers. That was the one that was detected but we do not know whether things like that have been happening and I wonder what the Ministry has done to keep such people that this year again we hear that certificates have been lost in the same very Ministry. I think the Ministry of Education is one of the most important Ministries that cater for the welfare of the people. The people to be kept in this Ministry, mostly in this very important section—Examinations—should be people of very good calibre. I see no reason why every time we have this report. Last time, there was a leakage of papers. My question is, who is the real custodian of the question papers; who is at the head there? This year, how can 500 papers be carried away from the office while it is one man's work. I do not want to say much about this but it worries our mind because in the rural areas, let me take Owerri Division, for instance before the examination time, there are many people who go about styling themselves "Clerks in the Ministry of Education". Last year, immediately after the examination, we were made to understand that certain boys and girls went and bought question papers without the consent or the knowledge of their parents or even teachers. They had a place where they used to go and buy this and, this question papers are sold to them from one of the clerks in the Ministry. That is what they say and really, I did all I could to see if I could trace them out but these boys and girls

have sworn not to say the name or where they bought the papers. This is a very bad practice and I would like the Minister of Education to take a very serious step about it and see how it can be curbed. When you visit the Ministry of Education, you see that most of the people who are there are very nice and honest people as we have known them before but this time something must be wrong somewhere. This is the only point I want to stress.

**Mr J. A. Agba** (Ogoja Division): I have a lot of things to say on this Ministry, but while saying them I would really like to confine myself to special areas, particularly the rural areas. I would like to say, that with all sincerity, I would ask the Minister to consider each point I present to him from a friendly point of view, not from a hostile point of view. And I would like to say also that whereas I am not speaking *ex-cathedra*, I am at the same time contributing very important views to this Head.

I begin with Primary Schools. I wish to tell the Minister that Nigeria as a whole is on the threshold of Independence, and I repeat what I said before, that what we expect is that all nooks and corners of the Region will enjoy this Independence, not only a special section of the Region. I would like to say that the means by which every person in the Region will come within the enjoyment of the Independence is education. And so I am suggesting seriously to the Minister that whereas in the Budget Speech and also in the Governor's Speech from the Throne, each of which I quote to you, with your permission, and also from the speeches of hon. Members in the House, I say that the intention of the ruling of the Ministry to stop subsidising or to improve the Primary Schools is not compatible with our present position particularly in the rural areas.

In the Governor's Speech from the Throne, page 10 paragraph 36, there is something said about Secondary Schools:

"The Ministry of Education has been under great pressure to approve the opening of the new Secondary Schools".

Before I go on to read it I like you to understand that I am taking it that the basis of



[MR AGBA]

Secondary School is Primary education. I will state here to show you that even though the problem confronting you is Secondary School, it should have something to do with Primary education. The need for more Secondary Schools, particularly in certain Divisions that have none or inadequate number is undoubted.

"No less than 186 applications for new schools were received and 27 of these were approved in principle by the Ministry".

So far, Sir. But here you have in the Budget Speech where the Minister said:

"Looking at the trend in our revenue I feel it is my duty to say that we shall be unable to afford for 10 years to come any further broadening in the basis of the larger subsidies which we now pay towards the cost of Primary School education".

I say that the first one is relevant to Secondary Schools, but the second one I have just read pertains to primary education. I do congratulate the Government for the much it has done towards education in the Region. But from this kind of statement made by the Minister of Finance in his Budget Speech, I am inclined to believe and say that the Government is not prepared to give more money to the expansion of Primary Schools. If that is the ruling of the Ministry, that ruling should not run through the whole Region for those people in the rural areas will never stand the chance of coming within the threshold of those that are already far advanced. What I am trying to state here is that any particular ruling should have due regard to the areas which are still backward. Those are the ones that the Ministry should be concerned with so as to bring them up with those which are already still marching forward—just as we do in school. I think you will help me expound that.

An hon. Member said here that—with due deference to the Member from Ikom with your permission I quote.

"The Ministry of Education, I think, should not continue to concern itself with the running of Primary Schools in the Region. Primary education should be in the hands of Voluntary Agencies and Local Government Councils, so that the Ministry of Education may have more time to look into secondary school education".

I do not think the hon. Member here really understands fully the importance of primary education and as I said before, if he is advising the Ministry not to run Primary Schools, I must say that I do not fully understand what he means by "running Primary Schools". If he means that, in the language of the Minister of Finance, "more subsidies should not be given to Primary Schools to enable them to expand". Then I say he is wrong. But it means that the usual aid should continue to be given to Voluntary Agencies controlling Primary Schools in order to enable them to expand and to bring up children to secondary school stage while leaving examinations and other things connected with primary education to the Voluntary Agencies and Councils. Then I can agree with him.

**Mr K. J. N. Okpokam** (Ikom Division): The hon. Member is unfair to me and I must give my explanations. What I mean is that the Ministry of Education should not run Primary Schools—that is to say that there should no longer be Government Primary Schools run by Government as such, but that Government should concern itself with merely the supervision of Primary Schools and not run them as such. I said nothing about grants at all. Grants should go on. (*An hon. Member: He is entitled to his opinion.*)

**Mr Agba:** I am sorry I quoted him from the Speech from the Throne of 23rd March, 1960, page 137 and I failed to understand what he meant by talking about "running". What I am saying here is that the Minister should not make a ruling which will govern the rural areas. If he does not want to continue with the expansion of Primary Schools, it should be within the areas which have already been fairly well advanced. But in the rural areas more attention should be concentrated on the extension of primary education and that can only be done by doing all that lies in the power of the Minister to foster all the necessary things that will enable primary education to be speeded up in the rural areas. Otherwise the constant complaints that scholarships have been given to this Division while that Division has been ignored will continue in this House. So I am asking the Minister to start from scratch and bring up those particular areas where people are still backward so that they will meet their brothers in other areas. The Minister has told us with perhaps some



Justification and pride that school fees have been free all through the Junior Primary Stage. I must say with all candidness that I do appreciate the efforts of the Government so far but I still say—and I would like to emphasise the point—that that should not stop in the backward areas. I am asking him that if he is making a ruling as stated here in the Budget, that will only hold in the advanced areas. I see that it is from the number of children from the primary schools that we get children to go to the secondary schools. It will be useless for me to say that Obudu has not got a secondary school. Ogoja hasn't one. But if they have a secondary school where will they get the children to attend the secondary school.

May I quote another statement from the same hon. Member from Ikom, He said:

"I would like to say that new scholarship policy goes further to widen the gap between the people of Ogoja and Abakaliki on the one hand and the rest of the Eastern Region on the other hand. The policy is that there should be five secondary school scholarships to every constituency, but you will find that we do not qualify for scholarships for our boys do not qualify for post-secondary scholarships. You will see in the Government White Paper on the scholarships award, Ogoja—no application. Abakaliki—no application and so on".

I want to make the hon. Members understand that I am still emphasising the need for bringing up primary schools in the rural areas to a reasonable standard. That statement is not absolutely true. We do qualify.

Referring to the Standard VI Results, you will find that the results in the rural areas are very bad for some reasons. First of all, the teachers in the rural areas do not live in the school premises. They come and go as the children do and the result is that they have not enough time to prepare the children for examinations. I would like to ask the Minister to see that reasonably good houses are provided in order to enable the teachers remain in the school premises. Compare the days when we were in school with this time. You will see that during our time the teachers were resident in the school premises with the result that the children did more studies at that time than they do now. Children must be enticed to come to school by the provision of milk for instance especially now that the minimum

school going age is five. Provision should also be made for first aid treatment. Children will then enjoy going to school and very soon the standard of schools in the rural areas will be enhanced.

**The Chairman:** This being the Committee Stage, I think hon. Members will like to economise time.

**Mr Agba:** Thank you Mr Chairman.

I would like to see both teachers and managers inspected to see that the teachers are in the school at the proper time and that they are doing their work no matter how small the school is. I suggest as I did last year that files should be opened for teachers and each file should contain what each teacher does. The Inspectorate Division should also help to see what the private proprietors are doing in the matter of building schools. A good deal of trouble arises from the fact that people who build private schools are not sufficiently supervised. Very often complaints reach the Ministry of Education about certain irregularities. I would like to appeal to the Minister to reply immediately to all letters of complaint irrespective of whether or not the Minister thinks the complaints are well-founded. After all, it is just ordinary etiquette to reply to letters. The Inspectorate not doing its work well and correspondences not being replied to bring a lot of trouble. Last year we had our pigeon holes filled daily with T. K. Utchay's papers of complaints, this year we have those of Mr E. E. Uwa of Uyo. The Ministry should therefore reply and find out what regulations, if any, have been violated so that the House will not be infested with all sorts of complaints which the Ministry could have efficiently dealt with. After all this is not a court of law for trying cases.

I want to come down to redundant posts in the Ministry. In Head 430 sub-head 1 (23) you have one Adviser on Education—Group 5 (Supernumerary). I want to ask the Minister what he really means by that. I think we have a Permanent Secretary of Education who is supposed to be a man who knows much about education. He has other people in the Department to help him to advise. This man here, as far as I know, is not going to remain permanent in the Region to advise the Minister. He is only on temporary basis. What is he advising when the Ministers of Finance and Education themselves have thought of giving



[MR AGBA]

up subsidising or expanding our primary education which is our headache? And of what is this man advising that the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Education cannot advise? I have no doubt that this man, who is an expatriate, I believe, is going to earn a big sum of money, when we have more competent Africans to advise the Minister. I do not see the need for the post. I should be grateful if the Minister would enlighten me. Moreover, we are talking of lack of money. Two days ago we racked our brains here looking for ways by which revenue could come into the Region. Why create redundant posts?

Lastly, I do not feel like passing over this scholarship business. I want to speak on it very strongly. Yesterday, the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Education read out a long list of scholarship awards in different Divisions. Obudu has none; Ogoja has two; Abakaliki has one.

**The Minister of Education:** On point of correction. The list read was not a list of scholarship awards; it was a list of students in the Universities.

**Mr Agba:** Let him give it any name he likes. I still say that Obudu has none; Ogoja has two; Abakaliki has one. I want to speak on these. I will start from the last, Abakaliki. That one is not really from Abakaliki. The person is living somewhere at Lagos and has been working and studying there privately, and when this thing came up . . .

*And it being 2.15 p.m. the Chairman interrupted the business and left the Chair to report Progress and ask leave to sit again.*

(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)

Committee report Progress. To sit again Tomorrow.

(3) The Native Courts (Interim Provisions) Bill—Second Reading.

*Deferred until Tomorrow.*

(4) The High Court (Amendment) Bill—Second Reading.

*Deferred until Tomorrow.*

(5) The Magistrates Courts (Amendment) Bill—Second Reading.

*Deferred until Tomorrow.*

### ADJOURNMENT

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until 9 a.m. Tomorrow.

With your permission, may I make the following announcement. The Federal Information Service would like to have photographs of Members of this House incorporated in the film show being prepared for Independence Celebration. They intend to have these in two parts. This afternoon, as we move out of the Chamber, they will make their shots, and may I suggest that, in order to avoid scramble, it would be greatly appreciated if the hon. Premier and the Leader of the Opposition and the Ministers were allowed to move in front of the rest. The photographers will be outside the lawn and they will direct you how to move along. On Monday, the 11th of April, the photographers will be at the gallery to make their shots of Members in the Chamber on adjournment.

Members may have found also some invitation cards in their pigeon holes issued by the representative of the Shell-B.P. Company, Limited, for a talk on oil developments in Nigeria. That will take place on Monday at 6.30 p.m., and it will be followed by drinks. Members are invited to attend, and it would be appreciated if as many Members as possible turned up.

**The Minister of Education:** I beg to second.

### ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

#### Atom Test in the Sahara

**Mr S. G. Ikoku (Enyong Division):** I would like to raise a rather sad matter. On the 13th of February, the first French atomic test took place in the Sahara. This hon. House met and on the 22nd of March, we passed a Motion unanimously in this House to the effect that if the French carried out a second atomic test anywhere in Africa, this Region would immediately undertake to boycott French goods. Since that day a second test in the Sahara has taken place. This was on the first day of this month. To my mind,



therefore, it seems as if the time is here for us to undertake to implement the resolution adopted by this House. I would like to make just a few points. The first one is that the Minister of Commerce did inform this hon. House that our Government could not undertake immediate boycott of French goods and services when he was speaking on the Motion on the 22nd of last month because we had one or two contracts outstanding with a French Firm and that we would lose if we carried out the boycott. Well, the position has been reached now when the Government will have to decide whether we would lose too heavily and as a result try to vitiate the stand of this House. I do not think the Government need worry their heads about that. The freeze should include the contract with the French Firm. In organising this boycott of French goods and services we have to send out circular instructions to all Voluntary Agencies, to all Local Government Councils and to all Ministries, that public funds must not be used for the purchase of French goods and services in this Region. In addition, we must take a few other steps to make sure that this circular instruction is obeyed. I am suggesting that there should be an appeal to all Trade Unions, to all women organisations and to all the Region's businessmen to the effect that they should refrain from patronising French Firms. In addition, I suggest that there should be peaceful pickets along all approaches to French shops to persuade people not to go in there and buy anything. Again I suggest that the Government should publish a list of French goods for the information of the public. Some members of the public do not know that Pigeot cars are French. So we should have a list of, say, Pigeot, Viedette, etc., which are French cars, in order to publicise what goods in this Region are really French goods. I was asked about certain non-French goods being retailed by French Firms. I handled that point when moving the Motion in this House. I said that the boycott should be extended to those goods. If the manufacturers in Britain want, say, the Austin, to be sold they should transfer the contract to either the U.A.C. or any other firm.

I will add further that we should undertake a campaign of non-fraternisation with French people in this Region. We should not attend parties which French men attend and they must not be invited to our parties either. In order to launch this campaign I am appealing to the hon. the Premier to choose a convenient day to make a broadcast to the whole Region.

**The Premier:** We of the Government Bench deplore, as much as the Leader of the Opposition, the second French Atom Test. I wish to assure this hon. House that we wish to carry out to the letter the intentions of the Legislature as expressed in the Motion under reference. I must however warn the House that the Government did enter into a very major road contract with a French Firm. It is nearing completion now and I have been advised that we should suffer very heavy financial penalty if we were to withdraw from the contract at this stage. But I can assure the House that we are entering into no more contract with this French Firm and as soon as this one is completed it will be goodbye to the French Firms, until they and their Master, de Gaulle, can re-assure us that they are not testing any more French bombs anywhere in the Sahara.

I, however, think that the Leader of the Opposition is carrying the war a little bit too far. Personal ostracism or boycott of French men in Nigeria was, I am afraid, not considered during the debate on this particular Motion and we will have to give it very serious consideration because I am reliably informed that many of these French men here are not in favour of these French tests. However, the Leader of the Opposition, as I said, is introducing new material and we shall have to go into that afresh before we arrive at a new conclusion. But in regard to the terms of the former Motion I have to say that the Government will carry out the intentions religiously.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Adjourned, accordingly, at twenty-five minutes past two o'clock p.m.*



EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Friday, 8th April, 1960

The House met at Nine o'clock a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(1) The 1960-61 Eastern Region  
Appropriation Bill

Considered in the Committee of Supply  
(Progress 7th April).

(FOURTH ALLOTTED DAY)

(In the Committee)

Head 430.—Ministry of Education

Question again proposed: That a sum not exceeding £7,287,600 for Head 430—Ministry of Education—stand part of the Schedule.

Mr J. A. Agba (Ogoja Division): I was misrepresented yesterday by the N.B.C. in connection with what I said about primary education. Much as we are indebted to the N.B.C. for the publicity they are giving us, I must say that the reporters should endeavour to report us accurately. What I said yesterday was that the Minister should concentrate on primary education and should do all in his power to encourage and expand primary education particularly in rural areas, where secondary education is still in its embryo. I never said that primary education should be left solely to the missionaries and councils. Indeed, there are lots of complaints against U.P.E. Schools now under the Councils. In a place like Abakaliki there is a complaint that the money allocated for the building of U.P.E. Schools in Ishielu has not been used and the people do not know what has become of the money. I am of the opinion that the U.P.E. Schools should be taken off the hands of the Councils and given to Voluntary Agencies.

I want to say something about the system of scholarship award. A few days ago, figures were published showing the award of scholarships to each Division.

The Minister tried to make us understand that the figures published were not for Government scholarship award. I challenge the Minister to publish the Government scholarship award for the Eastern Region. This will make us know exactly the position of things.

**The Chairman:** I do not think it is right for the hon. Member to challenge the Minister like that. The Minister has made a statement giving the true state of affairs, and I do not see any grounds for the hon. Member to challenge the Minister's statement.

**Mr Agba:** I adhere to your ruling, but I have to say that it will not help any body in the Region if we get something misleading in this House. We want to get the true facts.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member, I am not going to accept that the Minister is misleading the House.

**Mr Agba:** At any rate I want to say that we in Ogoja are qualified for scholarships and if we are not given University scholarships, I think there are other institutions lower than Universities. Scholarships should therefore be given to our boys to go to these lower institutions which will prepare them eventually to enter the Universities. If the Government should do this we will have no grudge against it.

Recently, a Commonwealth Scholarship was made for the training of teachers. The educational qualification required was Grade II Teachers' Certificate, and it was added that those who had G.C.E. would be given preference. Three of our people from Ogoja and Abakaliki came for the interview. They all had the Teachers' Grade II Certificate plus the G.C.E. Now what happened? I should have thought that these 12 scholarships would have been awarded on provincial basis to give each province one but this was not so. Where did our own go? We had none, but three candidates applied for it. Secondly, some of the scholarship awards of last year, 39 did not go to any place; we lost our chance because nobody applied. To what people, or to what Province or Division did these 39 scholarship awards go?

**The Chairman:** I hope hon. Members remember my point when I said on the question



of challenge that I cannot accept that the Minister would mislead the House. But rather, I can understand that an ordinary Member can mislead the House but not a Minister who is directly responsible and has given you information about actual things.

**Mr I. U. Imeh** (Abak Division): I have one or two points to raise on the Ministry of Education. The first point is about the post of Assistant Principal for the W.T.C., Enugu. I think it is the only Government institution that has not the post of Assistant Principal. I think it is high time that the W.T.C., Enugu had the post of Assistant Principal.

I would like to know also from the Minister of Education the difference between a Grade IV teacher and a Grade III teacher. I am made to understand that a Grade IV teacher and a Grade III teacher have the same qualification. If that is not so, I like to know what is the qualification of a Grade IV teacher because I think it is just an easy way of tying down teachers' promotion. If an elementary teacher is graded as a Grade III teacher in the Voluntary Agency there is no reason why the same elementary teacher should not be graded a Grade III teacher in the Government. I think it is high time that the Minister of Education should scrap this post of Grade IV teacher.

I am making one suggestion about Higher School Course. It is very interesting to know that most of the Government institutions have higher school course. Considering the need and the high qualifications our students must have before they enter the University of Nigeria and the University College, Ibadan, I would suggest to the Minister that he should authorise most of our old Voluntary Agency secondary schools to attach higher school course.

It is also interesting to learn from the Minister of Education that the Government is undertaking the building of a technical institution at Port Harcourt. While that is going on I would suggest also to the Minister that Voluntary Agency Schools should be authorised also, where it is possible, to attach

technical wings to their secondary schools. And I further recommend or suggest that our private Commercial Schools should be approved and grant-aided. I know much of our money is being spent on education, but so far what is worth doing is worth doing well. And I will be very happy to come here next year to learn that some of our good private commercial schools are given recognition.

I would join my hon. Friend from Owerri to deplore the attitude of some of the officials of the Examination Section of the Ministry of Education. When I made my speech last week, I said that last two years Standard VI examination papers were stolen; they were given out. I know certain officials were caught and punished. And last year it happened again. Why I mention this, is to emphasise how very bad it is that such official papers entrusted into the hands of officials should leak out. It is rather very disheartening, more especially when we learn that last week 500 Standard VI certificates were stolen again or are missing. I think these papers are supposed to be in the security branch of the Examination Section. So I call upon the Minister to look into this matter and take any drastic step to stem this menace. Some time ago, the Ministry of Education made an announcement that five Government Primary Schools were to be converted to secondary schools but up till today that project has not been carried out. If there is no money I would suggest that the Minister of Education should tell us so, in order that the areas where these schools are situated may stop entertaining the hope that the schools will be converted. It is not very good to keep the minds of the people hanging and thinking that something would be forthcoming. It were good if the Minister would revoke his own announcement and disband the idea that those Government schools we have in mind would be converted into secondary schools. But if he still hopes to convert the primary schools, I would rather then ask him to do so as soon as practicable.

There is yet one other point I would like to make and that is about Grants to Teacher-Training Colleges. I notice that we have a good sum of money earmarked for . . .



**The Chairman:** There is a Standing Order which is so very flagrantly broken here. Standing Order 32(3):

“Members shall not read newspapers in their places and may only read such books and letters as may be connected with the business under debate.”

I should not like to see any Members reading newspapers.

**Mr Imeh:** I am suggesting that when the Minister will issue out the amount in the estimate to the Teacher Training Colleges, new Teacher Training Colleges established by new Voluntary Agencies should be given first consideration. When I say this, I have in mind the Teacher Training Colleges established by Voluntary Agencies like A.M.E. Zion, T.T.C., Local Government Teacher Training Colleges, African Mission Teacher Training Colleges and other Teacher Training Colleges. I think if the Minister would take this suggestion to heart when dishing out these grants, it will be highly welcome by those who are now trying in various places and in various ways to help to expand education in the Eastern Region.

**Chief I. I. Morphy** (Ogoja Division): Hon. Agba has covered most of my points but what I want to know from the Minister is this: yesterday, he told us that scholarships will be awarded on population basis. Last year, we were told it was to be an automatic scholarship, i.e., if you gain an admission into any university, so far as you come from Eastern Nigeria, scholarship is awarded to you. But this year, what the Minister is telling us is that scholarships will be awarded on population basis. From where did he get this idea? All the world over, scholarships are not awarded on population basis. Also, if the Minister is awarding on population basis, how has he worked it out. Each Member in the Federal House represents about 100,000 people. On what basis is he going to award these scholarships? We want to know the basis because you find that the minority areas are complaining that they do not receive their fair share and now you tell us you are going to make awards on population basis. That means the minority areas will still suffer more because they will not measure up to the scholarship award as the majority. If you have 20 scholarship awards for the majority tribes, you will have about two or ten for the minority area.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Members, yesterday, I received a complaint from these gentlemen who are busy with our *Hansard* that they do not hear what hon. Members say because of noise-making so that they report you wrongly and you get annoyed; secondly, they said that some hon. Members are not distinct or loud enough. I should appeal to Members to make as little noise as possible so that they might be able to hear and report you correctly and also when you do speak, please speak a little louder and a little more distinctly.

**Chief Morphy:** What I was saying was that the Minister should tell us the basis on which he is going to award the scholarships. Is it one per hundred persons? If he does it on population basis, the minorities will still suffer. They are not going to aid the minorities because the N.C.N.C. party tells us that they are doing all their best to help the minorities and it is only by giving the minorities their fair share that we can take our stand along with other people. So the minorities want to know on what basis the Minister is going to award the scholarships.

**Mr S. E. K. Iwueke** (Okigwi Division): I have earlier registered my congratulations to the Minister of Education for the glorious achievement of the Ministry for the past year with regard to the completion of U.P.E. in Junior Primary, establishment of more secondary schools and more teacher-training colleges. I still maintain that the Ministry deserves this praise.

I have to associate myself with the views expressed by some previous speakers with regard to the Standard VI Certificates. I just want to add a little emphasis. All the things that have been happening in this Ministry have created some amount of indignation in the public. In 1957, we had the ugly news that Standard VI question papers leaked and that some of them were sold. Last year, we had some rumours of leakage of some question papers somewhere in the Region. This year, again, it has been reported that 500 blank Standard VI Certificates have been stolen. How did this happen, Mr Chairman? The Eastern Nigerian public are entitled to know how all these things happen in the Ministry of Education, of all Ministries. I am trying



to conclude that there must be something wrong with the Department or Division in the Ministry in charge of these papers and I would ask the Minister to take a very serious view of this matter and, if possible, institute a Departmental Inquiry and report to this House because these things are very scandalous and tend to bring discredit to the Ministry in which everybody is interested.

I have always held the view that sufficient emphasis has not been placed on our educational curriculum as far as African background is concerned. That is why our education is not sufficiently original and productive.

Educational philosophers from Socrates to Jean—Jacques Rousseau have had their own theories as to the aims and principles of education in relation to the societies in which they lived. They all realised, however, even Rousseau himself, who first advocated growing up naturally without the taboos of society—that a child must learn to take his place in the society of which he will eventually be an adult, so his education must teach him about the structure of his society and where his fits into it. By this, I mean that our educational policy should be established in such a way that African background should have prominence. In our Standards V and VI syllabuses it is found that instead of teaching the children our African history as it affects African personalities, the children are taught the biographies of Napoleon, Hitler, Mongo Park and Drake. It will be a nice thing if our people are taught to know their immediate leaders so that we start from the “known” to the “unknown”.

No one who watches the events in our country today, will hesitate to be apprehensive of the future. There is no gainsaying the fact that the standard of morality in our schools is deteriorating and the tone of discipline in our schools is falling. I am asking that necessary measures should be adopted to restore a higher standard of morality in our schools. I respectfully refer the hon. Members to a Motion introduced on the floor of this House by hon. D. A. Nnaji. With your permission, Sir, I will quote the relevant portion of the Motion and the reply given by the then Minister of Education. It is contained in the 1955 *Hansard* of this House—

Second Session, Third Meeting, pages 95 and 96. Hon. Nnaji moved:

“That this House deplores the withdrawal of moral instruction in the curricula of schools and colleges in the Eastern Region and urges the Government to restore the teaching of moral instruction in schools and colleges in the interest of the people of the Eastern Region.”

In reply to this Motion the then Minister of Education said:

“The re-introduction of moral instruction as a formal subject in the school curriculum is not something I can contemplate without consulting my Education adviser who will be very interested in the whole subject. I can give an undertaking that the question will be given further consideration because it is so vastly important that the standard of moral instruction should be high. It is at least as important that the child should be taught a high moral standard as that he or she should gain a first-class School Certificate.”

When the other day, Mr Chairman, I was raising the question of unmarried women teachers who incidentally are members of the staff of the Local Government Council and who have been asked to retain their services even after they had misbehaved, I made that point with all seriousness and responsibility. I feel that the scandal and the untold harm such kind of laxity will bring to our children cannot be estimated in the foreseeable future.

**The Minister of Local Government (Mr P. O. Nwoga):** Many of the lady teachers who have misbehaved in the Local Government Council Schools and whose cases were brought to my notice have been terminated.

**Mr S. G. Ikoku (Enyong Division):** We are in the dark. We want to be told what this misbehaviour is. We do not know what is going on.

**The Minister of Local Government:** Well, I think what the hon. Member is referring to is obvious.

**Mr Iwueke:** On the supervision and staffing of Local Government Schools, I will come to that later. With the introduction of U.P.E. many hands were brought into our schools.



[MR IWUEKE]

A lot of amateurs were employed to teach in our Local Government Council Schools with the resulting inefficiency in our Local Council Schools. I am suggesting that the Minister will take a serious view about this matter, more especially, next year when our U.P.E. schools will reach Standard III. In our Local Government Council Schools experienced and trained teachers are needed to run the Schools because we cannot profitably entrust the children in the hands of amateurs. The next point is on the aspect of education as far as Nigerianisation is concerned. If the Government succeeded in speeding up Nigerianisation in other departments and then decide to go slow in the Education Department, I think the battle is half-won. I would say, however, that I have no quarrel with the head of the Education Department, but the truth is that when it comes to the question of deciding what is good for the African, I think the African should have an advantage over our expatriate friends.

It seems to me that the Ministry of Education is a hunting ground for many critics and also I realise that everybody is interested in education. The overall interest which everybody has in the Ministry of Education should evoke the sympathy of every hon. Member of this House for the poor condition of the teachers who constitute the fundamental factor in our education. It is a fact that when the case of teachers is raised here people who are expected to laud the cause of teachers try to heckle down somebody who rises to speak the fact. It is admitted that teachers are being made objects of ridicule because of their poor conditions of service.

**Hon. Members:** We have voted seven million pounds for teachers.

**Mr Iwueke:** Yes, seven million pounds; but do they know that £7,000,000 is not enough for teachers.

The last suggestion I have to make is that as we are interested in secondary schools, we must get ourselves also interested in technical education. The Minister of Education should undertake the establishment of more technical school centres. That will be better for the Region.

**Mr E. Ita** (Calabar Division): I want to thank you for the opportunity given me to speak. I am going to speak on the Educational Policy and Philosophy for the Region. As one studies the vote for Education one is impressed by the fact that more than fifty per cent of the revenue was spent on Education. We do not spend over seven million pounds on Education for mere conspicuous waste which according to Veblen is an essential human nature, nor do we do it for mere ornamentation but we do it because we know what education means for the whole of the country.

The Minister speaking yesterday said that he is to raise educational standard with a view not only to have more schools and more people given opportunities, but also better schools and better quality of education. The new question ultimately is: what do we educate for? Do we want to continue to educate as we have been doing or do we want a change? I am reminded now of the fact that we have educational review going on, especially for the Eastern Region, and I think for the whole country—Dr Dike with his Commission being at work to produce something new. We hope that in this review very strong emphasis will be laid in the philosophy of education we want to adopt. I ask the question again: for what do we want to educate? He said we want to give as many people opportunities as possible. That is well. We say that we want to give people education that will mean something to them, about what to do. I am asking: what something is worthwhile? If we consider is it of great value to a country without a philosophy for education—I have myself studied the philosophy of education for various countries and for this country and at one stage I had thought that we should have a new education for a new Africa. I think the time has come now since we want to produce a new Nigeria, a free Nigeria and if we have accepted the system of democracy for our future and for the present, to educate our citizens to be critical and intelligent in whatever they do. You cannot have a true democratic system where people are ignorant or where people are unable to think for themselves and be critical. You find an ordinary citizen in Nigeria, he takes up a newspaper and reads and accepts everything that is said without any criticism; we do not have that critical mind here. The answer is that our education has not trained



people to be critical. This leads me to the question of freedom. When you say that you are educating free citizens, what do you really need? We are now getting free from external rule but we may not be free from ourselves. I want to emphasise this fact because it is improper that people are not allowed to express their views because of their political beliefs. We want education that will make us really free—free from self interest and free from the other bad sources of human nature. These are essential. We find that in some free countries people are still slaves to themselves. If you want to be really free you should be really free. Our attitude to our country and to people from other countries or other races will have to be changed.

We want to educate creators and inventors. Someone has mentioned with regret the fact that our National Anthem was created by a foreigner. I do not think we have the foreigner to blame and I do not think we have many of our musicians to blame. We all heard the appeal made to all of us to create our own National Anthem but if we do not respond then someone who feels inspired must respond. The fault is that of education that hitherto has not created creators and inventors. Education must now turn its attention to this matter of creating creators and inventors.

I do not want to take more of the time of this House, but, I just want to emphasise this need for a change, the necessary change in our educational philosophy and I do hope that when the report is made on the review on education, something very substantial will have to be done.

**Mr M. N. Yowika** (Ogoni Division): I have only one observation to make, but before doing so, I have to seize this opportunity to thank the Minister of Education for promising to improve our educational standards. His plans on this matter are embodied in his speech in reply to points raised by hon. Members in this House.

I would also like to congratulate the Government for the huge sum of money which it is spending on education this year.

Let me now make my observation. I would like hon. Members in this House to give this point a very serious thought. I am

not blaming the Government and I am not criticising anybody but I would like us to think of what to do so that when we get our independence it will not be freedom for only a few people on top, but freedom for the masses, freedom for all. The Minister of Education informed us the other day that 28,655 candidates passed the last Standard Six examination. In 1958 about the same number passed. What are these children doing? When they go home what do they go home to do? They go home to increase the number of unemployed, and they join the gangs of hooligans and high-way robbers. What I am trying to point out is that the number of school leavers increases every year. Government spends large sums of money every year on education to train children. If nothing is done to make these children useful to themselves and to the country all these money which is being spent is wasted. If a person has no means of livelihood, he is compelled by unavoidable circumstances to do what he may not like to do. Hence today we have many cases of theft, burglary and high-way robbery. What I am saying is that unless Government thinks of something to do in order to help these children to become useful to themselves and to the communities to which they belong we are simply wasting money. May I remind the Minister of Education that one of the aims of primary education is to train children in as many ways of life as possible, so that after leaving school they may turn to any profession that come their way. Those who are not outstanding in education may take up any profession and become useful to themselves. May I suggest to Government that it will help our children if we try to introduce into our school something which after a child leaves school he can go home to do to help himself. In this connection I would suggest that to each of the full-fledged primary schools there should be a technical wing and one Technical Instructor attached so that the children may be taught one trade at least and with this trade the children can help themselves if they are not fortunate to be employed.

**Mr J. O. Ihekwoaba** (Orlu Division): In the first place, I have to thank the Minister of Education for his recent announcement about the allocation of scholarship awards on population basis. I think that some Divisions were not being fairly treated in the previous years,



[MR IHEKWOABA]

and now that this change is being made, I think the Minister is going to reconsider the Divisions which were left out in order to compensate them for the past losses. I do remember a Division like Orlu. For the past six years, since 1954, after the first Minister of Education left this House, when we asked why we were being cheated on the question of scholarship, the reply was that we had enough when the former Minister was in office and since then we are being cheated. I am appealing to the Minister that he should try now to compensate us in order to cover the previous losses. At the same time I am appealing that these scholarship awards should be extended to our children in the United Kingdom who managed to cross over to get higher education. But unfortunately because of money and other things they are sometimes unable to meet up. I appeal to the Government to see that those boys who are hanging there get scholarship so that they will get the necessary education and come back to help the Region.

Another thing is the ruling that no more Secondary Schools and Colleges should be opened. I think last time I appealed to this Minister that if he is serious about this his announcement, a place like Orlu Division especially Orlu District Council which has made their application since 1958 for a permission to open one College to absorb the many Council school leavers in that area, should not be affected. I appeal to the Minister to consider previous applications.

Another point is that inasmuch as you said no more Secondary Schools or Colleges should be opened, why not expand the present Government Colleges in order to accommodate boys and girls who have nowhere to go.

The next point is this failure of Standard Six boys and girls. Most of our people have taken very serious note of that. I feel to ask the Minister to look into the cause why these boys and girls who are in elementary schools are not up to expectation whenever the Standard Six results are out. It may be due to the teachers themselves or the school children. It is the duty of this Ministry to look into this affair and know why people pay high taxes

and high school fees only to be told at the end of the year that results are unsatisfactory and that their children failed. I want the Minister to look into it, whether it is due to the fact that most of our teachers now leave the school and spend much of their time in politics. If the teachers are not satisfied with their work let them resign and allow those who are prepared to do the work do it.

I am appealing to the Minister to put his eyes on it, especially the Mission Schools. You cannot get Government Schools or Council School teachers playing politics. If you watch the Standard Six results of all the Council Schools, you will see that they had almost 100 per cent. Some of these missionaries allow their teachers to move up and down and dabble in politics.

The next appeal is, if this Government recognises any secondary school or college, it will be the duty of this Government to give amenities to that secondary school or college equivalent to those given to Government colleges. Where the Government has taken upon itself to recognise any secondary school run by any Voluntary Agency or by private persons, they should also give it the same amenities in other that those boys and girls going to that college will keep to the standard of the Government schools.

I remember that most of these secondary schools have not sufficient boarding accommodation for the school children to live in, no electric light to study with. Just imagine a child brought up in a decent home, where everything was sufficiently provided for him in his parent's house. He goes to the college and every morning, he is asked to carry a bucket three to four miles to fetch water whereas boys and girls in Government colleges use that time to do their studies.

Another point is about small girls in these girls' secondary schools. If you visit some of these girls' secondary schools, you will see girls of twelve to thirteen years old being called upon at four or five o'clock in the morning to go to the stream about 3 or 4 miles to fetch water before they bathe. I am therefore appealing to Government that where any Secondary School is recognised, the Government should try and provide it with



water. In some cases, when our children return from these colleges you will see that some of them suffer from a lot of things which they were not suffering in their fathers' houses due to bad drinking water and bad light.

This sort of thing is very disgraceful to an approved school. When you visit these secondary schools, in the night you will see these children using hurricane lamps to study whereas their equals in Government boarding or other approved schools use electricity. If you watch as well, you will see that most of these Government schools score 100 per cent in any Cambridge result, whereas these boys and girls in the Mission schools do not cope up with them because there are not sufficient amenities and time given to them to learn. I do not want to occupy most of your time but the points I have made about electricity and water supply to all the secondary schools are very essential to us.

I am again appealing to the Minister of Education to allow the Orlu District Council to open their Secondary School for which they have been applying since 1958.

**The Chairman:** I believe a part of the Member's speech was drowned in noise. I will appeal to Members, when there is much noise-making, to stop talking for a while until the noise ceases a bit so that they would be heard.

Here again, I wish to appeal to every Member, all Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries, Provincial Commissioners to help these *Hansard* gentlemen with copies of their speeches. They have made a request to me that they would like copies of speeches of Members that were not sufficiently understood by them. They say that they often appeal to Members to give them copies or to help them in some parts of their speeches which they did not take down correctly and sometimes Members object seriously. I think that out of courtesy we should try to help them. I remember when I was in the Federal House, as soon as a Member made his speech and was going out you will see one of them; he comes up to you and says: "please can you help me". You either give him a copy of your speech or you sit down with him somewhere for three or five minutes and he reads out and you make the necessary corrections where you feel he got you wrong; then he goes away. You

see the next morning, everything is produced. I should like you to help them in that way and do not be angry with them because, after all, they are human beings. They are bound to make mistakes.

**Mr M. N. Onwuma** (Aba Division): May I first of all say that I personally send my congratulations to the Minister of Education. So far, he has done remarkably well. The Minister of Education as well as his Ministry have done remarkably well and I am prepared to defend the Minister anywhere in the Eastern Region. I do not say that the Minister of Education has done everything completely but so far, from the U.P.E. up to now, I have reasons to be satisfied and we expect that the Minister of Education will do more in the future.

Having said so, he should please not pay attention to traders, especially the kind of traders we have in this Region. They find it impossible to rise above certain levels and when a trader talks, you will immediately know that he is perfectly a trader and what is more important, you will take note that any time during the Budget Session, the traders here, Licensed Buying Agents, people who have vested interests, will claim priority in this House even where they do not take time to study things scientifically. I know you realise, Sir, that at times, some days most of them leave the House and you will have only the teachers and perhaps a few others left. We cannot allow this Region to be governed by traders. They evade taxes. If we allow that to happen—we know what difficulties we are having in collecting taxes—you have traders moving from Onitsha to Aba, Aba to Port Harcourt and from Port Harcourt to Enugu; they do not declare their incomes accurately. In any case, I am a teacher and I try to be as honest as possible.

**The Chairman:** I wish to remind the hon. Member that the debate is on Education.

**Mr Onwuma:** When the scholarship schemes as outlined by the Ministry of Education and the University of Nigeria and all other efforts which are being made to improve the education of this country come to materialise, we may have enough Economists and Professionals to come and look after the Eastern Region. Some of us who have done our bits



[MR ONWUMA]

as pioneers will leave the House to go and teach. Until then we will continue as at present.

The Ministry of Education, I would say, appears to be a closed shop at the top. For example, if you compare the Ministry of Education with the Administration you will see that men from the University entering the Administration have opportunities to go forward, but in the Ministry of Education it is somewhat slow or top-heavy. I would like to suggest that as a sort of outlet, the Ministry of Education should consider creating posts like the Deputy Inspector of Primary Schools, Deputy Inspector of Secondary Schools and Deputy Inspector of Teacher Training Schools. This will offer opportunities for young men to go into the Ministry of Education. I would also like to point out to the Minister of Education that we have twelve Provinces now in the Eastern Region, but we have got provision for nine Provincial Officers. I am, therefore, suggesting that it will be necessary to make provision for twelve Provincial Officers.

Thirdly, the Minister of Education should not allow himself to be scared into accepting any kind of American qualification. Effective scrutiny should be made before allowing people with American B.A. (Travelling) and B.A. (Dish-washing). I ask the Ministry of Education to scrutinise the basic degrees properly because when they come to the Ministry it is extremely difficult to make out the difference.

Once again, I congratulate the Minister of Education for not agreeing to open more Teacher Training Colleges. I endorse this action because we now have enough Teacher Training Colleges, apart from the U.P.E. schools which will come to Standard VI in the next three or four years, there will be no real further expansion except, of course, in so many years to come. But for the moment, in order not to flood the market with teachers, for the purposes of proper utility, we are satisfied that no new Teacher Training Colleges should be opened. We welcome the decision also to allow more secondary schools to open.

The trader who was talking a short time ago about the establishment of more secondary schools does not appear to have been reading

his official papers. The Minister said he has given permission for twenty-seven new secondary schools to open.

**The Chairman:** Do not refer to the hon. Member as a trader.

**Mr Onwuma:** The case of employing Science Teachers in our Secondary Schools cannot be over-emphasised. Anything that can be done by the Minister of Education to increase Science staff must be done. With the proposed expansions of trade and commerce or heavy industries, more Science Graduates will be greatly needed and, as a matter of fact, these Science Graduates will prefer to go into Industries than go to teach. Therefore the Minister should place his fingers on the pulse of events and take that into consideration. Let us hope that a formula would be found or a compromise effected whereby these Science Graduates could be attracted to remain in the Institutions by offering them special allowances. I would also ask the Minister of Education whether it would be possible now or at some future time to consider up-grading the Principals of the older Voluntary Agencies Secondary Schools. When you consider the older Secondary Schools like the D.M.G.S.; C.K.C.; the Methodist College, Uzuakoli; the Hope Waddell, Calabar; you will realise that these colleges have been responsible for training these eminent men now in this country. With their qualifications and experience it would not be too much to give them a salary of about £1,500.

**Mr M. C. Awgu (Awka Division):** I rise to talk on this Head and must first of all say that the Ministry of Education can be rightly called a "Progressive Ministry" manned by intellectual experts who know and uphold that only the best is good enough for our Eastern Region. I must make some suggestions and appeal to the hon. Minister of Education.

*Staffing of Secondary Grammar Schools.*—The educational policy for the staffing of Secondary Grammar Schools is that for every ninety students there must be a graduate. As I said earlier the Ministry has intellectual experts who know that only the best is good enough for our Eastern Region. Yet I think we shall haste slowly in this direction because



when we look towards America for our graduates some call them M.A. (Kitchen) and B.A. (Garden). We are disappointed. When we look towards India for our graduates we are told that our G.C.E. (Advanced) and Cambridge School Certificates are equivalents of the B.A. degree in India. So, our proprietors are embarrassed and forth at reason we sincerely appeal to the Minister of Education to allow us have, for one hundred and fifty students, one graduate as an interim measure; so that when we shall have graduates trained out from our University of Nigeria we may then have for every class in a Secondary Grammar School a graduate.

I appeal most sincerely to the Minister of Education that he should reconsider the education policy.

Another point I want to make is that we are looking towards independence in October this year and I do not see how we are building for the future in so far as Nationalism is concerned. We shall have true and sincere nationalists, when we infuse in the minds and in the blood of our children the essence of nationalism. You can never go beyond the four walls of a school in doing this. Today what we have primarily in our children is the British way of life. I do congratulate our British officials who came here in those early days and opened our Government schools and brought up so many of our people who today are holding important positions but they are going away from our country. We must build on our own. We must educate our people according to our own standard, and educate them in the way to perpetuate African nationalism in the real sense. We are going to have a Nigerian Army. Suppose we leave our children like that and fail to infuse in their blood the essence of nationalism, do you not think they will betray us in the battle field? Many of our District Council schools are ignored and neglected. Let nobody hesitate to say that what is wrong is wrong. We must have State schools and infuse in the minds of our children from generation to generation the sense of true nationalism.

Another appeal I am directing to the Minister of Education is the question of grants-in-aid to Voluntary Agencies, which are now withheld simply because they opened after 1956 when

the policy was that if a school did not open at the time scheduled the school would be regarded as a private school. All that I am saying is that the Minister should reconsider assisting Voluntary Agency schools and if Government comes forward to aid them it must do so ungrudgingly.

With these few observations I beg to end my speech.

**Mr H. U. E. Edelduok** (Eket Division): I just want to make one observation. I am very happy that some people like Professor Eyo Ita have spoken on this matter. The observation I have to make is that there are some flaws in our educational system. Our educational system as it is now was handed down to us some years ago by our British Masters. As we are getting nearer to independence, it is my view that we should overhaul our educational system. However, I thank the Minister of Education for the shaky U.P.E. scheme. That is how we view it. I might go further and say that our educational system needs more than mere overhaul. It needs a radical change. I would suggest that our primary education should be designed in such a way as to give adequate opportunity to every child born in the Eastern Nigeria to go to school. In addition the Minister of Education should approve applications for the opening of secondary schools. After all we want mass education in all fields. We cannot say what a child will be tomorrow. We must therefore give a chance to every child to go to school in order to prove his mettle. I understand that the Minister of Education is too strict over the opening of new secondary schools. I think as many schools as possible should be allowed to open. I have not been to America, but I understand that there are many schools there. In America there are High Schools, Secondary schools and Universities of both high and low grades, the same as we have in this country. So I do not see the reason why we should prevent a school to open just because we do not feel the school will measure up to the standard. It is only by allowing as many schools as possible to open that we can give every child in the Region an opportunity to be educated. Only in this way can we produce more Ziks, more Awos and more Okparas in this country. It is said that the present panel of nationalists we have in the country is drawn from lower strata of our societies.



[MR EDELDUOK]

Therefore we want opportunity for everybody in this field.

I would also like to suggest that in the secondary education there should be two types of schools. We should have modern schools and grammar schools as we have in the Western Region. This is something we will like to copy from the Western Region. Finally, I would like to appeal again to the Minister of Education not to refuse applications for opening of secondary schools for only in this way can everybody be given a chance to the prosperity of this Region.

In the field of technical education, I suggest that one technical school should be established in each Province so that thousands of our boys who leave primary schools might find a chance to be trained.

Finally, I appeal to the Minister of Education to stop at nothing to guard against anything that might endanger our educational system, because as population expands, as I said two weeks ago, our educational system must continue to expand.

With these few remarks, I beg to oppose.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Members, I think we have spent a lot of time on this, and so, with your permission, after the Leader of the Opposition, I will call upon the Minister of Education to reply if he wishes.

**Mr S. G. Ikoku (Enyong Division):** I would like to raise just three points. Firstly, I would like to talk about rural education. As I sat down listening to Members, I was surprised that nobody bothered to put in even a word for the very good work which is being done by this wing of the Ministry of Education. Records which I have been privileged to glance at, suggest that some 14-15 thousand people get their literacy certificates every year, and that is a very commendable thing indeed. I very much like the Minister of Education to give more encouragement to this wing of his Ministry. We would like to see a few more qualified Adult Education Officers appointed in the Region. It will be very encouraging indeed if the present head of the Adult Education Service in the Region were given a status

comparable to that held by Education Supervisors in the Western and Northern Regions.

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** On point of correction. The item being discussed by the Leader of the Opposition comes under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and not Ministry of Education.

**Mr Ikoku:** I was just about to end up that point. I thought that the proper thing for me to do was to prepare grounds here for the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Anyway, I mentioned that because, I think, it is about time that the Adult Education was included in the Ministry of Education. I do not think it is the type of thing which could be conveniently managed under the Ministry of Internal Affairs. I was merely preparing my grounds here because I had a feeling that the Minister would reply to the effect that all I was saying did not really concern him, but that in doing so he might give one or two clues which might help me to deal with the Minister of Internal Affairs later on. It is a pity that the Minister of Finance has cut me out. Anyway I go to my second point.

My second point is that I feel that the Voluntary Agency teachers are likely to feel cheated as regards the Mbanefo Awards. It is true that they are not directly employed by Government, and that Government has been magnanimous in trying to extend to them the benefits of the Mbanefo Revision of Salaries, but I think that what is worth doing at all is worth doing well. If Government has decided to come to the help of the Voluntary Agency teachers it should go the whole hog and give them the same rates of award as in the civil service, because the danger here is that we might set up sectional feelings and might even encourage Voluntary Agency staff to become obdurate and obstinate as regards this salary revision. I have made a little calculation and I think that if Voluntary Agency staff are given the full 15 per cent Mbanefo award, and not 12½ per cent we would have to find something like another £100,000 for the next financial year. This is quite a sizeable sum of money but I do not think that it is an amount which would upset the Government unduly. So I would suggest that Government should think along these lines, because my driving motive is that we do not want unnecessary



labour disputes in this Region. Instead we are anxious to create the necessary atmosphere for forging ahead with our more pressing development programme.

Lastly, while thanking all Members who have said something about the content of our education, and about the need for revising that content in keeping with our new and enhanced status as a young nation, I was surprised that even the teachers who are Members of this House failed to draw attention to a serious problem in the field of Voluntary Agency work: that is the question of Nigerianisation of the staff of Voluntary Agencies. In the Government service we have made up our minds to Nigerianise as rapidly as possible. But the Voluntary Agencies are not keeping in step with this Nigerianisation programme—and of course there is the argument that the schools are theirs so that they can do almost anything they like with their schools. I do not think that is right. After all this Reigon pays the bill and we insist that Nigerianisation in the Voluntary Agencies should be pressed ahead. It is true that you have many Nigerian teachers in these Voluntary Agency schools, but it is also true that in some of them—I do not want to embarrass anybody by mentioning names—the higher administrative grades are held exclusively by expatriate missionaries. That is the type of thing we do not want to see. Churches in this country—if they are going to survive at all after independence—must begin to think seriously of Nigerianisation. If they do not do it—I am merely giving them an advice, I have no vested interest—they will perish in the process. If the Anglican Church is going to survive in Nigeria, or the Methodist Church, or the Roman Catholic Church, they must all be Nigerianised. If not, they will not survive. It is a statement of fact. If they do not believe it, well let them try and see what will happen. So I will advise that, while Nigerians are being called upon to teach, serious efforts should be made to Nigerianise the administrative grades in the Voluntary Agencies. And I am surprised that even the teachers in our midst did not draw attention to this point.

**The Minister of Education (Mr G. E. Okeke):** I thank all the hon. Members for their contributions to this debate, particularly for their constructive suggestions. Yesterday

my attention was drawn to certain points. May I begin with the hon. Agba who has a reason to quarrel about the Adviser on Education as found in the Estimates. He felt that Africans should be given opportunity to rise. But may I say that it is towards that end that that post has been created. He referred to Sub-head 1 (23) of Head 430. The hon. Member who spoke about this post did not read the Memorandum on the Estimates which at page E 165 explains that both post and the post provided further up in the Estimates as Sub-head 1 (8) for Deputy Chief Executive Officer are supernumerary, to be held by expatriate officers whose posts will be filled at an early date, possibly at the end of this House, by suitably qualified Nigerians. The purpose of creating the two posts is to hasten Nigerianisation and to ensure that suitably qualified Nigerians do not remain on junior posts because expatriates have blocked the higher posts which they can hold creditably. It will be noted that the posts are supernumerary and will lapse when the holders retire with lump sum compensation. When this post is filled by a Nigerian it will be the first time a Nigerian is the professional head of the Ministry of Education.

He further referred to the primary schools in his area. He laboured too much on this point as he did the previous time, but may I say that it does not pay him enough to label himself as coming from a backward area. The only advice I will give him is to emulate those other areas where there is a spirit of self-help. I do not think it will pay Nigeria to ask Russia, America or other countries in the civilised world to wait until we manufacture our atomic bomb before they get their own. (*An hon. Member: It is regrettable.*) It is not regrettable; it will keep you all the time groaning if you do not make any effort. I must say that I did mention the other day that efforts are being made to help the so-called backward areas. As many as 133 U.P.E. schools were opened in these areas and we will have to wait until the results of these schools show themselves. The hon. Member does not expect that after the first year of a primary school he will turn out a secondary school leaver or a University school leaver. He has got to wait and see the results of the provisions we have so far made.

On secondary education I did mention here the other day that all the applications from these



[MR G. E. OKEKE]

areas were approved. Among all these—33, not 27; the 27 was earlier on but since then there were more others and they are now up to a total of 33. I said that these areas so-called backward were given approval for all applications from their areas, so that there is no point in telling this House that they were not considered. Now, on the point of expansion of secondary schools I think by the time I finish this I will claim to be like a lizard who fell from a tall tree and looked aside and did not see somebody to congratulate him. He had to check his right with his left hand. Now the figures here show themselves that there has been a phenomenal advance in secondary education. In 1955, there were only five Grammar and one Commercial schools opened, giving you a total of six; in 1956 there were seven Grammar and one Commercial, giving you eight; in 1957—seven Grammar and two Commercial, giving you nine; in 1958—fourteen Grammar and three Commercial, giving you seventeen; in 1959—eight; in 1960—thirty-three. There is no sign or indication to show that we have not been going ahead. Rather, there is no reason for anybody to feel that after allowing thirty-three to open we must just leave the flood gate for everyone to come in. I gave you an assurance that there was no undue embargo placed on the opening of secondary schools and you must rest assured that very soon when the time comes we shall consider your cases one by one on their merit.

Some hon. Members, hon. Opara in particular, did mention about leakages. While I feel as a sea dog on this issue, I must mention that undue emphasis is being laid on these 500 Certificates. Some say Certificates but I will rather say they are Forms because they are unsigned Certificates. What happened is that parcels about thirty thousand books of fifty each were delivered to the Ministry and when they were being issued out in serial numbers it was discovered that, in between, ten books of fifty each were missing. It is not for me to say whether it was magic or what it is, but what I had got to do was to refer it to the Police to investigate, and that was what I did. Secondly, it was gazetted so that if they are actually missing they should be valueless to any holder, since these numbers have been gazetted and the public has been warned that anybody holding any one of them is not holding a

Certificate. But that is not all; I promise this House that not only that particular Department but the whole Ministry will be overhauled.

Hon. Imeh made mention about certain grades of teachers in W.T.C. I do not know why he particularly chose W.T.C. I had thought that he would use the grades and not W.T.C. The grades he referred to (grades II and IV teachers) are paid according to the appropriate scale, that is £150 - £270. I think, normally, qualification for entry to the grades is either the Elementary or Higher Elementary Certificates. Teachers with these qualifications are appointed initially as grade IV teachers on £150 per annum. But only those who possess the Higher Elementary Certificate are entitled to proceed beyond a salary of £207 to become grade III teachers. So that you do not expect an Elementary teacher and a Higher Elementary teacher to be on the same scale of salary. I hope that will satisfy him on this point. He referred to grants-in-aid to teacher training institutions. I must say that, as opposed to secondary schools, every teacher training institution is automatically granted.

Hon. Morphy wanted to know on what basis the scholarship awards are made. I said, on the will of this House, that it should be by population basis. I hope to bring a Policy Paper on scholarships during the next sitting of the House. He also referred to automatic scholarships. I think the hon. Member might have misread the statement I made on the floor of this House. It referred to those who entered University Colleges in West Africa on the 1st of October, 1958.

I agree entirely with hon. Eyo Ita and others like hon. Awgu, who felt that the certificates serve as a means of service to the Community. And they went further to define the philosophy of education which they felt should be imbibed in the Ministry. I think that Dike's report will answer this matter creditably. The terms of reference were very exhaustive, and it was aimed at revolutionising our education. I agree with them that our education should have African background. By that we mean a change in our education from the present system to a new system. As I said earlier, when the time comes, we know how either to supplement or to accept both.



Hon. Yowika was alarmed at the number of school leavers every year and he wanted to know what will happen to them. I will only ask him to refer his case to the hon. Member on my right—the Minister of Commerce—He will absorb them in industries.

The hon. Ihekwoaba referred to the award of scholarships, but I did not understand him when he said Orlu was cheated or rather was unfairly treated. I remember in the course of my speech here last, I did say that because some of these councils in fact have not broken up, the policy paper on scholarship affected some of them and that a revision was made recently to correct that in the case of Orlu, Abakaliki and Okigwi. But I had thought that the hon. Member would congratulate me for so doing. About the Secondary School for Orlu, and others, as I said earlier, the embargo is not placed indefinitely, but for 1960. I am afraid we shall pay attention to other matters. The same hon. Ihekwoaba felt that equal treatment should be given to voluntary agency schools as well as that of Government. But if we do that there is no question of our having voluntary agencies; why not convert them to Government institutions? What we do to voluntary agencies is assistance. We do not expect to assist somebody 100 per cent, and if he is not ready to continue, we take over the schools and then take care of them. He referred to the percentage of passes in these schools. While I agree with him that Government secondary schools are doing very well in their passes and in their performances in the examinations it will be untrue to say that that pertains to them alone, because even this year we have several schools with 100 per cent passes. We have in Enugu here C.I.C. 100 per cent, for the past five years 100 per cent pass. So that if any school does not measure up he will not quarter his blame on the Government. May I thank the hon. Member from Aba for thanking me, and may I say that the reason for 9 Provincial Education Officers as against 12 Provinces, is well thought out. There are some other Provinces (now, I am not talking in terms of importance, but in comparison to the school population in these areas) which do not warrant having one Provincial Education Officer each. But then these Provinces are merged together and that is why you have 9 Provincial Education Officers. When the time comes for us to change this we might consider the need for it.

I will only say this, that unlike what some Members said here some time ago, my Ministry including my house, is open to any Member and that if he comes to my office and wants to enquire about cases relating to his particular constituency we shall receive him gladly. My quarrel has been that hon. Members do not visit the office until they come for House of Assembly, and that is not ample enough for me to give them the attention they desire. I will give you attention whenever you come to see me. May I say that if there is any point left unanswered the Member might come round to my office.

**Mr Agba** (Ogoja Division): Point of Order, I refer you to Standing Order 30 (5). I have just been called "coming from a backward area" and not from under-developed area. (*Laughter*).

**The Chairman:** It seems to me you raised the point of order, and you took a decision. You were bullying somebody.

**Mr Agba:** No, somebody was bullying on me.

**The Chairman:** What is your objection?

**Mr Agba:** My objection is that I do not like being called hon. Member "coming from a backward area." I must prefer the words: "coming from an under-developed area".

**The Minister of Education:** On point of explanation: In the *Hansard* he used the word, and I used it in consonance. In other words, I do not believe that there is "backward area".

*Question put and agreed to.*

#### Head 431.—Ministry of Finance

*Question proposed: That a sum not exceeding £967,360 for Head 431—Ministry of Finance—stand part of the Schedule?*

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** In opening the debate on this Head I want to reiterate the fact that the increases and upgradings reflected in the posts of Senior Accountants and Executive Officers in the Accounting Division are required to strengthen the accounting personnel of the Sub-Treasuries which are the institutions through



[MR IMOKE]

which Regional revenue is received and expenditure finally incurred. I hope that this higher cadre of officers will see to it that the efficiency in the Treasuries is increased.

I have also, in my Budget Speech, spoken about the expansion in the Internal Revenue Division. Not only is it desirable to strengthen this Division which came into being in 1956 but it is also necessary to provide for its further expansion as its operations are extended to all parts of the Region. As the take-over of tax assessment and collection from the Administration progresses, the staff requirements of the Division will be reassessed with a view to giving it eventually a full complement. I wish to pay tribute to the work which the Internal Revenue Division is performing and I hope that hon. Members will agree with me that it is of the utmost importance that this work, on which the successful prosecution of the Finance Law depends, should not be impeded by inadequate staff.

In the Memorandum to the Estimates, I have drawn the attention of hon. Members to the fact that it is desirable to replace the large number of temporary staff in the Tax Offices by more permanent clerks. The increase under Sub-head 1, item 70 from 192 to 275 Second and Third-class Clerks reflects this change which is considered necessary in the interest of security. With the proposed opening of a twelfth Motor Licensing Office at Ikot Ekpene, it is hoped that a desired need in the area will have been met.

I have already paid tribute to my staff while winding up the debate on the Budget Speech and I take this opportunity to commend the Government Printer and his staff for co-operating fully with my Ministry in printing the Estimates and the Schedules to the Finance Law.

**Mr A. O. Chikwendu** (Bende Division): I beg to take this opportunity to commend the industry and devotion to duty shown by the Commissioner of Internal Revenue and request the Minister of Finance to convey the gratitude of this hon. House to Mr Whittam for his excellent work. I have to thank the Minister of Finance as he has been able to put up a

Treasury Building at Umuahia which is equal to the volume of work done in that office. I have to appeal to him also to increase the staff at Umuahia because the volume of work there is very largely increased. Umuahia is where the Provincial Engineer lives and so a lot of contractors from Owerri, Okigwi and Aba go there for their payment. There also we have the bank and you find contractors crowding up the place and, as a result, the small staff there are worked to death. I am making a strong appeal to the Minister to consider increasing the staff of Umuahia Treasury.

I understand that Executive Officers in other Ministries receive what is called Children's Separate Domicile Allowance and Outfit Allowance but the staff in the Ministry of Finance are not given such allowances. If the allegation is correct, the Minister should please look into it.

I am also informed that before members of the staff of the Internal Revenue Division are considered to have passed their Efficiency Test, they have to pass in Book-keeping or secure a pass in the Advanced Level R.S.A. If that is correct, the Minister should ensure that these people are given a good measure of preferential treatment.

I am indeed happy that strong effort is being made to improve tax collection and it will be appreciated if the people who devote their attention to ensure that tax is collected and that our revenue is improved are given adequate compensation.

**Mr Onwuma** (Aba Division): I thank you very much, Mr Chairman, I will be very brief because I have made some comments on this Ministry before. May I say that I am in sympathy with the Minister of Finance because his portfolio is such a difficult one and is bombarded from all angles not only from the House but also from the outside. I might say once again whether it will be possible somehow—I say this even in the name of God—that the tax of the people in the rural areas be reconsidered in order to make some reductions. The reason is that it is possible to increase our revenue from some other sources. One is that already, as I have pointed out, the Federal Government has imposed tax on some imported goods and that will, according to the Federal



Minister of Finance, increase the Federal share to the Region to the tune of about £60,000. So, if that happens even without these increases, it is likely that . . .

**The Minister of Local Government:** Point of Order: Standing Order 30 (4):

“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 think we have already taken a decision on this.

**The Chairman:** Yes, I am afraid, Mr Onwuma, we should not allow you to proceed. That matter has been dealt with and the Schedule has been approved by this House.

**Mr Onwuma:** I am talking about the Ministry of Finance.

**The Minister of Local Government:** He has asked the Minister of Finance to reconsider what we have already considered.

**Mr Onwuma:** I am saying that there are several ways of increasing our revenue.

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Justice (Mr D. A. Nnaji):** On point of Order. Standing Order 39.

**The Chairman:** My decision is final. Thank you.

**Mr Onwuma:** I am saying that as far as the Board of Internal Revenue is concerned, we can increase our revenue without getting some people in the rural areas whose income . . .

**The Chairman:** Is he still talking on this ?

**Mr Onwuma:** The salary of the Accountant-General is not in keeping with the schedule. The Accountant-General who is responsible for the state of the finances of the Region should be equated wherever the

Commissioner of Income Tax is. You will notice that when the Minister of Finance was making his Speech, he said that the Permanent Secretary received a salary more than any other member of the Division. You will therefore see that the salary of the Permanent Secretary is £2,640 and that of the Accountant-General is £2,220. I submit that the Accountant-General should receive the same salary as the Commissioner of Internal Revenue. In the Department of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue many officers are preparing to quit. They are dissatisfied with the administration of that Department.

**Mr S. E. K. Iwueke (Okigwi Division):** I just want to raise one point and that is on tax assessment. I am going to make this statement with reference to what is happening in Okigwi Division. Last year in that area there was arbitrary tax assessment. This was caused by the injection into Assessment Committee of irresponsible Councillors who had no consideration for the financial abilities of the people they were assessing. I am appealing to the Minister of Finance to take this matter very seriously especially as it affects many people. It will be most unfair to tax somebody who cannot afford even the bare necessities of life. Another point is on the question of this hire-purchase mania. It has been the practice of many people to buy articles of high value on hire-purchase. They take orders from U.A.C. and other firms on hire-purchase and this has wrecked many a young person. As the Government is concerned with the welfare of the people, something should be done to curb the tendency of people going in for this hire-purchase.

**Mr Ikoku:** I just want to ask two questions. I would associate myself to what has been said in the field of the Minister of Finance and his Ministry. I would like to assure him that the over-all work of his Ministry is quite good. But what my hon. Friend who has just spoken said is quite true. There has been a lot of complaint in the Internal Revenue and if only he could try to get at the root of these complaints these would soon be all right.

Under sub-head 31 we see that the sum of £135,000 was put down for passages. I will take it that this is the estimated cost of leave passages, etc., of our expatriate civil servants and probably one or two indigenous Nigerians.



[MR IKOKU]

I have thought that as a result of the increase in Nigerianisation this amount should decrease but the amount is increasing. The annual expenditure for 1959-60 was estimated at £135,000 and this is the estimated expenditure for 1959-60 !

**Mr G. C. Okeya** (Owerri Division): Point of Order 77 (9):

“... On such debate Members shall not deal with the details of Expenditure but may refer to the details of Revenue.”

**Several hon. Members:** It does not hold.

**The Chairman:** I think he is right but we are trying not to waste time. So that actually the debate could now be on policy but we are trying not to do this so as to save time.

**Mr Ikoku:** I think I can even defend myself on the ground of policy because that is precisely where I want to ask my question. If we want Nigerianisation why should provision for passages be increasing instead of decreasing? It was £101,929 in 1958-59 and it is now at £135,000. The way I see this matter is that we have too many expatriates in our civil service and if it is correct that Nigerians are taking over from the expatriates then this waste on passages should not be increasing. Instead it should be decreasing.

**The Minister of Finance:** I want to reply to the question raised by the Leader of Opposition. The passage provision made rightly speaking, was not only for expatriates, but also for a lot of our young men being trained abroad. It is not being provided to cover only the expatriates.

The Leader of Opposition also said that we have some increases in passages. The fare of both air passage and sea passage has increased. This accounts for the increase in the Estimates.

Hon. Chikwendu has paid compliments to the Commissioner of Internal Revenue, whereas hon. Onwuma has criticised him and he was

supported by the Leader of the Opposition. It makes the situation a bit difficult for me to know what to say. In any case, there is no tax collector or tax commissioner who is very popular in any part of the world and all I can say about that is that I would look into the matter very carefully.

Hon. Iwueke complained of arbitrary tax assessment in Okigwi. There again, I would appeal to hon. Members to appeal on our behalf to those who are serving in these Assessment Committee to try and use their offices properly and not to engage in bribery and corruption. If hon. Members will help to educate the people I think the result will be much better.

Hon. Onwuma mentioned something about the salary of the Accountant-General. I am afraid I am not quite sure what the position is in other Regions. When the salary of the Director of Audit was raised here, I gave the question a study and found that we were not worse than the other Regions and in the case of the Accountant-General, I think the same thing may apply but I am not sure. I will have to look into it and find out what is the position. I think hon. Members are not very enthusiastic about this Ministry and there has never been any real serious points raised.

*Question put and agreed to.*

#### Head 432.—Pensions and Gratuities

£11,260 for Head 432—Pensions and Gratuities—agreed to.

#### Head 434.—Ministry of Health

*Question proposed: That a sum not exceeding £1,599,270 for Head 434—Ministry of Health—stand part of the Schedule.*

**Mr G. I. Oko, M.B.E.** (Awgu Division): I would like to draw the attention of the Minister of Health to what I consider to be very improper and unfair administration of the Joint Hospitals in the Region. The Joint Hospitals have different policies. With regard to the supply



of amenities which are enjoyed in Hospitals, school children who attend Joint Hospitals do pay for their treatment whereas in the Government Hospitals school children get their treatment free. I would like the Minister of Health to look into this matter.

The other thing I want to point out is the question of electric lights and water. In Awgu Joint Hospital there is no water. The Hospital is about 25 miles away from Oji River where this Region has Electric Power Station. I think it is high time this Ministry considered supplying the Awgu Joint Hospital with electricity from the Oji River power Station.

The Awgu Joint Hospital needs children's ward also. This has not been in existence up to this time. If Awgu community could not build a Joint Hospital for themselves, I think it should have been the duty of this Government to provide one for the Division. I think the hon. Minister of Health will take this matter seriously and make fund available for the extension of the Hospital in order to give it all that it needs.

The quarters for nurses in Awgu Joint Hospital need extension also. Many of the nurses in the Hospital live very far away from the Hospital and as a result, when cases come, may be at night, there are no nurses on the spot to treat them promptly. So I am asking the hon. Minister of Health to consider extending the staff quarters.

The other point I want to make is that the 12½ per cent increase on salary award to Voluntary Agency Hospital nurses has not been extended to those working in Awgu Joint Hospital. The staff of this Hospital feel they are not being well treated. I ask the hon. Minister to see to it that they are given their dues as those working in other Voluntary Agency Hospitals.

**Chief I. I. Morphy** (Ogoja Division): I will like to start from the Maternity Section of the General Hospital in Enugu here. What they do in the Maternity Section here is to have selected people who go to the Maternity Section to deliver. When you take a pregnant woman to that section the people in charge will

tell you to go to one of the Maternities in Enugu, and in most of those Maternities Doctors do not go there frequently, and sometimes do not even go there at all. We do not see the reason why we should have a Maternity Section here which continues to recommend pregnant women to private Maternities. We will like the Minister of Health to tell us why such things happen. Even the pregnant women who are admitted into the Government Maternity attached to the General Hospital are not being properly cared for by the nurses and midwives there. These people who are called the nurses and midwives and who are supposed to take care of these pregnant women who are in agony, do not take care of them. What they tell these pregnant women is that you go and sit down and suffer your pains. After all we are using these poor tax-payer's money in training these nurses and maintaining them, and yet the wives of these people go to the hospital you hear the trained midwives telling the pregnant women all sorts of things. This is very poor and we want the Minister to make an investigation. Any of these nurses and midwives who is found doing that should be removed from the register of midwives and nurses.

Another point about the General Hospital is that as you drive into the General Hospital you find relatives of the sick ones admitted into the hospital. You find them in very poor conditions. You find them cooking outside. The way they cook is very disgraceful to the Africans. After all, this is the Regional Headquarters and we have our own way of caring for the sick ones. When your brother is sick you follow him along. The English man does not do that. When one of them is sick they will only take him to the hospital for the nurses and doctors to take care of. It is high time that this Ministry provided a place for the relatives of the sick ones. What we should do is to provide a kitchen for them and provide a sleeping place for them. What the nurses there do in the night is to drive them out and they sleep in the cold. The next day they catch cold. It is time something was done to improve the present condition.

Also in the Chemist Section you will find some people staying from morning till two o'clock and yet may not receive treatment. You



[CHIEF MORPHY]

have very few Chemists so that you find so many people queuing up. Some of them stand under the sun from morning till two o'clock. What I am saying is that we have not got sufficient Chemists in the hospitals to take care of these patients. The Minister should try his best and do something because this is the Regional Headquarters. It should be started here and from here it will get into other places.

The next point is about the treatment of the Corporation workers. You find that in the Tourist Corporation and the E.R.D.C. some of the workers do not know under what grade they are placed. Whether or not they too are to receive free medical treatment as Government Servants because when the workers in the Catering Rest House go to the General Hospital for treatment, they are never treated free. We want the Government to tell us where they have placed these workers, whether the Corporation is to pay for them or whether they should pay for their treatment.

Another point is the Ogoja Hospital. We just describe it as a Hospital because we have a Doctor there. We describe it as Hospital for courtesy sake. It is not a well-run Hospital at all. The patients have no light in the night. What the Doctor does is to use his car light in the night when he goes there for urgent cases. When you go there in the night you see patients who are very sick. Since the houses were blown off we have not got them ready yet for people to live in. So you find that the Mission Hospital there is doing better than the Government Hospital. We are asking the Minister of Health to try and come over to that place and help us, and also provide light. The school boys who are supposed to be treated free are not, because they go to the other Hospital. Even nurses in that Hospital go to the Mission Hospital. This will show you how bad that Hospital is. We want the Minister to try and help us to improve the Hospital, and also to bring a Nursing Sister there.

We want the Minister to give us light even if it is Tilley or Aladdin light because the patients are moving in darkness.

**Mr E. U. Eronini** (Owerri Division): Our people so much demand hospitals and after building most of these hospitals they either give them to one Mission or the other and call them Joint Hospitals. But it is a sorry thing at times to find that when one goes to some of these Joint Hospitals, the people who built the hospitals are not looked after unless they pay so heavily and in many cases, the Government gives them some aid. In some cases Government pays for the Nurses. Yet, there is nothing like acts of gratitude shown by these Missions. They charge more than the Government would have charged; they charge more than the Private Practitioner would charge; in almost anything, they charge very heavily. Those who have been to some of these Joint Hospitals can tell better. I am asking the Minister to be very careful how he gives preference to some of these Joint Hospitals and Mission Hospitals. They may in future know what to do and they must also realise that as time goes on we shall find Doctors to take over these hospitals from the people.

I am glad that there is a provision for Principal Medical Officer and also provision for Principal Matron. There is also provision for Chief Superintendent of Health. In the Public Health Branch you have Nurses, Doctors, and Pharmacists. There are a lot of things now happening in this country especially with the traffic in drugs which I know is now being tackled by the Minister of Health. You will be surprised to know that over one thousand licences have been given to illiterate persons to practise medicine, only by paying 2s 6d the certificate is signed. The recipients of such certificates take the certificates to the rural area and tell the people that they are Doctors, registered and licensed to practise medicine; licensed to sell any medicine. It is very unfortunate! I know of what happened recently. A man from Onitsha, I am sorry to say, was able to get £10 each from 300 of these people, to get them licences. His job is to get for them what they could have got if they went themselves.

*And it being 11.45 a.m. the Chairman interrupted the business and left the Chair to report Progress and ask leave to sit again.*



*Eastern House of Assembly Debates*

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(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)

*Deferred until Monday, 11th April, 1960.*

Committee report Progress: To sit again on Monday.

(5) The Magistrates Courts (Amendment) Bill—Second Reading.

*Deferred until 11th April, 1960.*

(3) The Native Courts (Interim Provisions) Bill—Second Reading.

**ADJOURNMENT**

*Deferred until Monday, 11th April, 1960.*

Resolved: That this House do now adjourn  
(*The Minister of Finance, Dr S. E. Imoke*).

(4) The High Court (Amendment) Bill—Second Reading.

*Adjourned accordingly, at five minutes to twelve o'clock noon.*



EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Monday, 11th April, 1960

The House met at Ten o'clock a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENT

Federal Film Unit

**Mr Speaker:** Hon. Members, I want to ask leave of the House in regard to what the Federal Film Unit will be doing in this House. They will be taking snap-shots of various places, the Premier and so on. They will therefore be getting their machines ready while we are at work. At one o'clock, that is after the break, they will come in and take snap-shots of hon. Members.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(1) The 1960–61 Eastern Region  
Appropriation Bill

Considered in the Committee of Supply.

(Progress 8th April).

(FIFTH ALLOTTED DAY)

(In the Committee)

Head 434.—Ministry of Health

*Question again proposed: That a sum not exceeding £1,599,270 for Head 434—Ministry of Health—stand part of the Schedule.*

**Mr E. U. Eronini** (Owerri Division): Before the House adjourned on Friday, I was speaking on the granting of certificates to illiterate persons to traffic in drugs on payment of 2s 6d. It is, however, not only in this Region that this happens. It happens in the West and in the North. When one enters the markets he will discover that half of the people trade in medicine. How to overcome this menace presents a big problem, but a remedy must be found. I suggest that the Minister should find means of tightening up

the granting of certificates. He can do that by raising the fee to something high enough.

I would suggest the payment of £50 for licence. I say this because those people who sell beer and wine pay a lot and there is no reason why we should be lenient on those persons who go about killing people. I think that at least we must make money from these quack doctors and by so doing limit the trafficking in medicine, and the illicit medical practice in this Region. There are cases of pharmacists who take to surgery and doctors who will not like pharmacists to dispense for them but will do it themselves. There is therefore a lot of illegal medical practice in this Region in which pharmacists, doctors, nurses, etc., are included. There should, therefore, be a way of controlling this illegal trafficking so that the doctor will know his duty, the pharmacist will keep to his duty and the nurses will do the same. Even ward servants nowadays pretend to be doctors. You will see that there is need for tightening up control and supervision. I would like the Chief Pharmacist to help the Director of Medical Services and the Chief Medical Officer in advising and guiding the Minister of Health in matters connected with health and medicine.

I would furthermore go to say that there is need for health education in this Region. There is a lot of people dying because of ignorance of what to do or what to eat. The pregnant women deserve to be instructed what to do during the period of pregnancy and after birth. Our Health visitors should devote more time on instructing than remaining in the hospitals. They have an important duty to perform and this is concerned with teaching the people what to do.

I must congratulate the Ministry of Health for the attention now given to remodel the Owerri General Hospital. I have also to thank the Ministry for the services of the present doctor, Dr Nzeribe. Owerri Division had been unlucky in the past in the provision of doctors but of recent I must say that Dr Nzeribe, who is a native of Owerri Division has been posted to the Owerri General Hospital and I would like to say that the people of Owerri Division, both young and old, would like Dr Nzeribe to remain there forever.



**Mr S. G. Ikoku** (Enyong Division): We want Dr Nzeribe back to Aba where he was before. (*The Premier: We also want him at Umuahia.*)

**Mr Eronini:** Dr Nzeribe must remain at Owerri. He is a native of Owerri. (*Several hon. Members: Then let him remain at Owerri.*)

May I call the attention of the Minister of Health to the fact that Mbaitoli District with a population of 100,000 people because of scarcity of water and poverty, suffers from various diseases, chief among them being water-borne diseases. The quack medical men I have just been talking about find there a very fertile ground for their practice and their agents can be seen going about looking for patients. It is the prayer of the people of this area that a cottage hospital should be built because a cottage hospital is not too much for a population of 100,000 people. There is enough of trained nurses, both locally trained and overseas, who can man this cottage hospital if built. After all, the main job of running a hospital falls on nurses and if well-trained nurses can be found then the job of manning a hospital will have been done. The doctors only come once in a while, sometimes once a week, and that is when there is an emergency case. The people of my area should not therefore wait until they have the services of fully fledged doctors before they have a cottage hospital. If they are to wait until they have fully qualified medical practitioners they will wait till doomsday. Many of our nurses nowadays, especially those trained overseas do about three-quarters of the hospital job more than even some doctors. Doctors do more when it comes to the question of operation but in ordinary hospital management and looking after the sick, diagnosing such ailments as fever and other diseases of the children, nurses always play a vital part.

So we feel that Government should build for us, or give us a helping hand to build a cottage hospital for this populous district. When I talk of joint hospitals, I mean all these hospitals owned by the people and given to one of these Missions to look after. I do not mean the Government should build one like the Joint Hospital at Umuahia—the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. That Hospital is doing very well indeed, just as well as the Anua Hospital. The only difference is the fee charged; if they can

cut down their fees, we should be proud of them, especially of some of the doctors there. (*An hon. Member: What of the Owerri one?*) Owerri Hospital is good for Owerri people. As long as you allow the doctor we want to remain there to be there you will be our friend.

**Chief I. I. Morphy** (Ogoja Division): On Point of Order. You last ruled that people should not heckle unnecessarily. But Mr Okafor—and he is a Provincial Commissioner—is heckling.

**The Chairman:** He is a great friend of yours, I think?

**Chief Morphy:** He is not.

**Mr S. O. Achara** (Okigwi Division): I wish to speak on this vexed question of pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Society in the Eastern Region. The history of pharmacy is as follows: Many years ago, when the first expatriate doctors came to work in this country, they had not in the hospitals qualified pharmacists as at present. People who were then referred to as pharmacists were in the real sense dispensary attendants who had to work under the strict supervision of doctors. This continued until there reached a time when it was thought that the profession of pharmacy should be under the medical supervision. But now that we have produced eminent pharmacists—some of them holding University degrees in pharmacology—we should recognise that these two professions are parallel and independent. They only agree as far as mutual interest of the doctors and the pharmacists in carrying out the functions of healing is concerned.

My point is that we have come to a stage where the Minister should undertake immediately to create a Pharmacy Division in the Ministry of Health and a post of Chief Pharmacist to take charge of that division. The Chief Pharmacist should be to the Minister what the Chief Medical Adviser is to him. For all matters affecting medicine, the Minister is advised by the Chief Medical Officer and all matters affecting pharmacology, or the practice of pharmacy, this Chief Pharmacist should advise the Minister. I should like to go further by saying that wherever we have in the Region a Senior Medical Officer taking charge of a group of hospitals, we should post his



[MR ACHARA]

equivalent—a Senior Pharmacist—who will take charge of the supervision of hospitals in that area. The object of this is to ensure that the malpractices, such as the last speaker referred to rather extensively in his speech, should stop. He drew our attention last Friday to the fact that in Owerri alone at one time, as many as two hundred patent medicine vendors received patent medicine certificates. (*An hon. Member: Onitsha*). Is it Onitsha he said? I thought he said the lawyer who procured these certificates came from Onitsha and distributed them in Owerri Division. It will be the main duty of these Senior Pharmacists who are posted in the various Provinces to check with a view to combating the ill-practices of these patent medicine peddlers, as some people call them. We cannot talk much—in fact much cannot be said in condemning the malpractices of these so-called doctors with certificates who parade everywhere in the rural areas giving injections of very dangerous types, opening surgical theatres in their private houses and administering all manners of drugs. I think it is a direct threat on the health of the people of this Region. In every market beginning from Enugu to Onitsha, Port Harcourt, Aba (Aba in particular), Calabar, Umuahia, and all these urban areas, you find all drugs sold—drugs which pharmacists only are supplied because they have the training and which they keep under lock and key. (*The Premier: From where do they get them; from the Pharmacists?*) From the Pharmacists and from the doctors. It will be the duty of these pharmacists who are posted to the Provinces to undertake regular inspection of all these patent medicine sellers who have a Government licence of 2s 6d.

The other point is that I understand that practising doctors in this Region hardly employ qualified pharmacists to work under them. They undertake the duties of medical officers and try to practise pharmacy which I understand is not their field, with the result that standards are lowered. The Minister should, in his usual meetings with medical practitioners in this Region, draw their attention to the need for them to have qualified pharmacists to dispense medicines for them.

We see regularly an exodus of Pharmacists from our General Hospitals and the reason is not far to seek. Pharmacists in our General

Hospitals have no future. No future whatsoever. In the first place, a Pharmacist, after obtaining his school certificate, is required to have his G.C.E. advanced subjects before he is admitted into the Pharmacy school. He goes there with this intermediate degree and does three years after which he takes a very stiff examination, passes out and goes into the Civil Service. He is given an initial salary of £405 per annum. His counterpart who goes to the University College, Ibadan, after obtaining his degree, may be in Geography or History or Mathematics, comes out after three years, gets into the Civil Service and is placed on £624 per annum with other allowances. One can easily see the disparity there. I would call upon the Minister to recommend a revision of salaries for Pharmacists in this Region so that we can stop the exodus of this class of people in our hospitals. When the salaries are revised and these posts of Chief Pharmacist, and Senior Pharmacists in the Provinces, are created there is no doubt that the Pharmacists in the hospitals will then have a future. They will look up to something higher than the initial salary of £405 per annum and will be induced to stay. As long as we treat them as if to say they are a by-product of the medical profession, so long will they continue to go to the Pharmacy school, come out, and, as soon as they finish with their bond, resign and go.

While on this question of the General Hospitals in the Region, I would like to deal with the acute shortage of trained nurses in our hospitals. I agree that we do criticise our nurses (some of them, not all of them) that they do not possess the humanitarian qualities which the profession of nursing requires, but there is the fact that even those of them who have shown remarkable efficiency and have done the best that is to be expected from the best nurses are offered nothing to give them the incentive to work. The highest post in our General Hospitals that an efficient nurse will attain is Senior Staff Nurse which has a maximum salary of £405 per annum. After a nurse has worked for 20, 25, 30 or 35 years he is called upon to retire on a salary of £405 per annum. That is one of the reasons why even those of them who are willing to give their services properly feel very reluctant to do so. They are spiritually depressed and consequently there is no more enthusiasm and no



more interest in the job. I will call upon the Minister to create opportunities for nurses to advance. The post of Nursing Superintendent should be created in all our General Hospitals to assist the doctors. If a nurse knows that he can aspire to become a Nursing Superintendent he will be prepared and willing to do his best so as to qualify for that post. But as long as he knows that no matter whatever he does throughout his period in the hospital his maximum salary will be £405 per annum and no more, one cannot expect him to do anything. In addition to this question of service conditions for these nurses, at the Enugu General Hospital, in each ward of 30 beds we have one Senior Staff Nurse in charge of the ward. One; and this Senior Staff Nurse does morning duty. Those who are called upon to assist him are the trainees who have just left the P.T.S. at Aba, and these trainees have not the authority of the profession to do certain things until they have completed three years and have taken the final examination. So that in actual fact the whole duty in this ward rests squarely upon this Senior Staff Nurse. There is an absolute need for the increase of qualified nurses, Senior Staff Nurses with many years experience. At least if we must expect a certain degree of efficiency from them, there should be two Senior Staff Nurses during the morning duty, at least one Senior Staff Nurse during the afternoon duty and one Senior Staff Nurse on night duty, who will work with and supervise the other junior nurses. We find out that in our Voluntary Agency hospitals the staff position is much better. (*Some hon. Members: Worse!*) I will cite instances of three Voluntary Agency hospitals where there is good staff position: The Queen Elizabeth Hospital at Umuahia, the R.C.M. Hospital at Anua in Uyo Division and the Ituk Mbang Methodist Hospital. If these hospitals with their limited financial resources are able to be staffed properly with nurses, I do not see why our general hospitals with all the Government resources should not be properly staffed. So that when we apportion blame to some of these nurses for not carrying out their duties as we expect, I think the medical authorities have their own responsibility.

I would like to pay tribute to our Voluntary Agency Hospitals in this Region. They have done very magnificent work. Not only is the quality of their doctors very high but the

quality of their nurses is also very high and the only defect is that they have not enough money to expand their functions in the hospitals, no money to build more wards and no money to buy and stock in large quantities the various drugs. I would like to give an example. Take the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. That hospital stands in an urgent need of four additional wards but unfortunately there is not the money to build these wards. Four additional wards, excluding staff quarters, and the provision of money for extra drugs constitute an urgent need. The standard and reputation of this hospital have made it such that everywhere in the Region it is known and people rush there for treatment.

I want to call upon the Minister of Health to make money available immediately, find money from the Contingencies Votes and other Votes in the Ministry, too numerous to mention, to help this Hospital. A small sum of about £40,000 will only do to begin the job. I appeal to him very strongly, that this hospital stands in need of immediate help from his Ministry. The same applies to other Voluntary Agency Hospitals.

I now come to the General Hospital at Okigwi. I am coming home to my constituency. I want to say that we are grateful to the Minister of Health and his Ministry for the extensions made at the Okigwi General Hospital. These extensions have brought great relief to our people and I am asked to congratulate him very warmly and in doing so, to bring to his notice the persistent request for an additional Medical Officer. There is only one doctor in the General Hospital, Okigwi who serves this Division with a population of 443,000 people. It is extremely difficult for one doctor to cater for the health of a Division with such a dense population. There are numerous maternities and dispensaries, and because of pressure of work it is not possible for the doctor at Okigwi to inspect these maternities and dispensaries. I am asked to make this special request to the Minister and I hope that between now and the next three months a second doctor will be posted to that hospital. Well, there is the need also for a health centre to serve Isuochi, Umuchieze and Nneato—three Local Government areas with a population of 52,000. The nearest hospital is at Okigwi, and it is about 14 to 18 miles away



[MR ACHARA]

from some towns. And you can imagine the sufferings of the people. We have had some cases of pregnant women dying on the way before they get to Okigwi as a result of the distance, and other cases of people bitten by snakes who by the time arrangements for transport is made to take them to Okigwi, die on the way. I want to appeal to the Minister of Health to find small money and open a Health Centre at Isuochi to serve these Local Government areas.

Finally, I would like to congratulate the Minister and the Ministry for deciding to build a Specialist Hospital in this Region. I remember when I contributed to the debates in 1957 I drew the attention of the Government to the urgent need to build a Specialist Hospital in this Region. It is a good thing that it would be done very soon. I would advise that we take very good care in recruiting real experts and specialists from within and without this country. Real experts, right from the toe to the hair. A doctor in charge of hair will be specialist for hair. We need a surgeon, specialist for nose, throat and hair; specialist for the chest, specialist for the belly, specialist for the waist, specialist for the bile, right down to the toe. So that we may not have the need to fly to U.K. to receive treatment. I congratulate him and his Ministry and wish that it will not be long before this new hospital is started.

**The Chairman:** I think it is the general desire that we adjourn *sine die* latest on Thursday. Therefore, please let us have fewer and shorter speeches. We have 15 more Heads to go through.

**Mr Achara:** I think we can adjourn and come back after two weeks.

**Dr W. N. Onubogu (Onitsha Division):** I am going to be very brief. Ordinarily, I would not have said anything, because year in year out, I have shouted myself hoarse in this House, calling on the Ministry of Health to do something about this drug peddling. Whenever I rose to speak some hon. Members would shout, "vested interest!" Well, once they do not shout now it only goes to show that they are realising the seriousness of the position. Why I want to say a few words

was, in the first place to disabuse the minds of this House that doctors go out of their way to dispense medicines. In the first place, it will be most expensive for them to start to dispense medicine by themselves, whereas there are many Chemist Shops where they could send for their drug mixtures. Some hon. Members may not know that there are some doctors who also have very good experience and are qualified in pharmacy. But even then they do not bother to go out and dispense, so it is a very bad impression that some hon. Members tried to give to this House this morning.

Year in year out, this question of drug peddling comes to this House for mention, I think mere mention, because after that everybody seems to forget all about it. I had more or less demonstrated how injections are given in the open markets in Onitsha, Aba, Enugu, Port Harcourt, Calabar but I have never heard of any attempt by the Ministry of Health to follow this allegation up. That has never been done. These people carry motor cars to the market squares and shout themselves hoarse, with a bottle in hand, that they sell very good medicines. Has the Ministry of Health ever investigated even one case? If they did they would find syringes, needless, drugs for injections inside the car. Some of them sell kettle tea. They even go to the length to give injections. This allegation is made every year.

There is another point suggested, that inspecting pharmacists should be appointed by the Government to go round armed with power to search these unscrupulous people including chemists. Though it is very difficult to set a thief to catch a thief; there must be some conscientious ones who will face their work squarely. People have asked where these drugs come from. A lot of them come from the pharmacists themselves. Last year I described in this House how the drugs get to the market from the Chemists and, as I said, often when we leave here everybody forgets all about it. I will take the trouble to narrate it all over again. These traders pay upwards of £500 and £1,000 for the signature of a Chemist and then they go away with that and then write anything they want on it and submit to Firms. Now, when these drugs arrive they go and claim them and the drugs go right into the market. I said it before and



I am saying it again and I hope the Minister of Health would make investigation. There is no question of vested interest but it is the health of the people of the Eastern Region.

There are certain stalls all over the Region where you have in front of the stalls bottles of medicine purported to be for sale but in actual fact behind the shed they administer injections. These things have been brought to the floor of this House and to the notice of the Police. Nothing has been done, absolutely nothing.

**An hon. Member:** Suggest a remedy.

**Dr Onubogu:** I am just telling him ordinarily; if the Minister gets to his office, he can set the ball rolling. If he wants further investigation he may invite us—both private practitioners and even Government doctors.

**The Provincial Commissioner, Yenagoa (Mr N. L. P. Apreala):** Vested interest!

**Dr Onubogu:** I know he would say vested interest, but we have the interest of the Region at heart.

There are many lorries that come from Lagos with medical drugs. Once, at Onitsha, it happened that a lorry was off-loading and a case fell and got broken and the content of the box was medical drugs, penicillin, etc., and the lorry driver drove away leaving the broken case behind. All these lorries that come from Lagos should be intercepted and all the contents checked; this is necessary if this Government wants to do something. How many times has the Minister of Health arranged for raids in the markets? I know it is a very serious problem and I am not blaming the Ministry that the thing continues but what I am saying is that I have not seen what it has done. It is not enough to say that efforts are being made. Serious efforts should be made now and people appointed to investigate.

**Mr A. J. Ekpe (Opobo Division):** I received with some satisfaction the announcement of the Minister of Health the other day that he is going to make £8,000 available for the supply of electricity to the General Hospital at Opobo. That was a very good and generous

effort on the part of the Minister. This is an outstanding thing to the lives of people in Opobo hospital and I want to say "thank you" to the Minister and the Ministry.

There is only one doctor in the General Hospital at Opobo and this poor fellow has to tour parts of Eket, Uyo and Oron and has to work at Opobo General Hospital. So often when you come to the General Hospital with an emergency case you will be told that the doctor is on a week's tour and, of course, the natural thing that happens is that the patient dies and that is the end of it—a great loss to the Region, a loss to the relatives and, of course, a loss to the Government as he may be a tax-payer.

I am suggesting that having a second doctor is very essential. The one doctor we have stays in the Hospital and works. Uyo has several hospitals; Eket has a hospital of its own. Where are all these Mission doctors now; why is it not arranged that these doctors visit the dispensaries in their own Division? Why must the Government doctor go round all these places? I think it is what we in Opobo think and I hope the Minister of Health will issue instructions at an early time.

I did mention last time that in the whole of Opobo Division there is no Rural Health Centre and I think the Minister replied that there is one in Opobo town. As far as my knowledge goes, I do not think there is a Health Centre in Opobo town. I did advocate for a Health Centre at Ngo in Obollo because this place is totally cut off by a big expanse of water and from this place to Egwanga is almost 20 nautical miles and when there is any patient to be attended to, that is, to be carried to the General Hospital, he will have to be paddled in a canoe for a very long distance of over 20 miles before he gets to the Egwanga General Hospital and, of course, the normal thing is that he dies before he ever gets to the General Hospital and the people have to travel back.

In these Creek areas there are mushroom villages and water hedges. I had suggested that there should be mobile dispensary or a Health Centre to serve the medical needs of these areas. I know people who understand what I am talking about because they have been frequenting these areas during elections and after that no more. So I am appealing to



[MR EKPE]

the Minister of Health to arrange for a Health Centre and or a mobile dispensary in a boat which could round these areas. A Health Centre is also necessary for the Annang Division. The nearest hospital is at Ikot Okoro; that is also the only hospital in Abak Division, so one can imagine the Ikoro hospital catering for the medical needs of the Abak Division and part of the Opobo Division. I should be grateful to the Minister of Health if he could go into this case. In fact this is one of the causes of discontent among the Annang section. This Government has consistently neglected this area and has not done anything about their social needs. There is now a lot of the business of trafficking in drugs in the open market. I would support a Member who has just spoken that the Minister of Health should institute a very thorough search on this dangerous trafficking. If you go to the market in the rural areas, you will see vans containing dangerous drugs. They advertise the wonderful restorative effects of these medicines. I remember occasions when I had to rush two patients to hospital because they took dangerous drugs. It is not therefore out of place to say that there is need for a serious surprise check in the market. A lot of people are being killed and a lot more are being incapacitated for life as a result of the effect of these dangerous drugs. I think that serious emphasis has been laid on this and the Minister can see that it is the consensus of opinion in this House that something serious should be done about it.

The other day a Member spoke about the humility of nurses in Government hospitals. I think this is only extended to those who are well placed in society. Those who are in the higher rung of the ladder in the society do not experience how these nurses treat people in the rural areas and the way they demand money from people. They also bully people about. That is why people leave Government hospitals to go to Voluntary Agency hospitals. People leave the Hospitals at Opobo and Eket and go to privately owned hospitals in other places because those are places where they are treated like human beings. Unless one gives money to these nurses one does not get anything good from them. These things are facts and those who are fortunately placed in society may not be suffering these things but they exist. The Minister of Health should intervene and make

enquiries to see that the attitude of nurses to patients is improved. This is one of the things which people see and lose interest in the administration of the black man. The fault is in us and in our people.

I want to emphasise the need for the training of more pathologists in the Region. Many criminals have gone away free of charge because there have been no adequate proof and detective measures against the causes of murder and as people keep on reading some of these criminal novels on the use of various drugs to commit murder and crimes, criminally minded people get poison in the open market and use them in very dangerous ways. This is a very bad thing in our society. Laboratories should be built to analyse the effects of poisonous drugs. So I am asking for more pathologists to be trained for our hospitals and for experiments in laboratories in order to be able to detect these evils. More and more people are learning a lot more things and there are now some very highly intelligent criminals who are using scientific method to carry on their ghastly intentions.

The position of trainee nurses need also to be reviewed. Better salaries should be paid to nurses in Voluntary Agency hospitals. Perhaps the Minister does not realise that in some of these Voluntary Agency hospitals young girls who have just left primary schools are employed and are paid about 15s to 20s a month and some subsistence allowance. These girls remain in such training hospitals for about four to five years. How can young girls live on 15s a month? What are they expected to do to augment this poor salary? It is obvious, and this is putting them off the road. I am suggesting that Voluntary Agency hospitals should be checked and the grants-in-aid paid to them should be reviewed so that living wages could be paid to the trainees. I saw that the Premier made some suggestion that more money should be voted for the improvement of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I had thought that he would also suggest more money for the improvement of hospitals like Anua and others.

I am now asking that the Ministry of Health should do something to assist the Lutheran Hospital at Eket. That hospital is doing a tremendous work in the Region and when you go there the treatment given to patients by the nurses is simply wonderful; I mean,



you really feel you are going there to be cured. I would like the Minister to give attention to that and also to assist the Methodist Hospital at Ituk Mbang. That hospital is one of the oldest hospitals in the Methodist field and there is not much help to some of these Voluntary Agency Hospitals. So I am drawing the attention of the Ministry of Health to the Methodist Hospital at Ituk Mbang and also at Etinan. I happen to be a Methodist (*Laughter*)—there is no point in hiding my identity. I would like the Government of the Region—the Minister of Health—to do something to help some of these Voluntary Agency Hospitals that happen to be operated by the Methodist Mission.

Maybe the Minister of Health is not aware that many of the dispensaries, the Local Government dispensaries in the Region, are helping also in humanitarian service by way of medical help. If you go to these dispensaries, you will find that there are no drugs and you see some old labelled bottles empty. The dispensary attendants tell you, "well, no drugs, no medicine". So that I would ask for more subvention to Local Government Councils to enable them buy drugs for these dispensaries. In areas where there are no health centres but where there are dispensaries, at least, the Regional Government should subsidise the Local Government bodies to enable them to buy more drugs. Also, the Minister should be able to supervise these drugs in the dispensaries and see that they are properly used. Only God knows what happens in some of the dispensaries. Sometimes, when the doctor goes on his weekly round to the dispensaries to give injections he finds very few people waiting for him. Obviously, everybody knows there have been lots and lots of injections going on in the dispensaries because there is no adequate supervision. When the drugs are brought into the dispensaries, you find that in the next two or three weeks, they disappear because of lack of adequate supervision. So I would ask the Minister of Health to be up and doing now. Now that we have a new Government, one might expect that there should also be new life infused into the various Ministries. They should work harder and they should go round and try to see that these things are well done.

**Mr J. M. Ito** (Ikot Ekpene Division): I want to say something about the waiting rooms

in Government Hospitals in the Region. There are not enough waiting rooms in these hospitals and patients go there from morning till very late without being attended to and they keep on waiting. I am drawing the attention of the Minister of Health that waiting rooms should be provided in Government Hospitals so that these pregnant women or mothers of babies will be able to find seats while waiting to be attended. That is the point I want to make.

The second point is this: I thank the Minister of Health for the opening of Ikot Ekpene Hospital but I should also say that this is not enough without the operation of the X-ray machine; and in this circumstance, I am appealing to the Minister that a Radiographer be posted to that hospital in order to attend to emergency cases requiring such treatment. So that instead of people to go to Aba or elsewhere, they should be treated there. In most cases these patients have not enough money to afford the expenses and other incidental charges. So I am calling upon the Minister of Health to take notice of this.

Another important thing is the smallness of staff. You know that this always brings about inefficiency. So I ask that more nurses should be posted at Ikot Ekpene Hospital.

Third point I wish to raise is this rural health centre. Sometime ago, there was a grant sent to the Otoro District Council but later on, we were made to understand that this grant has been transferred to somewhere else. So I am appealing that this grant should be restored as early as possible, so that work can start.

The other point is about the treatment nurses give to patients in hospitals. Instead of helping them to endure their pains, they always irritate them. In most cases most of these patients leave the hospital without getting their treatment because they are irritated to the extent that they could not bear and instead of getting the medicine, they feel that they should better go home and die. If nurses in the Mission Hospitals could treat patients kindly, why should not the nurses in Government hospitals do the same? I think this is very bad and I am suggesting that a circular letter be sent to all the Government



[MR ITO]

Hospitals informing these nurses that if they do not stop being a nuisance and wagging their tongues telling pregnant women "We are not responsible, you can go, when you were doing it I was not there", disciplinary measures would be taken against them. And so these pregnant women are sent away like that. Some of the patients feel there is no point in waiting and not being treated and on getting such irritating words, they prefer to go.

The other point I wish to raise is the salary of Medical Officers. If the salaries of Magistrates are increased, those of Medical Officers need to be increased too. I think their salaries should be reviewed.

I want the Minister of Health also to see to it that children sent to these voluntary agency hospitals are well cared for and treated free.

**Mr S. G. Ikoku** (Enyong Division): Mr Chairman, thank you for giving me the opportunity to say one or two things before the hon. the Minister of Health replies.

First of all, I would like to thank the Ministry and UNICEF for the wonderful work they have done in connection with yaws eradication. I think we are all agreed that it makes one feel much better to see little children growing up normally without the encumbrances of yaws and such skin disease. I would also like to thank the Ministry for getting set on this important matter of building a specialist hospital in the Region . . .

**The Premier (Dr M. I. Okpara):** It will cost £2,000,000.

**Mr Ikoku:** Yes, we know it will cost a lot; that is true. The hon. Premier said that it would cost £2,000,000, but I think an investment of that nature in a really first-class hospital is something which nobody in this Region should grudge. We shall all be very happy to see real specialists at work. I would also like to thank the Ministry and U.N.I.C.E.F. again for the successful experimentation on this Domiciliary Midwifery Service which has been started in Aba and it has very encouraging and bright prospects. We would like to see this service extended and I hope the Minister of

Finance will give U.N.I.C.E.F. a good deal of support in extending this service. May I draw the attention of the hon. the Minister of Finance to what is being done by one of the United Nations Agencies in connection with malaria control. I have read some literature on what they have done in Italy and India and I wonder whether we could not tackle malaria control as a major problem here in this Region, particularly as the United Nations Agency undertook the scheme of supplying both the technician and a good deal of the capital required.

I would like to mention this problem of peddling in drugs. I am glad to know that both sides of the House have strongly condemned this peddling in drugs so that the Minister will now be armed with the fact that this is not an issue of party political controversy. Furthermore, his mind should be extended to the fact that in this House both pharmacists and doctors have condemned this illegal trafficking in drugs so that the good old rivalry between the two professions will now cease to be a limiting factor in the whole issue. I would prefer to look at the problem from the point of view of the health of the Region. It is true that doctors will like to express their own views from the point of views of medical profession and pharmacists will also like to express their view from the point of view of pharmacy, but as Legislators we should be more concerned with this problem from the point of view of the health of the people of this Region. It is mortifying to visit some of our markets to see poisons being sold, and, I for one, I know I have been to chemists' shops on doctors' orders or prescriptions to purchase some of those high anti-biotics, but I have been afraid to administer them in my home and I have always run back to the doctor to ask "is it two, or three, or four capsules to be taken?" You will be surprised to find that in the open markets in the rural areas these drugs are sold. They just open the bottle and count out a few capsules and hand over. Nobody looks at the literature with the drug and nobody consults any doctor. People just go and buy them. Some of the doctors in this House must have had the experience of people being rushed to them on the point of death, and after battling with the trouble, discover that it is due to one or the other of these drugs having been taken. The worst part of it is that the patient is not



prepared to consult the doctor, until it is too late. The patient comes in and the doctor asks him "Did you take any medicine? He will say "No" because even on his death bed he is trying to protect this bad man who sold the drug to him. When it is serious and the doctor says "This is too bad", he will say a week ago I bought something from a vendor. And the doctor will say "What is that", and the man cannot even describe what it is. He will say "It is in a small tube like this". It is true that to such extent doctors are given more work than is necessary and something should be done to stop all these peddling in drugs. Is it not surprising that the Senior Medical Officers in the Region merely sign a piece of paper for say 2s 6d in order to give one the right to go up and down this Region peddling in drugs. Some of them even resort to the dangerous practice of compounding. They have as much medical knowledge as myself, and I confess that I have no medical knowledge whatsoever, but these fellows undertake to compound. They do not even sell the drugs as they were made. They try to make certain mixtures. You may ask "How do they get at these drugs?" I am glad to note that some speakers have been very frank on this issue but I do not think they have mentioned all the sources and all the avenues by which they get into the hands of the vendors. It is true that our chemist shops do sell them. If our pharmacists want us to cure this problem they must admit the fact that to some extent they have been contributing to this menace by selling some of these drugs to the vendors. Not only our local companies but some of the Agencies representing foreign pharmacists have a share of the blame too. They just issue a catalogue of what they have available and the only condition is that they should despatch so much money and they will receive such and such quantity of drugs. It is true that when you come to the dangerous ones they ask for the signature of the Pharmacist. Our General Hospitals are also a source of some of this canker. Some of these drugs and poisons get into the wrong hands through the General Hospital. How is it that when one goes to the Hospital and the doctor recommends some sort of penicillin injections one cannot get it in the Hospital, but yet nurses in that very hospital administer penicillin injection in their houses? How is it possible? I understand that certain drugs have been going astray.

Thirdly, some inferior drugs are being manufactured locally here. I am sure Members will agree that in Onitsha market Nigerian made M and B tablets are being sold. Some of these peddlers get in touch with some drug manufacturers overseas and import these drugs. How they get at their names and addresses I do not know. Fourthly, some of these drugs get into illegal hands through the medical stores at Port Harcourt and Lagos. (*Hon. Members: How do you see them?*) Do not ask me how I see them. It is not easy to see these things but there is no getting away from the fact that the time when most of these things are done is towards the end of the financial year when stores are being cleared and new indents being placed. That is the time they do most of the havoc. A Member has given us the example of certain drugs being found in a lorry returning from Lagos. Where do they get these drugs from? I am inclined Sir, to think that the Medical Stores Agents and the Medical Store, Port Harcourt are very fruitful sources for getting these drugs. We are calling on the Minister to devise ways and means of ceiling off these various avenues through which these drugs get into illegal hands.

I am sure the Minister would like us to make a few suggestions as to the work he could do. I would like to make seven suggestions to the Minister. The first is that he should arm himself (because this is a professional matter) with the necessary authority and advice to deal with the problem by creating in his Ministry a Pharmacy Division without much delay so that he can have a qualified pharmacist right at the Headquarters to give him the necessary advice on how to handle this problem and other problems related to the sale and use of drugs in the Region. This matter being such a technical one with professional standards at stake, it will be difficult for the Minister to tackle the problem without having at his beck and call a really strong man who knows everything about that profession. Professionals are very jealous people and they would not like a Minister whom they regard as a layman and, in fact, the Minister is a layman and politicians are laymen on this matter, to come and tell them what to do. He is to get over this problem by having as one of his principal aids a qualified pharmacist heading a Pharmacy Division in his Ministry.

Secondly, I suggest that the Ministry of Health should create many posts of Inspecting



[MR IKOKU]

Pharmacists; people who can go from place to place in the Region and actually view the problem from the other end. The Minister is looking at it from the source, we are looking at it from the point of view of the public, the point at which the drugs now pass into the hands of the general public. It is that point which we want closely scrutinised and this can only be done by these Inspecting Pharmacists.

Thirdly, I suggest that all who sell patent drugs, like these vendors or quacks, as they are called, should be made accountable to known and reputable Firms of Chemists in the Region. What do I mean? Before they are given a licence to sell any of these patent drugs, they should have a sponsoring chemist to sign the application form on their behalf so that the chemist becomes a sort of feeder to the peddler. At this stage, I would like to make it clear that the vendors are not entirely harmful. There are certain patent drugs which, if sold far and wide in this Region, would help. Quinin, Aspro, Aspirin and Phensic can be very helpful as palliatives and, if the general public could get hold of them and take them and, when they are really sick, they go to a doctor, there will be no trouble. As far as these peddleris are concerned, that is, as regards their selling purely patent drugs, I think they are performing a useful function. The danger arises when these peddlers leave what they should be selling and begin to retail poison. I would suggest that these vendors, if they want to sell what I might call pure patent drugs, should be made to attach themselves to a particular chemist. When they are applying for a permit to be allowed to sell certain patent drugs, the drugs they could sell should be put down on the paper and some chemist should be their Godfather in the business. If any of the Inspecting Pharmacists gets hold of a vendor who is doing the wrong thing, they should trace him back to the sponsoring chemist and punish both of them.

Fourthly, I suggest that the permit issued to vendors should no longer be issued by Senior Medical Officers. The permit should be issued by the Pharmacy Division in the Ministry of Health and they should satisfy themselves that everything is in order before they issue the permit.

Fifthly, we should have a few more pharmacists in our General Hospitals. If one goes to

the Hospitals and sees what trouble patients go through to get drugs, it will be realised at once that that bottleneck in the hospital is one of the factors helping this illicit trade in drugs. A housewife goes to the hospital 7-8 a.m., she stays there till 2 p.m. and she cannot even get drugs. She goes home to face a very furious husband who comes back from work and no food prepared for him; he is very annoyed over the whole thing and the wife decides that the better part of the valour is not to waste so much time in the hospital next time and probably to patronise a passer-by who is ready to sell one or two patent drugs. We would like to have a few more pharmacists in the General Hospitals.

Sixthly, I would suggest that Local Government Councils should be called upon to appoint Drug Inspectors whose duty would be to visit every market within the area of jurisdiction of the Council concerned in order to see what are the activities of the patent drug vendors. It sounds a thorough order but it is really an easy one. If you regard every Rural District Council or Urban District Council as a unit and every one unit having its own Inspecting Officer, I think the job could be quite conveniently done. It is possible on the other hand that some of these Inspectors will actually aid and abet this illegal practice but it is the same thing. After all, we have Police Constables; there are some of them who do their work and there are those who help criminals to escape but that does not mean there are no Police Officers. It only means that we have to see to it that these Police Officers are efficient and that they do their work. The mere fact that there is possibility of corruption does not make the recommendation unworkable.

Finally, my seventh suggestion is that I notice a good deal of friction between the doctors and the pharmacists in this Region. I think it is about time they held a round-table conference. After all, Pharmacy is a profession, Medicine is also a profession. I do not see what is wrong in the two professional bodies, the British Medical Association, Nigeria Branch and Nigerian Pharmaceutical Association coming together and pulling their resources to see that adequate and efficient health service is given to this country and to the Region.

**The Minister of Health (Mr E. P. Okoya):** I would like to reply to some of the points made



by hon. Members. In the speeches of hon. Members prominence was given to two things: firstly mal-practices in the administration of patent medicines in this Region, and secondly the conduct and behaviour of the workers in our hospitals. These are very important aspects of the work of my Ministry I will leave them now and deal with them at the end. I shall first reply to the minor points made by hon. Members.

Hon. G. I. Oko (Awgu Division) stated that the Mbanefo award was not extended to nurses in Joint Hospitals but it was extended only to nurses in Voluntary Agency Hospitals. I would like to inform him that he is misinformed. That is not true. Nurses in the Joint Hospitals and in the Voluntary Agency Hospitals are in the same position. They get the same pay and the Mbanefo award was given to all of them. Again, he made mention of water supply for Awgu Hospital and said that there is no water in Awgu. I would like to invite the attention of the hon. Member to Head 806 Item 304, where last year the sum of £2,400 was provided for the installation of water supply for Awgu Hospital. From that you will see that some amount of money was spent by the P.W.D. last year. I would direct him to the Ministry of Works, if he wants further information about the supply of water for Awgu Hospital. He also wanted nurses quarters to be extended and the maternity ward to be built. I would like to tell him that last year my Ministry gave to this Hospital £10,000 for the extension of this hospital. In my view, Awgu Hospital has got a fair share.

Chief Morphy made certain points on the Enugu Hospital. He said that when women who are pregnant go to the hospital, they are always directed to the town. I do not know whether this is true or not but I shall look into this allegation.

Another point made by Chief Morphy is that houses and kitchens should be built for relatives of patients. What I am doing at the moment is to get all our hospitals fenced with a gate, to stop people from roaming about in the compounds. At the moment what happens is that some young men, under the cloak of carrying food to patients, carry a piece of bread and enter the hospitals. They sit down

there to disturb the nurses. I shall put a stop to this. By making our hospitals dieting hospitals we would keep away some unwanted people from the hospital compounds in order to enable our nurses to do their work. There is no plan for building houses for relatives in our hospitals.

Many other Members made the point that we have not got enough chemists in our hospitals. I agree that this is so. Those in the service are resigning. We train chemists every year with Government money and before they go they sign bonds. When they come back they resign.

I think it is because they want to become rich quickly. You must know that we have what is called the National Council on Establishments. We have a uniform rate of pay in the whole country, the Western Region, the Federal Government and the Northern Region. These things are always discussed in the National Council on Establishments before salaries are raised. This Region alone cannot unilaterally raise the salaries of chemists. Chief Morphy said that in Ogoja Hospital, there is no light and the doctor uses the headlight of his motor car when he goes there at night to see patients. That is not fair you know. It is not true. It is true there is no electric light there but we have other types of lamps there. (*An hon. Member: But will he investigate?*) I will investigate please. The question of that hospital is uppermost in my mind and I have to assure the hon. Member that something will be done before the end of the year.

Hon. Eronini wants a hospital built for the Mbaitoli District Council area. I think everybody knows the policy of the Government. We build hospitals on a fifty-fifty basis. Tell your people the policy and let them collect their own share, and their application will be given due consideration.

Regarding the vexed question of quackery in this Region, during my Budget speech I told you the little I have done. I went to Lagos because I am really concerned about this problem and I am not happy about it. However I have noted the sentiments expressed by most speakers. I know the harm quackery is doing in this Region to the health of our people. There is no doubt about it and so I am not



[MR E. P. OKOYA]

happy that drugs are being sold everywhere in the Region. For that reason, as I told you earlier on, I went to Lagos and held a meeting with the Federal Ministry of Health. Members felt that action is not being taken on the problem. For instance you suggested that there should be a Pharmaceutical Division in my Ministry. I have already in my file about a month or two ago instructed my Permanent Secretary to see that Pharmaceutical Division was created in my Ministry.

**Mr Ikoku:** On point of information. Could the Minister tell us in which Head of the Estimates.

**The Minister of Health:** *Vendors Licence:* I also minuted to my Permanent Secretary that the licence fees should be increased possibly to £50 and that the compounds must be registered. There are too many vendors and we must scare some of them away by raising the fee. I will also have the whole system reviewed. Meanwhile no new licences should be issued.

Coming to drugs, some hon. Members have said that drugs are being sold everywhere in the market. It is true and some of the hon. Members, in fact, Dr Onubogu, told us how drugs get into the market. Today, pharmacists are the people who are now crying daily because drugs are being sold in the market, but they are the very people, as Dr Onubogu has said, who help these drugs to find their way into the market. The cause of these things is insatiable thirst for money. Some people want to become rich overnight. What I am saying is that Pharmacists should maintain some professional ethics. Unless they do that it will be very difficult to stop these drugs getting into the market. Members of the public must also co-operate with my Ministry, otherwise it will not be easy to check these practices. I thank the Leader of the Opposition and others who made some suggestions and my Ministry will look into these suggestions.

Turning now to the conduct of officers in my Ministry, a lot of complaints are received in my Ministry daily on how officers behave and how they are not polite to the public. I am not happy at all to hear that. I am really very sad about that. What we are doing in

my Ministry now is that with the agreement of the Public Service Commission my Ministry has set up a panel—a disciplinary panel—to deal with each case, so that any case reported to us will be investigated and recommendation sent to the Public Service Commission for disciplinary measures. But in my opinion certain things must be done to bring about the desired change. The first thing has been done by my Ministry and that is the setting up of a disciplinary panel. The public must have to co-operate with my Ministry by reporting each case to the Ministry. The Permanent Secretary or Director of Medical Services does not always go to the hospital to watch the behaviour of the officers; nor do I. We stay in the office most of the time. If people will have the boldness to report genuine cases to us I can assure you that my Ministry will take up the matter. My point is that many a time people just talk behind without reporting their experience to us. If they are afraid to report to us there is nothing we can do. Unless the people of this Region report to us every case where there is improper behaviour on the part of the officer, we shall not be able to discipline the person concerned.

Another point is that it is my view that these girls are our sisters and when I say “our” I mean “Eastern Region”. They are our sisters and it is for you and me to advise them and try to change their behaviour. Some people said we have done nothing about it and suggested that a circular letter be sent out. I held a meeting with the Senior Medical Officers and the following circular letter has been issued.

It reads:

**“Stricter Discipline”**

Every S.M.O. in charge or M.O. in charge should hold a meeting with Medical Officers, Nursing Sisters and Nursing Superintendents. The object should be to devise ways and means of

- (a) maintaining and enforcing stricter discipline among the staff particularly the female nurses;
- (b) improving the behaviour of the staff particularly to the people.”

This letter has been sent and those of you who are asking for a circular letter to be sent will be interested to hear that this has been done.



**Hon. Members:** Follow it up.

**The Minister of Health:** The only way by which I can follow it up is to deal with people who committed crimes and if there are any cases reported to me, as I said before, I will take up the matter.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Mr J. A. Agba (Ogoja Division):** On point of Order. Standing Order 77 (11). It reads:—

“When several such amendments are proposed to the same Head of Expenditure they shall be called in the order which they appear on the Order Paper and each amendment shall be disposed of before the next is called, and debate on each amendment shall be confined to the sub-head or item which is sought to be reduced”.

I would like to call your attention to the first two lines.

**The Chairman:** That is specific on policy but I just can't get hold of it now where it is laid down that the Speaker or the Chairman has got to use his discretion on the question of such amendments.

*Sitting suspended till 12.30 p.m.*

*Sitting resumed at 12.30 p.m.*

### Head 435—Ministry of Information

*Question proposed: That a sum not exceeding £141,590 for Head 435—Ministry of Information stand part of the Schedule.*

**The Minister of State (Information and Welfare) (Mr B. C. Okwu):** May I, with your permission, briefly introduce to this hon. House Head 435, Ministry of Information. Before doing so I think that it is in order to recall that last year I was responsible for Information, Social Welfare and Community Development Divisions of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Before dealing with the programme of the Government under this Head and giving Members an intimation of the policy which the Ministry is expected to pursue in the current year, I wish to state that last year we tried as far as was humanly possible to publicise and interpret the policies of the

Regional Government accurately to our people and the outside world through the E.N.I.S., the Press and the Radio. Cases of misrepresentation which came before our notice were quickly handled.

In recognition of the ever increasing and important role which Information will play now and after independence, the Government decided to reconstitute Information into a full Ministry of its own. Considering the size, population, wealth, position of this country on the threshold of freedom it is natural for the eyes of the world to be turned towards Nigeria. The outside world wants to know more about us and our own point of view and here at home our own people with no less eagerness want to know as much as possible about the outside world, the policies and activities of the Regional Government. To satisfy these needs is the special assignment of the new Ministry of Information. Government has therefore made ample financial provisions in the current Estimates to enable the Ministry carry out its charge. As shown in this Head, we have a Publicity Division which will handle publicity and disseminate information about the Government from within, as one might say. This responsibility had hitherto been undertaken by the Publicity Division of the E.N.I.S. The range of its activities will be local and external. E.N.I.S. will therefore hands off this responsibility.

Then we have the Film Unit Division which will supplement the activities of the Publicity Division through the production of educational and documentary films about the Eastern Region for local and external requirements. I have no doubt that it will thus meet a long felt need and that the House will commend the action of the Government.

You will observe that under Sub-head 21 of this Head, provision has been made for the appointment of external publicity agencies. There will be two of these, one to be based in United Kingdom and the other in the United States of America. As agencies, their task will be in the nature of extension work of the Ministry of Information abroad—and they will be directed and guided in this work from the Ministry to which they are answerable. By means of contacts, well written, accurate, up-to-date and really informative literature, films



[MR OKWU]

and other suitable materials, they will undertake to publicise the Region in a most favourable light abroad. They will watch out for and correct any false pictures painted and erase any false impressions created about the Region abroad. In the past we have very often been victims of malicious attacks and propaganda by agents of die-hard imperialism who bear us grudge for the leading role played by the patriots of the Eastern origin in the struggle for Nigerian freedom. In addition, in a world that is fast growing smaller and increasingly inter-dependent, we are anxious to cultivate the friendship of the people of the outside world and build up goodwill and mutual understanding between them and our people at all levels.

I am sure that hon. Members are familiar with two important new projects, Broadcasting and Television, which will come under the portfolio of the Minister of Information. It was only during the last Supplementary Budget Meeting that the House debated and passed the Bill entitled "Eastern Nigeria Broadcasting Law, 1960". It is not my intention to bore you with another lengthy discussion on our aims and objectives. Suffice it to report that the Government has done all that is required of it to launch the two projects. Our United Kingdom partners are hard at work with the actual implementation of the schemes and I hope that before long Members will be able to enjoy what we have promised.

A word about the E.N.I.S. Corporation. If I may anticipate possible questions from hon. Members, I wish to state that the Corporation will continue to exist but that its function will be restricted to the publication of the *Outlook* as a daily newspaper. Work in connection with the building of the newspaper offices and staff quarters is proceeding while the Corporation's Board has recently been adding to the staff of the E.N.I.S. efficient and experienced Nigerian Journalists to handle the production of the newspaper as a daily.

From what I have said so far, you will agree with me that the Government has left no equipment unprovided to ensure that the task is accomplished successfully. In going about it all, I wish to assure the House that the Ministry will be guided solely by truth, justice, fair-play and the best interest of the

Region and the country. In this connection I will venture to say that all of us both in Government and the Opposition love this our Region, are proud of it and have equal stake in it, our differences in political ideologies notwithstanding.

About the Regional Library Service, I wish to report that progress has been steady and satisfactory during the year under review. The Central Library has now a stock of 25,735 books on various subjects. During the year, 2,764 persons registered as readers in the adult lending section, 830 persons in the junior division and 1,214 in the mobile library section. Plans have now been completed and work will soon start in the erection of a divisional library at Port Harcourt. In this connection I wish to place on record the appreciation of the Government for the valuable assistance and co-operation we have received and continue to receive from the UNESCO and the British Council.

**Rev. M. D. Opara** (Owerri Division): I am very much grateful to the Government for making this Ministry an autonomous Ministry. I have to start with the Film Unit. In the past our people, the Nigerians, and even the Africans had been portrayed to the outside world as monkeys. When one is abroad one will be surprised to see that no good photograph of anybody from this country is portrayed outside, rather one sees photographs of people who have just little cloths just across their bodies almost stark naked. These photographs or films are always taken by the Southern Americans who work here as Missionaries. They use these films in their country to collect money from their people. They go to tell their people that they work among the monkeys of Africa. They are people who come from the southern part of the United States and they are Missionaries here. Other people who do this are the Union of South Africa. A good many of them who work here just take these films. Where they see people stark naked they just take them photographs and sometimes film such photographs in their own country. I would like to ask the Minister to take note of this and even tell the outside world that what they see is not what the Africans or the Nigerians look like. Mostly I have had this experience in a certain place. A missionary of the Sudanese Interior Mission came to the place and brought photographs portraying



the Africans as monkeys. He said: "These are the people among whom I work and I want you to give me money to continue my job'. But this place is the very place where the Whites and the Blacks will never go to one Church, or be in one street or in one Cafe or even in one shop. And yet they come here to teach us about God. We do not know whether we have two Gods, one for the Whites in their own country and one for the Blacks in their own country, but when we come here we have one God. I am saying that the Minister will take note of this and try to tell the outside world that what these missionaries (mostly from the Southern part of the United States and from the Union of South Africa) portray to the outside world is not what the Africans or the Nigerians look like.

Another point is about the Library. Before, many of the townships or the cities or some of our Districts had libraries. I have to mention, for example, Owerri where we had a very big library run by the Government, and many other places. These libraries became defunct and Government does not even now supply books or novels or any information thereto. I would like the Minister to see that in some of these big cities or urban areas or Districts he should try to establish libraries because there are people who might not have enough to read. For example, let us take the daily papers. If the daily papers were placed in any of the village council areas, anybody could go there to read the papers. Even in the Local Council areas they would like to read and I think the Minister will look into this. Not all people have radio sets from which to know what happens from one day to the other and I think that if there are libraries, however insignificant they might be but let them be libraries, people would like it. There are some places too where there are colleges, schools and teachers. I think that if libraries were available there the people might benefit from the good work being done by the Information Service. We know we have a Central Library at Enugu but that will not suffice because all people do not live in Enugu, and we would like to share a bit of what is going on in the headquarters.

Another thing I want to talk about is the Television and Broadcasting System. These

foreign firms have had it in their minds that all our people like information and the prices of radio sets which they sell are always increasing. I remember a few years ago I bought a certain kind of radio set but this year as I was trying to know the price I found that it has almost doubled. I would like the Minister of Information to control these prices so that instead of one man having a radio set in any one village, we will have about ten people having their own sets. We are not so rich that everybody must have a set but where about ten people have sets in any one village it will enable the good news of the Government to be disseminated properly. As for television I do not know much about it but I have learned that it is for a place where there is electricity. What can we do with it? Those who live in the bush, even if they have money to purchase the television set, would not be able to enjoy it. I would like the Minister to explain how it would be possible for television sets in Enugu, Aba, Port Harcourt, Onitsha and Calabar to be commercially profitable.

What I am trying to say is that the Minister should try his best to see that at least half of the people of this Region enjoy television. It is a very nice thing; some people can pay for it. I know the Minister and the kind of man he is. I am sure he is going to do it.

**Mr Achara:** I would like to have the explanation of the hon. the Minister of Information regarding the publication of the Imoke/Ibekwe Inquiry conducted into the affairs of the E.N.I.S. in 1957. It was as a result of statements made before this hon. House and an undertaking was given by the then Premier that an inquiry would be conducted and that this House would be informed of the result of that inquiry. I thought that the Minister was going to include it in the statement he made. We want to know whether those allegations were founded, whether they were proved, or whether those who made them were irresponsible; and also to find out what action the Minister has taken or is proposing to take. We cannot continue to keep silence over this matter. I thought that he should have given the information to us.

The next point is that in the Federal Government, in the West and in the North, Ministers



[MR ACHARA]

charged with the responsibility for information are responsible for Government advertisements. In the East here Government advertisements are left with various Ministries to handle. I think it is a very wise thing that the Federal Government, the Western and Northern Governments have done. I would want the Minister of Information to take over the collection and distribution of Government advertisements as it is done in the other Governments of the Federation. These are the two points I wish to raise, and I would want the Minister to make a categorical statement regarding my first point.

**Mr Ikoku:** I would like to raise just one or two points. The first one is as regards the Film Unit of the Ministry of Information. I think that it is about time we had more of these Cinema Vans plying the rural areas in this Region and actually bringing some sort of education by way of cinemas and documentary films to the people of this Region. I notice that we made provision here for only six Driver Projectionists. That means, if I can infer from that, we have just six film showing units in this Ministry. My humble submission is that that figure has erred on the conservative side and that it should be rapidly expanded in order to enable this very important medium of education to be employed throughout the length and breadth of this Region.

Secondly, I would like to thank the Government on two points. Firstly, that it has seen it wise to bring back information or Government publicity as an arm of Government. When this Eastern Nigeria Information Service was being set up some of us in this House did express some doubt as to the wisdom of entrusting Government publicity to a corporation. I am glad that this case has been reviewed and that Government publicity is now wholly within the ambit of a Ministry. I do not know why they have taken this decision; probably the Government has had a second thought, or it has had more experience in the short time that the work of publicity was done by a corporation. In any case, I think it has now done the right thing. The second point on which I would like to congratulate the Government is the marvellous work being done by the Regional Library here in Enugu. I have had the opportunity of going round the place,

having a look at some volumes there, and in fact I think it is a monumental piece of work which the other Regions in this country will do very well to emulate. Having said that, I hope that the facility so amply provided in Enugu will be rapidly expanded to other centres in the Region. I notice in Sub-head 19 that there is a move now to have a Divisional Library at Port Harcourt; let us hope that that is the first protocol of what is to come. Those of us who live in Aba are expecting our own Library. Calabar should have a library, Onitsha certainly should have a library. (I do not want to be rushed on this matter). I think Members will agree that Onitsha is the most important educational centre in the Region. So that from the point of view of providing a library, I think Onitsha should come higher up on the list of priority than even Aba. I hope the extensions will be made.

Finally, I would like to state a point on which I am not so happy. I would have liked to congratulate the Ministry of Information, but I am sorry I just cannot. It is in connection with what hon. Achara has raised; and that is the report or the findings of the Inquiry into the Eastern Nigeria Information Service. We feel very strongly on this matter, because we raised the issue in this House. Some Members who were opposed to us felt we were using the Privilege sanctuary to say certain things which were derogatory to certain officers who had not the opportunity of defending themselves. We maintained strongly that what we were saying was correct and that Government should institute an inquiry. Now this inquiry has been carried out and completed—I gather—and I think the Government should consider publishing the findings of this inquiry or at least making known to this hon. House of the steps it has taken, because we want to know whether it is really a fact that hon. Members used the privilege of this House to misinform this hon. House and the Region.

We, who raised the matter here, feel very strongly about it and, I think, our conduct is also called in question; because if it is established that some of the allegations were hopeless, wild and irresponsible, I think this House should know and then Members should go away like dogs with their tails behind their hind legs. We would like to know what are the findings of the Commission of Inquiry



and what steps have been taken by the Government. This is very necessary as it will make hon. Members very ashamed if they have misused the privileges of this hon. House. But on the other hand, if that privilege has not been misused, I should say we feel very strongly about the matter.

Yet on the matter, we hear some rather disturbing news circulating in the Regional Capital. We hear that some officers who have been actually found guilty by this Commission are being retained in the employment of the Government and some of them are being transferred from the Ministry concerned to yet another Ministry in the Government. Some serious considerations are involved. We would like to know whether anybody has been found guilty and what steps have been taken against him. We sincerely hope that an officer who has been found guilty need not be sent to another Ministry. I do not think that will do us much good in this Region. We would like to know what is happening. If the Government feels that it cannot disclose the findings—and here, I must say that it is entirely within its right to refuse to make the findings known—it should take steps that will make it impossible for these bad rumours to circulate. If an officer has been found guilty of misconduct in the Ministry of Information, he should not find sanctuary in another Ministry. We should like Government to take this House into confidence in this matter. We do not want to upset the Government and you will have noticed that it has not been the policy of the Opposition to try to upset the Government, but we feel that there are certain things which must be done right and we are appealing to the Minister concerned and to the Premier to make sure that this thing is done in the right way.

**The Minister of State (Information and Welfare) (Mr B. C. Okwu):** I would like to reply briefly to the points made by hon. Members who have spoken to this Head.

In the first instance, I want to deal with some of the points raised by hon. Rev. Opara. He complained about some uncomplimentary pictures of misrepresentations of our people and colour in certain parts of the world. I think that we all accept that this is no news

at all in that it has been one of those unfortunate problems we have got to fight or we have been fighting against over the years—that is, the caricature which the foreign firm agencies and propaganda machinery have been making of the Negro Race. But I can only assure my hon. Friend that with the attainment of Independence and with the ample provision by the Government, all the misrepresentations and propaganda against our race are going not only to be eradicated but we should take the initiative and paint our people and the people of our race in the best light.

I want also to assure him that it has been the policy of the Government to expand library services to many centres in the Region and he will appreciate that when one considers priorities it will not be wise for the Government to spend undue proportion of the limited resources at our disposal on providing library to every nook and corner in the Region—there are certain things which must be attended to first. However, we are not forgetting the need of the Region in the field of library.

In connection with Mobile Unit, I want to explain to Members that we have a very large Mobile Library Van and this van is so huge that it is incapable of running in community undeveloped roads. It can only ply on broad roads where there will be no danger of damage by over hanging branches of trees.

It may well mean that in future it will be possible to provide smaller vans which will take care of the needs of the rural areas that are not accessible to the large van.

I want to explain that as far back as last two years, the Regional Library distributed to colleges and schools in the Eastern Region, thousands of books, and these schools and colleges are still entitled to benefit from the Mobile Library Project.

Rev. Opara also asked for some investigation into the cost of some radio sets. I think you will agree with me that under the free market system, there is hardly anything you can expect me to do about it, but I do hope, as was suggested by the Leader of the Opposition, that it might be possible to enter into arrangements



[MR OKWU]

with some of the overseas firms to establish an Assembly Plant here so that the Regional Government could have a hand in deciding the cost of the radio sets cheap enough for our people. I want you also to remember that it is the policy of the Government that the radio should be used extensively and there is no point having our radio broadcasting system if we do not provide means whereby our people living in the rural areas will know what is happening. To this end, it is intended to make provision for the installation of sets in hospitals, colleges and in some community centres where people unable to own radio sets of their own can listen.

About Television Sets, I am afraid there is nothing that can be done for any Division that has no electricity. If the people of these areas prefer they might consider going to towns on week-ends.

I want to speak briefly on the point raised by hon. Achara about the Imoke inquiry. Some time ago, serious allegations against the E.N.I.S. was raised on the floor of this House and Government promised to look into them and find out how true they were. I want to take this opportunity to announced formerly to the House that an investigation, on point of fact was carried out.

As a result of the findings and recommendation Government has carried out the reform departmentally. It was thought to be in the best interest of the public that the findings should not be published. That has been dealt with departmentally.

The Leader of the Opposition also asked the Government to consider increasing the number of mobile cinema vans for use throughout the Region. I think that is a constructive suggestion and I am sure that as soon as funds permit, it will be possible to increase the number of vans so that other parts of the Region will be touched as regularly as possible.

*Question put and agreed to.*

#### **Head 436.—Ministry of Internal Affairs**

*Question proposed: That a sum not exceeding £358,570 for Head 436—Ministry of Internal Affairs—stand part of the Schedule:*

**The Minister of Internal Affairs (Mr I. U. Akpabio):** In introducing this Head, I would

like to speak primarily on those subjects that were assigned to me for the year. As hon. Members are aware the Ministry of Internal Affairs has now been divided into two. Thus Adult Education Division, Community Development Division and Social Welfare Division have now come under my direct control. As I cannot say much about these at present, I will ask the hon. Minister formerly charged with the responsibility to take care of them. I had in my previous speech dealt with the criticisms of some hon. Members on certain matters under my portfolio. I do not now, therefore, wish to go over those points again and will refer hon. Members to the *Hansard* for the report of my speech.

There is, however, one or two points I should like to speak on now. Firstly, on the reference made by some hon. Members to the legislation of lotteries in this Region, mainly as a source of revenue.

I thank hon. Members for suggesting ways and means by which Government could raise revenue in the Region. Government, however, finds itself in an embarrassing position and is not sure that that would be the right course. In 1955, the late Mazi Mbonu Ojike as the Minister of Finance proposed the running of a State lottery but the idea was dropped for a lack of popular support. The introduction of legislation to amend the Criminal Code to enable Government to sponsor a lottery would on moral grounds encounter highly organised opposition from the Churches of almost all denominations. This consideration led to the abandonment of earlier proposal to organise a lottery as a source of revenue. Moreover, a Government lottery would require an expensive organisation to run it and also impose an enormous extra burden on the already overburdened accounting machinery of the Government. Besides States like Malta, which run the day-to-day business of their Government on profits derived from lottery do not appear to be richer than we are. However, Government is still giving the matter its consideration.

As hon. Members are well aware, 1st of October next opens a new page in the history of this great Country, as it is on this day that this Country attains independence. The arrangements for its celebrations are well on the way under the management of the Regional



and Provincial Independence Celebrations Sub-Committees. The Regional Independence Sub-Committee has met on a number of occasions and at its meetings various suggestions have been made as to how Independence should be celebrated in the Region.

The sum of £100,000 is available to finance the Independence Celebrations throughout the Region and to finance the programme for the visit to the Region of Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra.

It is proposed that there will be a continuous programme of activities from the end of September to the middle of October with its main features at the beginning of the programme at midnight of 30th September and at the end of the programme, between the 10th and 15th October, when Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra is in the Region.

During this period a number of distinguished representatives of Commonwealth and Foreign States may well visit Enugu and other Provincial Headquarters.

It is hoped that a hand-book will be printed entitled "Independence Celebrations—Enugu" and that this should give details of all the events and activities planned for Enugu during the whole of the period of the celebrations. Another booklet—"This is Enugu"—for the use of visitors is already in preparation.

It is the wish of the Government that the Independence Celebrations should be brought as near as possible to the door step of every citizen in this Region. Every effort in this direction is being made.

I can assure hon. Members that the programme for the celebrations will be full of interesting events.

The function of the Printing Division of this Ministry is to produce printed matter efficiently and economically in providing for the needs of Government. The work is highly skilled and calls for initiative and technical ability of the first order if the ever increasing demands on the services this Division offers are to be successfully met. I have already expressed to this House on 24th March, 1960, the expansion

realised over the past three years and the position and reputation the Government Press now unreservedly enjoys of being second to none in the printing field in Nigeria.

In the 1960-61 Estimates there is a provision for two apprentice Masters who will conduct a full scale training programme within the Press. Again, I have mentioned this before but to reiterate, it is planned to build during the year a printing school adjoining the main press where apprentices will receive a thorough training as part of their apprenticeship course. Such facilities are relevant in other countries and have proved to be a necessary part of a young printer's training.

The Press has suffered a staff shortage over the past twelve months due to the resignation of those junior officers who were appointed after having gained their West African School Certificates and decided after remaining for less than 12 months that they preferred clerical to technical work. This has not, however, adversely affected the potential output of the Press or its efficiency as such junior officers are necessarily of little value in the first two years of their training. However, steps have been taken to try and curb this "exodus" by appointing more Middle IV holders who in the changing circumstances would be more prepared to make printing their career.

Vacancies in the senior staff structure are receiving attention and will in the main, it is hoped, be filled by existing staff including those in-service trainees due to return to Nigeria later in the year. By October, 1960, it is anticipated that all vacancies will be duly filled.

The Development Programme has been instrumental in enabling the Printing Division to expand on lines worthy of this Region. As printing is both highly technical and scientific it is necessary that new machinery is introduced and working conditions improved. The former has been realised with the purchase over the last twelve months of printing presses capable of producing high quality work and which are contributing towards higher productivity, factors so essentially important if we are to keep abreast with other countries. The latter has been carefully planned and the biggest



[MR AKPABIO]

step forward has been the introduction of air-conditioning in the factory which is assisting production in providing for a more amenable and comfortable atmosphere to work in and counteracting paper stretch and contraction and eliminating the possibility of dust penetrating into the precision parts of the machinery which are highly sensitive requiring ideal conditions to work efficiently. This is a big step forward and the results achieved have more than compensated the initial installation costs. Besides the building of a printing school, which I have already mentioned, a typewriter sub-repair depot is nearing completion in Aba—yet another expanded service offered by my Ministry which is undoubtedly going to be of immense benefit to Government offices in the Rivers area and provide for quicker service of office equipment. Likewise a stationery store is being considered in the same town to ease distribution bottleneck which unavoidably occurs when issues are made for a central store with only one outlet. These developments will again offer greater avenues for employment and prospects of advancement.

It is interesting to note that the production potential of the Government Press has increased astoundingly over the past three years; in 1957, 1,400 jobs were completed, in 1958, 2,200, and in 1959, 2,330, which demonstrates the great demand for printed matter but which would not have been possible to fulfil had not my Ministry anticipated the growing needs of Government and planned its expansion accordingly. Members will realise that printing comes into our lives everyday; the Order Papers we have in front of us and the Daily Report of our proceedings are but two of the many jobs requiring the close supervision and meticulous care so necessary if we are to receive them in the condition we do and at the time we expect them. The *Gazette* must be scheduled and the *Eastern Outlook* under difficult conditions is always published to time even without newspaper rotary equipment generally required for such work.

In conclusion, I would like to invite any Member of this House to visit the Government Press and see for himself the intricacies of printing, its production, planning control and the working conditions relevant. It is only by

such visual contact that a full appreciation of a highly technical industry can be understood. I also hope that I will be in a position to present to hon. Members at the next meeting of this House my annual Report of the Printing Division.

**The Premier (Dr M. I. Okpara):** I would like to say a few words for the benefit of, and to thank, the Film Directors and staff who are here with us taking snap-shots. We all here are now like film stars.

I would like to seize this opportunity to reply briefly to what the Leader of the Opposition said about the Imoke Inquiry, and as a supplement to what the Minister of Information said. This is a young and new Government and we do not want to start as Shylock demanding a pound of flesh from a person who has faltered. It was a departmental inquiry and the Government has already taken appropriate action in the interest of peace and good government. I can assure my hon. Friend, the Leader of the Opposition that the action taken by Government is in the best interest of the people of the Eastern Region. We should really allow the matter to rest now and give everybody an opportunity to start afresh. If of course, those who have made mistakes in the past should now make further mistakes, well, they only have themselves to blame. I think we should let this new Ministry that has just been created start on a fresh clean plate without bringing all the old strictures of the past and reopening old wounds.

**Mr W. Abengowe (Aba Division):** I just want to mention one point about a club at Aba...

**The Chairman:** The hon. Member should please be loud, and those who are sitting down should stop making a noise so as to enable the Reporters to get exactly what the hon. Member is saying.

**Mr Abengowe:** The point I am making is about the prefix 'European' attached to a Club in Aba township. I do not quarrel with Europeans organising themselves into clubs, but certainly, to call such clubs "European Clubs" today in Nigeria smacks of racialism. In other parts of the country, where there used to be clubs, hospitals and quarters exclusively reserved for Europeans, their names had been



long changed. In Onitsha, Enugu and Port Harcourt, "European Clubs" have become Sports Clubs. In Aba township, the few African members of the "European Club" tried on various occasions to persuade the majority who are Europeans to change the name of the Club, but it was not possible to put their suggestion into effect. This is a very sorry situation, in a place like Aba township. On the eve of our Independence, it does not make for real co-existence if the prefix "European" is attached to any social institution existing in any part of this country. I will be very happy if the Minister can use his influence and cause these Europeans in Aba to be more reasonable.

The next point I would like to make is that which concerns the Printing Corporation. It is unfortunate that the Minister did not say much on the number of employees that resign from that Department in one year. It is alarming to think of as many as thirty-six employees with West African School Certificates resigning from the Department in one year. It is not a credit to that Department. I think the Minister responsible for the Printing Section should do something about that.

**The Minister of Health:** I hope the hon. Gentleman is referring to the Printing Department and not Printing Corporation.

**Mr Abengowe:** May I also add that the shortage of staff in the Department has caused a number of other members of the staff to over-work themselves, more than is expected of any human being. In some cases they do about fifteen to sixteen hours overtime in one day. Some go to work at 8 o'clock in the morning and continue till about 5 a.m. the following morning and return and then go back to work again at 8 o'clock. I will like the Minister to take some action on this matter.

**Mr J. A. Agba (Ogoja Division):** I will like to congratulate the Minister at least for one thing and that is the preparation for this Independence Celebration. I feel that what the Minister said so far is quite correct because I personally have come to realise that serious attempt is being made to get this Independence Celebration reach every door in the Eastern Region. It may be strange that I have to congratulate him because at the same time his Ministry is one of the Ministries that people of my own area have not come to realise that it exists. But anyway it has come within our

reach at this time, and we now feel it in every nook and corner of the Region, perhaps on account of the approach of Nigerian Independence. I will like to say that the line of community development pursued in our areas is not complimentary. I feel rather a bit unhappy in saying this and my mentioning it really touches quite a lot of the Ministries—I personally feel that there is a sort of unpleasant atmosphere in apportioning amenities. Quite true all right, there is a programme by which District Councils have sent out field staff yearly to Awgu Community Centre but I think that is not all. These people go there, come back to the Council to sit down and nobody ever knows or feels that these people have ever been to Awgu to study anything. All that distinguishes them from the ordinary staff who have not been to Awgu is that these people who have received a sort of training in Awgu come back wearing a medal and on the medal it is written "Awgu Community Centre". That is all. I would have liked to suggest to the Minister that instead of his coming here and making this flowery speech to the House about this Community Development it would be better if Publicity Staff would be raised who will go about telling people what to do in order to develop their own area. I think that the Minister of Education said the other day while referring to Ogoja people "that they could remain there until doom's day waiting for the Minister to come and establish schools for them and give them the initiative". I think that might apply here in the same way. I am asking that the Government should give us the stimulus and we will base our initiative on what the Government has provided for us. If the Ministry of Internal Affairs tries to raise Publicity Staff these Publicity Staff will go about particularly to undeveloped areas and tell the people what other people have been able to do and how they have helped themselves and made their own life worth living. Perhaps, that will help to encourage these people in undeveloped areas to try also to help themselves by this community development. Meantime it is in the hands of the Administrative Officers and I think the Minister apportions some funds every year to each Administrative Officer to enable him encourage the people of his area as regards this community development. But what happens in an area where the people are not interested? What happens to the money?



[MR AGBA]

I think that is really something for the Minister to answer. Over our own area apart from the time that he was the Minister of Education when he once or twice visited the place he has not been there again. I will like to know by what way this particular Ministry helps us to develop ourselves apart from the assistance of the Government. The Minister's not going there is on account of the roads.

Last point, Sir—Social Welfare. This is again in the hands of the Administrative Officers. Somebody spoke about Recreation Clubs a few minutes ago. There are certain places where there are not very many Europeans to form their own club. They like to go to clubs with Africans, but we have been under the impression that the initiative has been taken completely by the Administrative Officers. Many people have been under that conception and so I would again suggest to the Minister that here again we should feel that there are people whose duty it is to organise social clubs, help people to form themselves into some sort of organisations and so be able to help themselves.

**Mr S. N. Alo** (Abakaliki Division): I rise to congratulate the Community Development Division of this Ministry. Considering the amount of work this Division handles, I feel that the Division is understaffed. I say this from the experience I had last month when a Bailey Bridge was launched in my Division. The same Inspector of Works was also in charge of another Bailey Bridge in Bende Division. I do not know if the Minister will make it possible for the Region to have at least three Inspectors to be in charge of the three old Provinces in the Region. Mr Chairman as I said, from my experience last month, this very Community Development Division work even in the night in order to complete its job. Most of them do about six hours overtime a day. If as I said, the staff of this Division is increased, more work will be achieved by this Division.

I just want to say something about Social Welfare Division. Most of our children particularly from my own Division are being taken to Calabar and when they return they lose their mother's tongue. I would want one Social Welfare Centre to be here in Enugu or in my Division so that these children can easily understand their own mother's tongue.

Another point is the question of Adult Education. For the past four years, somebody has organised Adult Education in Abakaliki Division and I would like the Government or the Minister in-charge to make a statement on what aid has been given to this grand effort made by this man.

**Mr Ekpe** (Opobo Division): I was rather disappointed in that the Minister did not say much about Adult Education or the expansion of Adult Education service in the Region. I think every one now knows that the only way to make our adult people literate is by the intensification and expansion of Adult Education service in the Region. I happened to have been connected somehow with Adult Education work and I know that much has not been done to help our illiterate parents, brothers and sisters to learn to read, especially, in this year of Independence. I had thought that the Minister would have outlined the places where it would be possible for as many people as possible to be taught how to read and write. Only of late, we read of the issue of Certificates of Literacy to many men and women in the North. We had wanted something like that in the Region and I think it is the duty of the Minister of Internal Affairs to see that more and more men and women are taught to read and write in the Region.

Now in the province of community development, the amount of money set aside for encouraging community development is very poor indeed compared with what happens in the Northern and Western Regions of the Federation.

Now we realise that many of the roads that were only recently taken over by Local Government bodies and the Regional Government were opened by community effort. On this score, I would like to congratulate the people of Udi Division who set the fire blazing in community development work in the Eastern Region. This is something which should be encouraged in almost every Division. It is unfortunate that Administrative Officers who used to be interested in community development have now left the country and we have young men as Administrative Officers who have not the experience and the interest to see that community development is encouraged in the rural areas. The essence of



community development is to get the local people to be interested in the development, socially and otherwise, of their own community. The Premier is looking at the Estimates. I think he wants to look at the provision for community development. I have looked at it and I am not satisfied at all; that is why I am saying that the Minister of Internal Affairs should ask for more money for community development. We have a bridge in Annang area of Opobo Division, but the construction of a bridge in Opobo Town and landing stage in Ngo in Obolo should be assisted by community development. I am very serious indeed. I think the Minister responsible should go to these places and see what efforts the people themselves have made in building this landing stage and Mission Bridge in Opobo town and many other projects which were undertaken by this community. It is the duty of the Minister to travel. He would like to see these projects himself so that when he comes to the House, he may ask for more money.

With regard to Independence Celebration, I was not satisfied with a mere announcement that Independence Celebration shall be taken to the doors of almost everybody in the Region. I had expected a statement on a programme for the celebration of Independence in the Region but, so far, the Minister has only announced that everybody will enjoy. What is the programme, how is it going to affect everybody and how is everybody going to enjoy it? We expect at a latter stage, perhaps, during the debate on this Head, a full statement on the programme for the celebration of Independence in the Region.

**The Minister of Internal Affairs:** I will just reply briefly about what hon. Members have said. One hon. Member, I think hon. Abengowe, reported something about European Club, that it should not be Europeanised, that such clubs should not exist now in our country and that the name should be changed. I would tell him that I was unaware of that because at Enugu here, the club allows anybody who would like to join to do so. Only many of our people do not like this club and would prefer to go to the Recreation Club.

About the name, I will investigate into it and advise them on the correct thing to do.

Somebody said something about community development. I would advise him that what attracts money from the Government is self-effort. The Minister charged with this function previously had advised them from time to time that they should do something and then report to the Government and Government will come to their aid.

Hon. Ekpe said something about Independence Celebration which the Minister has announced. That announcement alone is not bad but I wish to assure him that we have made a gigantic programme and everything is put down. Within a very short time, he will see the detailed programme. Detailed plans for Enugu as well as other big towns where Her Royal Princess will visit have been completed. We have formed provincial committees as I said earlier and not very long, the detailed arrangements for the celebration will be announced.

*Question put and agreed to.*

#### Head 437.—Ministry of Justice

*Question proposed: That a sum not exceeding £62,820 for Head 437—Ministry of Justice—stand part of the Schedule.*

**Mr M. N. Onwuma** (Aba Division): Thank you very much. The special point I would like to make, and which I would like the Minister of Justice to take very strong note of, is that the essence of establishing the Law Courts is to administer justice. The monetary part of it is not the primary consideration. Therefore, if that is accepted the customary courts should, by and large, rest with the Ministry of Justice. You cannot have one section of the Department dangling to the Ministry of Justice and at the same time dangling to the Ministry of Local Government, thus swinging like a pendulum. You can never have the staff of the Department at rest because at one time decision will come from one Ministry and at another time from the other Ministry. Such a situation is very discouraging and very depressing indeed. I do not know, whether the people who are councillors realise that there is a circular which has gone out from the Ministry of Local Government establishing this hybrid situation, where the staff act like a bat. You are neither in the Ministry of Local Government nor in the Ministry of Justice. May I quote the relevant part of that



[MR ONWUMA]

circular from the Ministry of Local Government. It is No. 10660/243 of 24th February, 1960.

“I am directed by hon. Minister of Local Government to address you on the subject of Customary and Native Courts . . .”

The essential thing there is that of *Transfers*.

“If transfers of Court Staff within a District Council area are considered desirable the Minister of Justice will recommend such transfers to the Council. These recommendations will be based on professional grounds and should normally be accepted by councils. If a transfer from one District Council area to another is recommended by the Ministry of Justice the recommendation will be addressed to this Ministry. (That is the Ministry of Local Government). If a District Council effects transfers amongst its Courts' staff it will report the moves to the Ministry of Justice.”

It is ridiculous.

“It will be appreciated that the Ministry of Justice must have up-to-date record of the disposition of Court staff in the Region.”

This is very ragged. You cannot have things like that, dangling between this and that. The consensus of opinion is that anything pertaining to court must lie entirely with the Ministry of Justice. Perhaps the Minister of Justice will explain to us what pressure must have been brought upon him in the Executive Council to accept this dual situation. He should control not only the court members but also the staff, because they are a part and parcel of that section.

The other thing is *Disciplinary Action*. The circular reads:

“Should the Ministry of Justice consider that the conduct of any member of the staff of a Customary or Native Court warrants disciplinary action that Ministry will report the facts to the Council concerned and the council should then take the usual action as laid down in the Staff Regulations.

“(b) If the Council itself has cause to take disciplinary action against a member of the

staff of a court the council will at the same time inform the Ministry of Justice and this Ministry (that is the Ministry of Local Government). If interdiction is involved and the council is unable to supply a relief the Ministry of Justice will consult this Ministry regarding a suitable posting.”

**The Minister of Local Government (Mr P. O. Nwoga):** On point of explanation. The hon. Member is referring to an old circular; since then a new circular has gone out from the Ministry explaining the position.

**Mr Onwuma:** I think I am making a case. He will have time to reply when we consider the Estimates on the Ministry of Local Government. It is in the best interest of the Courts and the Ministry of Justice that the courts are completely separated from the Ministry of Local Government because there are series of cases where the Councils and the Councillors interfere with the course of justice (I hope the Minister of Justice is listening). For instance, there is a case where the Secretary of a Council wanted to take court action on behalf of the Council against some people related to some councillors and some of the councillors went over and quarrelled with the Court Clerk and Court Members. Such a situation is very, very embarrassing.

You will see that these Court Clerks and staff of the Courts including the members themselves, have been given special training by the Ministry of Justice. The Ministry of Local Government did not take any part in the specialised training and even the members at Awgu have asked for further training in order to enable them to specialise in their work. If a case is tried in the Customary Court, the case will eventually, if possible, go to the Magistrates Courts. They will be in a better position to champion the course of justice up to where it will go to the Magistrates Courts. So I am asking the Minister of Justice to put his foot down and let the Customary Courts remain in the Ministry of Justice.

**Mr Ikoku:** I just like to raise two points. The first, by way of a question, and it concerns the salary of customary court judges. These people are paid some £7, some £8 and the President of the Appeal Court is paid £10 a month. I would like to know: Do we sincerely believe that these people will administer



justice on such a salary? I am of the opinion that having customary courts judges on this salary is merely opening the door to corruption and all sorts of evil influences. So I would suggest that their salaries be reviewed and probably their numbers be reduced if the salary bill is getting too heavy.

My second point is that I am in full support of what my hon. Friend the Member for Aba has just said. We would like customary courts judges, as well as the staff of all customary courts, to be 100 per cent the responsibility of the Ministry of Justice.

This circular being referred to is a dangerous one. For example, under the section "Disciplinary Action", we are told that if the Attorney-General is dissatisfied with the work or conduct of a customary court official then he has to report to the Council concerned. Imagine the insult! The Attorney-General of a Region is to report a court messenger to a council.

Secondly, it is said that if the Council wishes to take disciplinary action against a staff of any customary court they should take the action and then report to the Attorney-General. In other words, the Council can take action as regards transfer or dismissal of a customary court worker and then merely send a letter informing the Attorney-General that such a step has been taken. I do not think this is helpful. In any case I do not think it is right in principle that our customary court should have any connection with Local Government because after all the Local Government council is administrative in its function and why should it have a hand in the running of the court because a good deal of the cases coming up before these customary courts involve the Local Government councils themselves? We would not like too much power to be given to Local Government councils to brow-beat people at the local level. So we would prefer to extend right down to the customary court level the accepted principles of democracy. Let the Local Government go ahead with the administration and let the Minister of Justice and Attorney-General be 100 per cent responsible for the customary court affairs. I would like to remind the hon. Attorney-General that this customary court is a potent weapon in upsetting people at the local level and therefore he must make sure

that that weapon is not abused. We want him to be entirely responsible so that if there is any complaint we know to whom to go. The hon. Members of this House will not like to be going backwards and forwards between the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Local Government. You go to the Minister of Justice he says: I think that concerns the Minister of Local Government. You go to the Minister of Local Government he says: I think that concerns the Minister of Justice. So one keeps going backwards and forwards. The Government is of the opinion that once the Magistrate's Court and the High Court are functioning normally that all is well, but do not forget that there is a large number of people in this Region who cannot go to the Magistrate's or High Court. They have to be dealt with by these customary courts and if we pay attention to the customary courts we would take the right course. These are my two points.

**Mr J. O. Ihekwoaba** (Orlu Division): I have a few points to make. The first is to point out that most of the towns are not represented in the customary courts. I feel that the Minister concerned should set up negotiations to see that all the towns have their representations. Most of the towns were left out during the appointment and especially the towns with one or two representations in the old court. I hope the Minister would take necessary steps to see that these areas have their proper representation.

Another point which I want to make has already been referred to by the Leader of the Opposition. It concerns the increase of the salaries of the native court members. They should be increased in order to avoid bribery and corruption. If the salaries are to be left as they are at the moment there is nothing that will prevent these people from taking bribes. For this reason I feel that the salaries of native court members should be raised to a reasonable standard.

On the question of the Appeal Court, I wish to say that in some Appeal Courts there are four or five members. I would suggest that in every clan we should have somebody for the Appeal Court. If some of the clans or some of the important towns are entirely left out it would appear that the interests of



[MR IHEKWOABA]

these people are not being represented in the Appeal Courts.

Turning to the question of transferring court registrars, we do not know in whose hands the matter is now, whether the Minister of Local Government or the Minister of Justice or Councillors. I say Councillors because Councillors are tampering with the movement of these registrars. If the Minister decides that the appointment or transfer should be made by the Minister the Councillors should be asked to take off their hands in this matter. I am appealing to the Minister to see that adequate action is taken in this respect.

Last time we said something about creating more courts for civil cases but up till now nothing has been done about it. I would like the Minister to hasten action on this.

**Mr C. A. Abangwu** (Nsukka Division): I think that both sides of the House agree that it is important that the Customary Court administration should be transferred to the Ministry of Justice. I myself think that this is very important and that the records of the courts and their staff should be under one Ministry. At the moment the administration of the Customary Courts lies with the Ministry of Local Government but certain legal aspects lie with the Ministry of Justice. To make for quick administration of justice every aspect of the Customary Court should be transferred to the Ministry of Justice. The present circular, as referred to by the hon. Member for Aba, appears to be the most recent. If the Minister concerned feels that this is not the most recent, I hope he will be able to produce the most recent one.

There is one more aspect of the administration of Customary Courts—the power of the President of the Court to order the arrest of persons and to grant bail. During the Native Court era it used to be the District Officer who had the power to arrest any person. At the moment the powers of the President are not defined. There is no Law which specifies that the President has powers to arrest any person. In some areas, after the President has ordered an arrest of a person, it takes a whole week to grant bail. The powers of the President of the Customary Court should

be defined by the Minister, and the President should not be allowed to toy with the liberty of the citizens.

Another point is that there should be separation of powers between the Customary Courts and the Ministry of Local Government. The Ministry of Local Government being an administrative structure obviously represents an administrative arm of the Government. As it is at present, it is not tenable as we understand Parliamentary Democracy in the British sense. I therefore feel that the Customary Courts should be separated from the Ministry of Local Government.

Another point is the payment of Customary Court members. At the moment the Ministry of Local Government is responsible for their payment. If the department is removed to the Ministry of Justice I would suggest that instead of the Ministry of Local Government making the payment to the Ministry of Justice, the grant which we give to the Local Government Councils should be payable to the Ministry of Justice.

Another point is the appointment of legally qualified persons to the Customary Courts. My suggestion is that in certain developed areas, like Onitsha, Aba, for example, there should be a legally qualified person appointed as President of the Court . . .

*And it being 2.15 p.m. the Chairman interrupted the business and left the Chair to report Progress and ask leave to sit again.*

(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)

Committee report Progress: To sit again Tomorrow.

(2) The Native Courts (Interim Provisions) Bill, 1960—Second Reading.

*Further deferred until Tomorrow.*

(3) The High Court (Amendment) Bill, 1960—Second Reading.

*Further deferred until Tomorrow.*

(4) The Magistrates Courts (Amendment) Bill, 1960—Second Reading.

*Further deferred until Tomorrow.*



**ADJOURNMENT**

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until 10 a.m. Tomorrow.

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

**ADJOURNMENT DEBATE**

**Nigeria Union of Pharmacists**

**Mr Speaker:** Mr Morphy.

**Mr I. I. Morphy (Ogoja Division):** Chief Morphy, Sir.

**Mr Speaker:** May I have any authority about that? I think the authority is the Minister responsible for Chieftaincies.

**The Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies (Mr O. U. Affiah):** As a matter of fact Mr Morphy is not known by this Government as a Chief. After we had passed the Recognition of Chiefs Law, I think it will be illegal to call him a Chief.

**Mr Speaker:** Then, Mr Morphy.

**Mr Morphy:** For the information of the Minister charged with the responsibility for Chieftaincies who does not know, I am a traditional member of a council.

**Mr Speaker:** Is that your topic?

**Mr Morphy:** That is a part of the information. I am a traditional member of the council at Ogoja. They should know that. I hope the Minister of Local Government will inform his cabinet colleague.

I would like to bring to the notice of this House the need of the Nigeria Union of Pharmacists (*Interruptions*). I think we are entitled to raise any point on adjournment. I was saying that the Nigeria Union of Pharmacists wants to go on strike if the following conditions are not fulfilled. What they want the Minister of Health to do for them is to create a section in his Ministry that will deal with Pharmacists. This point has been dealt with by other Members, so I do not want to waste the time of Members.

What pains them most is the grading. They want the Minister to abolish grades I, II and III because they are professionals of equal standing. They do not want to come out from Ibadan University to be graded, I, II and III because this grading does not allow them to have any hope for the future at all. So what they want is that the Minister of Health should abolish these grades and substitute this grading with what is happening in the Federation.

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** Standing Order 14. The hon. Member appears to be making a petition on behalf of certain people and there is a directive in Standing Order 14 by which such a protest should be brought into this House.

**Mr Speaker:** Hon. Members, Mr Morphy approached me and said that a certain section of the community were about to go on strike and so I thought it is something that must have been brought to the notice of the Minister concerned, and I think it has been brought to the notice of the Minister concerned, probably he might say a word or two about it, because I thought it quite a bad thing for any section of the community to go on strike and if something could be done to avert the strike it would be in the best interests of the Government.

**Mr Morphy:** When they come out from the College of Technology they are placed in grades III, II and I, and in grade III their salary is £408 and they keep running until £510; in grade II the salary is £570 and they keep running until £774; in grade I they are on £774 to £800. What the Pharmacists want is that this grading should be abolished so that they may be placed on the same footing with the Pharmacists who are working in the Federation. In the Federation the position is that when they come out they are regarded as Pharmacists; then they get on to becoming Staff Pharmacists, from there to Senior Pharmacists and finally they get on to Chief Pharmacists. The initial salary there is £624 and the Pharmacists in the Federation keep getting from Pharmacists to Staff Pharmacists, from Staff Pharmacists to Senior Pharmacists and then to Chief Pharmacists. But according to the present grading in the Eastern Region they remain on grade III for long. Most of them have remained on grade III for the past five years and some up to ten years.



**The Premier:** I think the hon. Member is misleading the House. We have the Federal Estimates here: Pharmacists—Scale C (T) 1, 2: £530, not £624.

**Mr Morphy:** I take note of what the Premier has said but here in the Region they are started with £408. What they want is that these grades should be abolished and they want to be on the same footing with the pharmacists in the Federation. That is what they want. If that is done they will not go on strike. Another thing—and much has been spoken about it—is the post of Inspector. The pharmacists want this post to be filled. Every year we create it in the Estimates and it is never filled. The pharmacists say that if the post is filled they will not go on strike. So we want the Minister of Health to do his best to see that this post of Inspector is filled. What these Inspectors do is to go about checking this indiscriminate sale of drugs and also the Inspectors will help to see that the big firms too do not go about bringing drugs indiscriminately into the Region. Help the Pharmacists.

**The Minister of Health:** The fact that Pharmacists want to go on strike has not been brought officially to the notice of my Ministry. I only heard it over the radio. So I mentioned it to my Permanent Secretary and I have told my Senior Assistant Secretary to check on the facts. They have not brought the matter officially to my notice at all. I only heard that

they held a meeting somewhere in Awka and that they threatened to go on strike. I think the proper thing for the pharmacists to have done is to approach me on the point. They should have declared a trade dispute with my Ministry and the Government before bringing the matter to the Opposition, or to anybody for that matter, to raise it on the floor of this House. I think that is the proper thing for the Pharmacists to have done. I said before when I was talking that I have already given instructions to my Ministry for the Pharmacy Division to be created. And so what are they quarrelling for?

Coming to the question of their salary I said before that we have what is called the National Council on Establishments in this country and it is there that all the salaries are discussed, because we want uniformity in the salaries of all the workers in this country. It has been pointed out to me that Mr Morphy is misleading the House. The salaries for pharmacists in the Federation, in the West and in the East are the same; there is no difference. According to the most current Estimates they are the same throughout the country. He talks about the four posts of pharmacists. He knows very well that that is the responsibility of the Public Service Commission, and not that of the Minister.

*And it being 2.30 p.m. Mr Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order 6 (8).*



EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 12th April, 1960

The House met at Ten o'clock a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Revision of General Orders

2. **Mr M. N. Onwuma** asked the Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies), what is holding up the revision and publication of the General Orders for the guidance of civil servants of the Region.

**The Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies):** The revision of the existing General Orders is a task upon which all the Governments of the Federation have now embarked. No Government has yet completed the revision of its own General Orders. It is not an easy task since it requires not only the correlation of the existing rules on staff matters but also the adaptation of these rules to the new constitutional position and the increasing Nigerianisation of the service. Secondly as it is intended that the conditions of service of all the civil servants in the Federation should follow the same pattern, it is essential that there should be full consultation between all the Governments of the Federation before new General Orders are published. Good progress is however being made and it is hoped that later this year the revised edition will be available.

Rural Water Supply

25. **Mr M. N. Onwuma** asked the Minister of Works, the location of Rural Water Supply Schemes in Aba Division, giving details in respect of Northern Ngwa, Eastern Ngwa, Southern Ngwa, Asa and Ndoki Rural District Council areas.

**The Minister of Works:** There are 336 Rural Water Supply water points in the Aba Division as a whole. It is not possible to split the list into District Council areas as the work was carried out on Divisional basis. However, I have instructed my Ministry to forward to the hon. Member a list of all these 336 water points, with his intimate knowledge

of the boundaries of the District Councils in Aba Division, no doubt he will be able to satisfy himself as to how many have been constructed in each Council area.

**Mr Ekpe:** Will the hon. Minister also circulate the number of water points in other Divisions?

**The Minister of Works:** I really want notice of that question before I can answer it.

**Mr Speaker:** Strictly, that is not a supplementary question; it requires an answer by itself.

**Mr Abengowe:** Will the hon. Minister, in circulating the water points in other Divisions mention the population of each Division?

Coal Oil Industry

43. **Mr S. E. K. Iwueke** asked the Minister of Commerce, if he is aware that the process of extracting oil from coal is being carried out successfully in South Africa; if so, will he make representations to the Federal Government to explore the possibility of establishing such oil industry as a means of alleviating the serious situation of the coal industry in this Region.

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Commerce (Mr K. Kiri):** I am directed to answer as follows:

Yes, Sir; I am aware. The possibility of extracting oil from coal was investigated in 1953 on behalf of the Coal Corporation by a firm of consultants called N.E.D.E.C.O. After examination, they recommended that such a project would not be economic.

The main point is that since then oil in commercial quantities has been discovered in Nigeria. Against natural oil the expensive process of extracting oil from coal could not possibly compete.

In South Africa there is no oil; that is why the tremendous expense in overcoming difficulties in processing oil from coal has been justified in that country. The answer to alternative use of our coal is iron and steel industry and it is on this that I am making strong representations to Federal Government.



## ORDERS OF THE DAY

(1) The 1960-61 Eastern Region  
Appropriation Bill*Considered in the Committee of Supply.**(Progress 11th April).*

(SIXTH ALLOTTED DAY)

(In the Committee)

## Head 437.—Ministry of Justice

*Question again proposed: That a sum not exceeding £62,820 for Head 437—Ministry of Justice—stand part of the Schedule.*

**Mr C. A. Abangwu** (Nsukka Division): Yesterday, I was speaking on the appointment of legally qualified men to the presidentship of Customary Courts in the more advanced areas of the Region. I mentioned Onitsha, Aba and I may add any of other large townships in the Region whose status and advancement merit this consideration. In my view, this would help to enhance the administration of justice in the Region.

My other point, Sir, concerns the codification of customary laws of the Region. This, I think, would be a stupendous task for the Ministry but I venture to say that it would be worth all the trouble. We have had our Native Courts for some fifty years now. It would therefore be a comparatively easy matter to compile from court judgments and precedents our customary laws in certain of our more important matters such as land matters, dowry, devolution on death, sale of land and other property, etc. etc.

I am therefore calling upon the hon. Minister of Justice to set up a Commission for the purpose of codifying the more important aspects of our Customary Court Laws.

If I may strike a personal note, I like to suggest to the hon. Minister of Justice that in my own District, Isiuo, the 34,000 people of Isienu Clan want their former Native Court which was some years ago abolished to be reinstated for them. My people of Isienu are very much concerned about this matter

because the present Obolo Court, where they attend, is between twelve and twenty-five miles away from the people of Orba and Eha-Alumona. I am therefore appealing to the Minister to probe the possibility of re-establishing this Court at Isienu.

**Mr M. U. Etuk** (Uyo Division): I want to refer to the appointment of members and Presidents of Customary Courts. Up to the moment, the Minister is responsible for appointing them, but I think that in the interest of peace and good government, they should be appointed by an independent judicial body, so that there will be no room for any suspicion that they suffer the force of political interest. A lot of people have applied for this Court membership and presidentship of Customary Courts; but from my own observation so far, the appointment has been one-sided.

I would advise the Minister to consider this point.

**Mr M. C. Awgu** (Awka Division): This very Head is just as important, if not more, than those of Education and Health. Imperialism is now said to be giving way to freedom. But most conscientious and responsible Africans do agree that if great care is not taken to safeguard the interest of the common man our so-called freedom will be servitude, injustice and oppression in disguise. Let us examine the question of Customary Courts Judges. They love the job not for the present salary but for the bribery and corruption it entails. Let us call a spade a spade. Some of the court judges left the jobs which fetched them an annual income of not less than £480 per annum for the ones which yielded an annual salary of £72 or £96. They have an ulterior motive. They need no increase in salary. If the present salary is inadequate for one the one may resign.

I shall say without fear or favour that giving high salaries to Customary Court Judges will not stop bribery. The more money they get the more they want to have. If they were given one million pounds today as annual income, tomorrow they might have one million needs to balance their account. The geotropic tendency in man has made his



nature to be such as will never have satisfaction. The more he has the more he wants to have and so the weary game goes on until man bids goodbye to the earth plane. I am now appealing to the Minister of Justice and Attorney-General to stop, in the interest of the common man, the demand by the Customary Court Judges and court messengers of 20s consultation fees, 15s, eight yams and a cock in addition to legal summons fees from plaintiffs and defendants alike. I appeal to the Attorney-General to kindly use his good offices to stamp out what I think is most unjust. The poor farmers in the rural areas rejoice that national independence is knocking at the door but yet they cannot have justice in the courts. What then is independence when the poor are oppressed and denied justice. I think our freedom must be for the rich and the poor alike, if not the era today may be rightly called that of plutocracy where only the wealthy have a say.

**Mr A. J. Ekpe** (Opobo Division): I have few points to raise in connection with the Customary Courts. I would like, however, to refer the House to section 12 of the Customary Courts Law which says that the staff of the Customary Courts shall be under the Minister of Justice. According to the interpretation and definition of "Ministers", in the Customary Courts Law No. 21 of 1956, the "Minister" means the Minister for the time being charged under section 119 of the Nigeria Constitution Order in Council, 1954.

In March, 1957 the hon. Iwuagwu, Member for Okigwi was sworn in as Minister of Justice and then he was also charged with responsibility for Customary Courts. In section 94 of the Local Government Law, 1950 it is laid down that the Customary Courts shall be under the Minister of Local Government. This is a contradiction in law. It is a contradiction because . . .

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice (Mr M. O. Ajegbo):** The Local Government Law, 1960 is not yet effective.

**Mr Ekpe:** All right, the Local Government Law, 1960 which is in process of being passed lays in section 94 that the Customary Courts

shall be under the Minister of Local Government. Assuming the law is passed without amendments, I maintain that this is a contradiction in law because while on the one hand in the 1956 Customary Courts Law, Customary Courts were placed under the Minister of Justice, in the 1960 Law, Customary Courts are placed under the Minister of Local Government. This will, in effect, bring some difficulty in the administration of the Customary Courts Law.

**The Chairman:** Are you criticising a Law which has already been passed in this House?

**Mr Ekpe:** No, I am trying to point out some irregularities.

**The Chairman:** Well, do you say that there is something irregular in a Law that has been passed here?

**Mr Ekpe:** Yes, certainly.

**The Chairman:** Where is the authority?

**Mr Ekpe:** I would like to quote the authority.

**The Chairman:** No matter what is the authority, that point cannot be raised again. Bills which have been decided upon by this House cannot be raised again.

**Mr Ekpe:** The point I am trying to raise is that the new law in relation to the old one is in conflict with administration in the two Ministries. The next point I want to make is that if the court staff as a whole are placed under the Ministry of Local Government and the court members under the Ministry of Justice, it is going to work some hardship on the administration of the courts because in the Customary Courts and the Native Courts the Court Clerks or Registrars are technical officers of the courts and are going to advise the Judge on point of law of the Region. If you ask a Court Member to work under the Ministry of Local Government and then to be controlled by the court there will be occasions when the councillors will come into conflict with the staff of the court and thus there is the chance that the work of the Court Clerk will be made difficult because there will be a clash of interest.



[MR EKPE]

Then later on, the councillor will have to go to the Council and arrange for the transfer of this court clerk—that is victimisation. If the staff are under the Local Government and under the supervision of the council, situations are bound to arise often and there will be no administration of justice without fear or favour. That was the point I was trying to make.

Another point is that if we could borrow a leaf from our neighbours in the Western Region, we would find that the Customary Court Staff in the Western Region are under the Ministry of Justice and the court members are also under the Ministry of Justice. That can be an example which this Region can emulate. (*Several hon. Members: Where is the authority?*). Look at their estimates.

Another point, is about the appointment of court members. In my Division members of the Government Party have been going round telling people that it is the Government which recommends all the court members. I do not want to mention names but I can assure you . . . (*Several hon. Members: Mention names.*)

**The Premier (Dr M. I. Okpara):** Mention any names you like.

**Mr Ekpe:** All right, the hon. Premier wants me to mention names. One Mr Udo Kefere in the Four Group area had been holding meetings and telling the people that he had been to Enugu and that arrangements had been made to appoint only N.C.N.C. members to the panel of court members. I gather also that the same thing is going on in Ogoja; my hon. Friend Chief Morphy has just told me about this. So that unless an arrangement is made for a body of independent civil servants or judicial committee to appoint these Customary Court Members, we are going to be left with the impression that the Minister will appoint only his party supporters and that will be an injustice because political influence or political consideration should not be the basis on which these court members should be appointed.

**Mr W. Abengowe (Aba Division):** Point of Order; Standing Order 30 (7):

“No Member shall impute improper motives to any other Member.”

I hold the view that by saying that the Minister appoints only Members of his Party Customary Court Members, the hon. Member is indicting the Minister of Justice.

**The Chairman:** I think he is right.

**Mr Ekpe:** It is the desire of all of us in the Region that the Customary Court should be an instrument of justice and fair-play for everybody in the Region.

Another point, I want to raise is one which concerns an area, Edem Aya, in my Division. These people have applied long ago to be favoured with a customary court. They have a population of some 20,000 but owing to their geographical position—surrounded by water—it has not been possible for them for quite a long time now to go to the nearest court. The Administrative Officer in the Division has really proved that these people should be given a native court of their own and, in fact, there is a letter from the Ministry of Local Government which said that the matter would be looked into when Customary Courts were introduced. So I am requesting the Minister of Justice to see to it that the Edem Aya area is given a Customary Court when the introduction of Customary Courts in my Division will be considered.

I would further say that the Local Government Ministry should completely hands-off the control of Customary Courts Staff and that the whole of the staff, as well as the membership of the panel of the Customary Courts, should be under the Ministry of Justice. There are many points which could be raised in favour of the argument. The Minister of Justice controls the judicial functions in this Region and Customary Court set-up is an arm of the Judiciary in that it administers justice at local level. It will be almost impossible to discipline members of the native court or Customary Court unless they are directly under the Ministry that has expert officials in Law when they err in the administration of the Law. It is only the Minister of Justice that can claim the right to discipline these people. As far as I know, the Ministry of Local Government has no legal Head and all the legal matters are referred to the Ministry of Justice. Besides, as one hon. Member mentioned the other day, there have been training courses



in Awgu for members of the Customary Courts and also for the staff. These courses are conducted by officials of the Ministry of Justice. How then can a Ministry conduct courses and training for court officials while another disciplines them? That other Minister did not undertake the training of these people. I cannot say exactly why. So I am suggesting that the whole Customary Court structure should be brought under the Ministry of Justice.

**Mr K. J. N. Okpokam** (Ikom Division): I am really happy to have the opportunity to say something about what Members have tried to say with regard to who should control Customary Court Staff. Councils do not oppose the idea of the Ministry of Justice taking care of justice in our Customary Courts. They do not intend to interfere in the appointments of court members and in the real administration of justice. Councillors do not intend to go and review cases... (*An hon. Member: Are you a councillor?*) (*Another hon. Member: He is the Chairman of a council!*) (*Several hon. Members: Oh! vested interest!*)

**Mr Okpokam:** He who calls the piper should also dictate the tune. Councils employ court clerks and pay them. I would like to point out that apart from Customary Courts, there are other departments in the Local Government set-up which have to deal with Ministries other than the Ministry of Local Government. You have health for instance. District Councils establish dispensaries and maternity homes and employ the staff. The work of this staff is supervised by the Ministry of Health while their discipline is in the hands of the District Councils which pay them. The position is the same in the Ministry of Works. We talk of training Customary Court Registrars at Awgu. Works Supervisors are also trained there. After they have been trained, they are sent to District Councils to work. They are disciplined by their respective Councils although the Ministry of Works exercises supervision over their work.

It is the same with Agriculture where Veterinary Assistants and Agricultural Assistants are trained by the Ministry of Agriculture for Councils. The actual work is supervised by the Ministry of Agriculture but the discipline of the staff is in the hands of the Ministry of Local Government. What we of the Local

Government Councils are demanding is that if we are to employ and pay the staff of Customary Courts we should be allowed to control them. If it is the pleasure of the Government to take away the question of courts from the Councils entirely, let the courts become a department of Government like the Magistrate Court and so on so that District Councils will have practically nothing to do with them, in which case the Government will see to the building of court halls where cases would be tried. We either have Government built and run Customary Courts as Government Courts or have the Customary Court whose staff would be controlled by the Local Government Councils while the administration of justice should be in the hands of the Ministry of Justice.

**Rev. M. D. Opara** (Owerri Division): I rise to speak on this Head. I will start with the Customary Court. I do not want to talk much because much has been said by other Members. I do not agree with hon. Members who said that Customary Courts should be under the Ministry of Justice. The Ministry of Justice must concern itself with justice according to the English Law and Custom. The Customary Court Law and whatever is drawn out of the Customary Court must be within our local law and custom. At present if there is any local court in a place the workers there are all working under the Local Customary Law and the Local Government Councillors or the Councils have to control these people. Somebody was talking about how the Minister who is locally qualified should be the only person able to control the workers in the Customary Court. I say "No" because the councillors have the local law with them and can discipline any of the staff. What I am saying is that the appointment of workers and the administration of justice should be under the Ministry of Justice but the discipline must be under the Local Council. The appointment of these Customary Court members may be under the Ministry of Justice, but I am not trying to tell him what he will do. I am trying to point out that whenever these people may be appointed, they should be people whose characters are exemplary because in many places where people of bad characters have been appointed as Court members they have often oppressed. Another thing is about certain places where they have what is called double stream courts, that is



[REV. OPARA]

in one court you have the criminal section and the civil section all sitting at the same time. It might be in a large area. I heard somebody mentioning that some 20,000 people are trying to have a court when you have about 100,000 people having one court and perhaps they have no hope of having another court. I am trying to ask the Minister of Justice that in such a place instead of appointing five or seven people, he will appoint ten or fourteen so that they will have two courts sitting at the same time in one place. There is a place in my own Division Egbema; these people, as I said the other day, come from the north-west of Owerri Division. They have been denied the right to enjoy the court in Ahoada Division where they were attending before. Now they are in Owerri Division, they live very far away from the nearest court which is at Oguta. I think the Minister will help these people before the Customary Court is formally inaugurated in Owerri to have their own court.

**The Chairman:** I am trying to call upon the people who have given notices of amendments as they appear on the Order Paper.

**Mr J. A. Agba (Ogoja Division):** I want to start with this question of Customary Courts being under the Ministry of Justice or under the Ministry of Local Government. I think some of the previous speakers who are in favour of Customary Courts being under the Ministry of Justice misunderstood the word "Customary". The courts are now in a new model and are a substitute for our Native Courts. Our Native Courts, after the establishment of Local Councils, came directly under the Councils and the Councils really were empowered to employ the staff—the clerk, messengers and so on. I have no objection at all that the Ministry of Justice will undertake the appointment of the members of the court but the court should still be under the Councils. It does not matter what happens or what the Councils or Councilors will do to influence the members to discharge certain cases in the court in one way or the other. I am taking my stand on the word "customary" and what happened previously before the introduction of these Customary Courts. The members I say should be promoted or appointed by the Ministry of Justice or better still a Judicial Committee should do the appointment so that

there will be no question of political party affiliation coming in. I am saying this with special reason. There are some chiefs now, so-called First-class Chiefs in certain areas . . .

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Local Government (Mr P. U. Amaefunah):** On point of order, Standing Order 32 (3):

"Members shall not read newspapers in their places and may only read such books and letters as may be connected with the business under debate."

**Mr Agba:** I have my point. Somebody might have mentioned it in connection with a certain aspect of the debate and dealt with it only in so far as it concerns his own area. I am dealing with it, and in doing so, with particular reference to my own area. In that way, it might seem a sort of repetition but at the same time, I am making a class distinction in the whole aspect of the debate.

I was saying that the question of appointment should be left to the Ministry of Justice or a Judicial Committee in order to avoid suspicion and the rest of it. I am advocating that the Members of these Customary Courts should consist of chiefs and non-chiefs. The chiefs should be two-thirds of the stipulated number to be on the Bench. In saying this, I would like also to say that it would be unfair to leave our chiefs hanging about—those who are not privileged to come into the House of Chiefs. They should be given some specific duties to do in the courts and councils.

The second point I would like to make is that at the present moment, it is very difficult to get cases heard justly in certain areas because of political party affiliation. You will be surprised to know that as soon as a case is brought up in the Court, the first question is whether this man is an Action Group or an N.C.N.C. and, then, the case is tried on that basis. I personally appeal to the Minister of Justice to do a good deal of supervision over these Customary Courts when they have been given the trial otherwise, as previous speakers have mentioned, there is going to be a lot of difficulty in connection with getting justice administered in the Court.



Finally, I say again that I mentioned this before and the Minister of Justice thought I was merely joking. I am appealing to him that a Magistrate's Court be built in Obudu for Obudu Division. I like the Division to worth its name and I think it would be worth the dignity, merit and the consideration it deserves. It is no point telling you that the Magistrate who comes there to try cases and finds that he has no proper building has to try his cases in the Council Hall or in any little hall. As a representative of the people, I think it is my right and my place to appeal to him for whatever amenities he desires to give.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** I shall start with the comments made by hon. Onwuma and, I believe, the Leader of the Opposition. They spoke about the dual control of Customary Courts. Quite a lot of Members spoke on that point. It is not a very easy thing because, as the hon. Okpokam did say, district courts are financed and more or less owned by District Councils. You have a District Council owning more or less and financing a district court in its area of authority, and you have the Government paying for the county courts, that is, paying the fees and the salaries of the staff because Government considers that a county court serves a whole area, not one particular District Council. Now you see that because the district courts pay for the services there, pay the members' fee and pay the staff of the courts, they feel that they are entitled to call the tune—you know, whoever pays the piper calls the tune. Again, there is this point to consider: if the whole of the control, that is, salaries, appointment and discipline, were to be vested in me as the Minister of Justice, it might mean the whole structure coming into the service of the Government. Members of the court will be automatically converted into Government servants—and I am not quite sure if they will like it, because it might mean not standing election into the House of Chiefs or the House of Assembly. If the staff were to come entirely under my control they might be governed by General Orders, and we do not know how they will like it. We are looking very closely into these matters and I can assure you that after we have studied them very carefully—the Minister of Local Government and I are not happy about the whole situation—we shall come back to this House and tell you what we have been able to do.

**Mr Ikoku:** Is the hon. the Attorney-General prepared to consult the staff side?

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** Yes, I will. Again, Members came back to the old question of the pay of Customary Court Judges. I remember that in my speech on the 24th of March, I did say—and I would like to take this opportunity of correcting the impression that has gained ground that I said I was satisfied with the pay of Customary Court Judges—that is far from the truth. What I did say, and I like to emphasise it, is that I am not at all happy with the pay and service conditions of Members of the Customary Courts generally. But as you know it is a matter of money, and I have to persuade both the hon. the Minister of Finance and the Government to give me more money in order to increase the pay; and that naturally will take some time. I have had a deputation from members of these courts and I have assured them that the matter is receiving attention. So I can only promise the House that as and when money becomes available, I will surely do the right thing.

My learned Friend, the hon. Abangwu, made an interesting contribution to the debate. I think I have answered the first arm of his argument about members of these courts owing allegiance to two different Ministries. I quite agree with him that that delays work and makes for inefficiency. But, as I have said, the Minister of Local Government and I will look into that. Then he said something about powers which Residents in good old days enjoyed in granting bail when an arrest had been made. Presidents of these courts are enjoined by Law to be literate. They can read and write. Some of them have held important positions in other walks of life; some of them are retired Managers in some of our Firms, and I do not see why they cannot grant bail. The only safeguard is that we must make it obligatory on them to grant bail as quickly as possible. Any complaints about this should be directed to the Customary Court Adviser. I have not had any complaints about delays in granting bail or refusal to grant bail; but if such complaints do come to my notice I will thoroughly look into them.

He also spoke about appointing legally qualified men to become Presidents of the Customary Courts. As I did say last time we



[MR AJEGBO]

have only two grades of courts, that is Grade A Customary Court which enjoys a jurisdiction of six months, and Grade B which enjoys a jurisdiction of three months. Unlike the West where you have the Grade A having concurrent powers to the High Courts and the Grade B having concurrent powers with the Magistrates Courts, I do not think it will be very useful to have a legally qualified man to sit down in a court where his jurisdiction is just six months imprisonment or £50 fine. If and when we decide to raise the jurisdiction of these courts we shall then begin to think of getting lawyers to man the courts. May I take this opportunity to say that it is not the intention of this Government to give our Customary Courts the powers that they enjoy in the Western Region. We have always frowned at a Customary Court being able, as was done in Ijebu-Ode Grade A Customary Court sometime ago to sentence a man to 15 years imprisonment—we think that that is intolerable and we are not prepared to adopt that system in the Eastern Region. When we come to think of it, we do not know whether a man who was tried for such an offence that entailed a punishment of 15 years imprisonment, had a preliminary inquiry—the sort of thing that you have in the High Court before a man is eventually tried. You have to go before a Magistrate, he tries you and finds out the facts—that is what we call preliminary inquiry—before the matter goes to the High Court. With a Customary Court having such powers, I do not think that they can go through the mill—through the routine—before sentencing a man to 15 years imprisonment. So I like to make it clear that it is not the intention of this Government to give our Customary Courts the same powers as they enjoy in the West. We have no reason to give Customary Courts concurrent powers with the High Courts of the Region. But if and when we decide to increase their powers a bit we may then consider appointing lawyers to be Presidents of these courts.

Then he again talked of the codification of customary laws. That is a very ideal thing and the intention of getting lawyers to be Assistant Customary Courts Advisers—what we now call Crown Counsel attached to the Customary Courts Division of the Ministry—is to make them to go round and collect data, and to be able to assist in codifying our Laws.

With regard to the Isien Court which Mr Abangwu talks about, I am afraid that is a matter in which I would ask him to come to my Chambers and see me so that we find out whether it is a thing we can do.

Hon. Etuk talks about the appointment of Members to Customary Courts. Uninformed critics of the way we appoint Customary Court members simply lose sight of the decision we arrived at in London in 1958. It is contained in the Report of the Resumed Nigerian Constitutional Conference held in London in September and October, 1958 at page 14, sub-paragraph C of paragraph 29. With your permission I read:

“The Regional Governments should seek to ensure that the powers of appointment, dismissal, and disciplinary control of all Judges of Customary and Native Courts (other than Emirs) with power to impose prison sentences of more than 6 months or fines of more than £50 should be exercised on the recommendation or under the supervision of the Judicial Service Commission.”

My Friend the Leader of the Opposition was in London at the time and he knew how we came by this decision. We have no apology to make for the Government assigning the responsibility for appointing members of Customary Courts to me because that is strictly in accordance with the decision we arrived at in London.

**Mr S. G. Ikoku** (Enyong Division): Point of information: The decision at the London Conference did make clear how Judges presiding over Customary Courts with power to impose more than 6 months sentence or more than £50 fine were to be appointed by the Judicial Service Commission but there was no decision at the London Conference to the effect that Judges presiding over Customary Courts with lesser powers should be appointed by the Minister. There was no such decision and it is not implied.

**Mr Ajegbo**: I am quite sure that my Friend, the Leader of the Opposition is not serious about this, because he knew the memos that were introduced at the London Conference



and he knew (I need not review it here) how we discussed the matter and agreed that it should be beyond the competence of a Judicial Service Commission, membership of which is part time, to select in every Court seven men. We gave the number and we said it was just beyond their ability, and so it was left to the Governments to make whatever arrangements they can.

**Mr Ikoku:** I agree.

**Mr Ajegbo:** You agree; well what is there now to stop the Minister from appointing. The Government of the Eastern Region has decided that a Minister in charge of the Ministry of Justice should be the person to appoint and we say that this is strictly in accordance with the decision arrived at the London Conference.

**Mr Ikoku:** No, that is where I disagree with you. The London Conference never took a decision to that effect.

**Mr Ajegbo:** They left it free and the Government of the Eastern Region has decided that the appointment should be by the Minister in charge of Justice.

**Mr Ikoku:** I agree but why quote the decision at the London Conference to cover it?

**The Chairman:** Let us hear the Minister.

**Mr Ajegbo:** Well what I am saying, whether the Leader of the Opposition agrees to it or not, is that we are acting strictly in accordance with the Law and we have no apology to make on this point.

Hon. Awgu spoke about bribery in connection with these Courts. It is my experience that most of our people are either very timid or very indifferent to bribery. For instance, you have, as you had in this House, somebody bringing up a charge of bribery, which he is not ready to substantiate. It has been my experience that where somebody comes up with a letter, sometimes in anonymous form or sometimes he writes his name, making an allegation, the moment you ask him to substantiate it so that you can take it up he disappears. I can only tell hon. Awgu that he will only help this Region if, when he knows the

case of a member of the Court wanting a consultation fee, he reports it to me or preferably to the Police. But if hon. Members are indifferent to these things and just come to the floor of the House to make these wild allegations, their allegations never appeal to me and I do not take them seriously, because the avenue is very, very clear. Hon. Members know what to do. The moment this sort of thing comes to their knowledge they should go to the Police and report, and if they are not satisfied with perhaps the treatment given them they should come to me as the Minister in charge of the Courts and I will certainly take it up. But if they leave this line of action and come to the House and just make some wild allegations, it does not interest me and I do not intend to take any action there.

**Mr J. A. Agba (Ogoja Division):** Standing Order 30 (5):

“It shall be out of order to use offensive and insulting language about Members of the House”.

I want to comment on the Minister's reference as it has occurred in this House. I do not want to be referred to as a timid man.

**Mr Ajegbo:** Well, I hope my hon. Friend, the hon. Agba, will come to me and lay bare his complaint and then I will cease to call him a timid man.

Hon. Ekpe was not quite right when he said that the Customary Courts Law, 1956, empowers me to appoint the staff of Customary Courts. I am sorry he is not here; that is not so at all. Section 12 of that Law gives the power to Councils but they have to appoint with my approval. That again is contrary to the provisions of the Local Government Law, 1955, but my Friend the Minister of Local Government and I are sorting these things out and when we have reached an agreement on the matter we will let the House know what we have agreed upon.

I think I have more or less exhausted the points made by hon. Members. The only point I want to make now is to assure them that there is a lot of things that we are sorting out and there is a lot on which the Law is not even reconciled, but as soon as we are able to get things working as they should



[MR AJEGBO]

work—and that lies between the Ministry of Local Government and my Ministry—we shall amend the Law and then come back and tell the House what we have been able to do.

*Question put and agreed to.*

#### **Head 438.—Ministry of Local Government**

*Question proposed: That a sum not exceeding £94,950 for Head 438—Ministry of Local Government—stand part of the Schedule.*

**The Chairman:** I shall be in duty bound to call only those names which have appeared on the Notice of Amendments because we have no time again.

**The Minister of Local Government (Mr P. O. Nwoga):** Little comment is necessary on the Estimates for my Ministry since the provision is only very slightly different from that approved for 1959/60. The most important difference is the insertion of three new Executive class posts: one in the Finance Division and two in the Examination of Accounts Division. These new posts are provided to enable me to pursue more effectively a policy of increased supervision, advice and assistance in the finance affairs of the Local Government Councils. I have explained to hon. Members in the past that it is my aim to create an effective internal audit for Local Government Councils through the medium of this cadre of Executive Officers (Accounts). Although it has been in existence for only just over a year, and has had to reckon with a backlog of accounting problems and errors, the benefit is now beginning to be felt.

Thanks to the effort of the Audit Department, the Audit inspections of all Local Government Councils up to 31st March, 1959, will be completed by about the end of May. Thereafter an annual audit should be possible and the Executive Officers (Accounts) of my Ministry will concentrate on the accounts of the current year. This ought to make the work of auditors easier since mistakes and irregularities will be detected and corrected at inspections during the year and will not have to wait until the auditors themselves arrive.

Another matter of importance under this head is the training of staff. The last of the nine months Local Government courses at the Nigerian College of Technology, Ibadan, finishes in a month or two's time. The training Division of the Premier's Office has, therefore, undertaken to arrange training courses for Local Government Staff within the Region and the first course for about twenty Senior Local Government staff begins in June. The course will be of three months duration and I hope it will be the first of many. In addition it is proposed to send one or two officers on the Public Administration course at the Nigerian College of Technology, Ibadan. I regret to say that it has still not been possible to recruit a Valuation Officer to head the sorely needed Valuation Division without which Council's property rating can never become really efficient. Every effort is being made to fill this post but until an officer is available the other technical posts in the Division will not be filled.

The last of the money for Special Grants has been paid out for capital development schemes approved but not commenced in previous years. Capital development is now undertaken by loans where Councils are unable to find the money from their own resources. To this end extremely adequate provision has been made in the Capital Estimates for loans. As hon. Members heard in the Speech from the Throne, arrangements have been made to assist Councils by way of guarantees when they approach a Bank for a larger loan than it is possible to make from Government sources. Hon. Members may be interested to know that a total of £109,400 has been issued in loans under the Development Programme. Many applications are still being processed in my Ministry and, without doubt, the total allocation under the Development Programme will be used up in due course.

I think that hon. Members will agree that in consideration of the volume and importance of the work undertaken by my Ministry the estimate under this Head has been modestly framed. I commend it to this hon. House and ask that it should be passed without dissent.

**Mr W. Abengowe (Aba Division):** I just like to make a few points on this Ministry. First of all, I like the Ministry of Local Government to review its policy with regard to the



question of lumping together of smaller District Councils in the Region to form County Councils. Why I am saying this is that since the new policy of having many District Councils, a number of District Councils have not been able to live up to expectation. There are some District Councils that are unable to pay their staff because they have not got the money to do that. I would like to draw the attention of the Minister to the Government White Paper on this question of lumping up of District Councils. If I may with your permission refer to page 23 of the Government White Paper. It is said at paragraph 2:

“Government is opposed to the setting up of small financially weak units which will never develop social services without placing an undue burden on the people of the area.”

That, in fact, means that Government is opposed to the creation of small District Councils. This is a tendency now amongst our people. People break away and form District Councils of their own. The Government should discourage a situation like this. It does not make for progress at all.

Another point which I will like to make is about the discrimination in the payment of staff salary. Local Government staff receive far less money in the form of salary than those of the main Government. A situation like this should not be allowed to go on. Even in the case of the Mbanefo salary awards, the recommendation is that it should be 15 per cent and 20 per cent to special grade of workers—the labourers. But in the case of Local Government staff the award is only 12½ per cent to all of them. I feel that the Government should make available to these Councils more grants in order to meet up the said 15 per cent.

Another point on this Head is that which concerns discrimination in transport facilities. District Council Secretaries have their transport and they are paid, but when District Council Chairmen use their own transport the Audit Department surcharges them. I would like the Minister also to look into the situation. It is not fair. They use their transport in the service of the District. The next thing I wish to mention is the question of transfer in Local Government staff. For sometime now the Ministry has taken up the matter; and the staff

of various District Councils go on inter-District Council transfers. I am very happy about that. It makes for efficiency, and I think it should continue. I would like to add that this transfer should also be extended to all the members of the established staff of the Councils—the Treasurers, clerks, the Dispensary attendants, in fact all of them.

If I say something about Local and District Councils as they affect members of this House, I would suggest that (unfortunately the Law has been passed) there should be provision for them to be *ex officio* members of their District Councils. Firstly, they will interpret Government policies and directives effectively. Secondly, they will enhance the working and running of Councils. Thirdly, they will help to check bribery and corruption in the Councils and, fourthly their presence in the various Councils will lend dignity and respect to the Councils.

**Mr I. I. Morphy** (Ogoja Division): I have only two points to raise: one of them deals with pregnant married women who are working. What Government does is that when these married women are pregnant, they go on three months leave with half pay. I do not think this is very good in that increased family requires more food and more money. It is better if Government would reconsider the married pregnant women. The proper thing to do is to give them more money rather than giving them half pay. This deals with all working class women in the Region. I just want to take this opportunity to raise this issue in the Ministry of Local Government. Also, the unmarried ones go on three months leave without pay. We are asking the Government to consider the unmarried ones who are pregnant and go on leave without pay. It will be good if they are given half pay.

Another point is the problem of “the son of the soil”. We are asking the Minister of Local Government to do his best to try to transfer as many as he can of the Local Council Secretaries and, in fact, all other staff of the Local Government Councils, to other places. We would like to have a person from Udi to come to Ogoja than a man who has known much of the Division. The son of the soil principle corrupts our Councils.



**Mr D. E. Akilo** (Udi Division): When the Local Government Law was introduced in this Region, Udi Division was one of the trial Divisions and ever since then we have been watching the workable way of the machinery of this Government and we have seen that there are certain clauses in the Local Government Laws. One of these is the inadequate representation of certain towns in my own Council area. These people who are not fully represented in the Council have been losing because the policy of our Government is to divide everything on population basis.

Now, I would like, with the permission of the Chairman, to quote the towns that are adversely affected and the facts relevant thereto.

Owa Imezi has the population of 10,523 and has 1 Local Council; Owa Aguobu has the population of 7,467 and has 1 Local Council; Owa Mgbagbu has the population of 8,524 and has 1 Local Council; Iwolo Oghe has the population of 8,351 and has 1 Local Council.

The above is compared with the following:—

Obeleagu Umuna has the population of 5,938 and has 1 Local Council; Umuowo Umuna has the population of 8,727 and has 2 Local Councils; Agba Umuna has the population of 6,979 and has 1 Local Council; Obinofia has the population of 6,572 and has 1 Local Council; Umumba has the population of 6,979 and has 3 Local Councils; Akama Oghe has the population of 2,799 and has 1 Local Council; Neke and Oyofe have the population of 1,642 and have 1 Local Council; Amankwo Oghe has the population of 2,104 and has 1 Local Council; Amansiodo Oghe has the population of 3,346 and has 1 Local Council; Okpogho has the population of 3,346 and has 1 Local Council.

All these four towns apart from the fact that they have not been adequately represented in their Local Councils have been losing on the line of scholarship awards; because in our Council, the policy of the District Council is to give scholarship awards on Local Council basis and these four towns have only one Local Council each. Above, I have compared these Local Councils and stated their figures.

There are certain other towns which have got less than 6,000 people and yet they have got three Local Councils. In sharing the scholarship awards these places with three Councils—that is, less population—gain at the expense of these people that have got larger population. I am pressing it to the Minister of Local Government to see to it that these towns that are adversely affected should be given more Local Councils or that the present ones existing should be increased so that the whole thing might be on population basis.

After all, we are basing everything on population and as we are paying as we earn, we must get as we pay. The people affected are very much annoyed about the method of distribution of amenities in our District Council basis.

Another point is the question of employment. I have to cite section 95 of the Local Government Law which gives general powers of engagement of staff. This section of the Law is abused in one way or the other, because some of the councillors are of immature minds—the natives who have no respect or who have not known the suitability of candidates for one job or the other in the Council. These people look for money instead of assessing the suitability and efficiency of the people to be employed. I suggest that the power of employment should be with the Local Government Service Board. This Board should be given the power to recruit suitable people—no matter where the persons come from in order to avoid nepotism in the Councils. The Board should also be vested with the power to transfer staff.

**The Chairman:** Save time, please.

**Mr Akilo:** The duty of any Council in this question is only to advertise the posts which are not carrying annual salaries of more than £72 and subject to the ratification of the Council.

In case of promotions the Local Government Service Board should also play an important role because at present promotions are bought in our Councils and not merited. Because of this there is no efficiency. The people do not know about efficiency.



I have to associate my view with those of the hon. Members who said that the Customary Courts should be handed over to the Minister of Justice.

*Sitting suspended at 12.05 p.m.*

*Sitting resumed at 12.30 p.m.*

**Mr M. A. Idoko** (Nsukka Division): I want to make a little observation on the Ministry of Local Government. I noted with great interest the effort of the Minister in the expansion of Local Government set-up in this Region. While complimenting the Minister, I want to make the following points: the first is about grant of loan to Local Government Bodies. I have noticed that loan for Local Government development is given every year to many Local Government Bodies; but not to all the Local Government Bodies, especially those Rural District Councils now County Councils and I am appealing to the Minister to see that this loan is spread to reach these Rural District Councils so that they will also have revenue to develop their resources. (*An hon. Member: That concerns Head 439.*) Another point... (*Several hon. Members: You have no point.*)

**The Chairman:** Will you wait until we come to Head 439? (*An hon. Member: He is a new man.*)

**Mr Idoko:** I continue with another point, please. It is about the allowances to councillors. According to Written Answer to Question No. 17 of the 28th of March, 1960, the Minister made mention of the chairmen and vice-chairmen of councils being the only ex-officio members of the Committees of the Councils, but according to Local Government Councils Standing Order paragraph 80 Section 9, the chairmen of all the statutory and standing committees of the Council shall be members of the Finance Committee of the council. If these gentlemen attend meetings according to this Standing Order, they must certainly attend more than 36 times and I feel that it is not justifiable to deny them allowances for the meeting they attend in excess of 36 as a definite provision is made to this effect. So, I suggest that the Minister should readjust his

ruling about the number of times a councillor will attend the meetings of the council and the committee meetings of the council in a year for which allowances will be paid.

Another point is on the service conditions of Local Government workers. Although the Government has done well by giving 12½ per cent to the Local Government workers, I am appealing to the Minister to pay them 15 per cent as their counterparts in Government Departments. There had long been a disparity between Government workers and Local Government workers and I feel it is high time this gap was bridged.

**Mr E. U. Eronini** (Owerri Division): I only want to make one point about Auditors who audit the accounts of Councils. The Audit workers after they have found out that some councillors made use of the council's money and after recommending their surcharge and their recommendation is approved, the money is not paid back by these councillors. The councillors keep on protesting from year to year and the money is not paid back. The Minister responsible should see to it that when councillors are surcharged, they should first of all pay two-thirds of the money before appeal. I know one Council whose Chairman at one time was surcharged. He knew quite well that the amount surcharged was in order but he would not pay. He kept on opposing the surcharge and up till now he has not paid the money. What happens? He is waiting for Enugu to reply to his petition and that money is not paid. The Minister should evolve a way whereby the surcharge should be paid as soon as it is made.

Another point is about the Council. There should be, if possible after an election of a new chairman, an adviser who can go to that Council and see whether things are moving well. I know of a Council after electing a new chairman, the chairman saw that a lot of things had gone wrong when the old chairman was there. What did he do? He wrote to the Minister asking for an inquiry or some such thing into the council but nothing was done? When a new chairman says that something is wrong, I think it is wise to investigate. The same thing happens in Enugu here, the Headquarters, how much more in the rural areas,



**Mr J. O. Ihekwoaba** (Orlu Division): I have not much to say but to remind the Minister of Local Government the promise which was made by this Government and the previous Premier to Orlu District Council with regard to their request, that is, splitting the Orlu District Council into four or five Rural District Councils. I do remember in 1955 when they were asked to choose either to be in three-tier system or in one District Council, we, the Members of this House, that come from Orlu Division educated our people to be in one unit, that is taking one District Council in view of the high taxation and so forth, and they agreed. Now that they feel that they are ripe enough and capable of carrying four or five Rural District Councils, I think it is time that this Government granted them their request. It is not a new request. This request has been made over four or five times, both by resolutions passed by the Council, by the members of those Councils connected, and by delegations to this Government recently. I appeal very strongly that the Minister should look into it and grant them the splitting of this District Council. It is one of the burning desires in their minds in view of distribution of amenities by this Government. Although the Minister has decided and said that distribution of amenities will be on population basis, but still, even from the present Estimate it will be seen that the announcement of the Minister does not comply with the distribution of amenities in this respect. I am appealing very strongly that they should be granted this very request. They are now capable of running Rural District Councils. Formerly we told them that before they make such a request they should get a mandate from the tax-payers and I think they have got it, and if possible the Minister should set up people to investigate from the tax-payers from that area to ascertain whether they are agreed on this splitting. They have taken strong decisions in their Council that after the expiration of the life of their present Council, unless the Council is split into four or five Rural District Councils they are not returning again. Orlu with a population of 356,000 and over is more than those Divisions which have three to four District Councils at the moment. There are some areas with less than half the population of Orlu having two to three District Councils,

how much more Orlu Division which is second to the largest in this Region.

The Council requires more funds for employment of more labourers to maintain some of the roads that are left out and to absorb the old labourers who were working on those roads recently tarred, and also to give them some grants to extend their market stalls.

**Mr J. A. Etuhube** (Ikot Ekpene Division): I just want to make an appeal to the Minister of Local Government on behalf of Annang people of Otoro and Ngwa people. The appeal I am making is to ask this Ministry to help Otoro District Council with some grant to build a bridge over Ntodino River. This river connects Annang people of Otoro to Achite. In the first place the two areas Annang and Ngwa people have had friendly communications and trade. This area is very thickly populated and exports plenty of palm produce. It is difficult for the people to carry tins of oil across this river unless they loose them from bicycles and carry them across on head; and times without number, Otoro District Council have made appeals to the Eastern Government for grant to build a bridge over this river. I remember the former Governor and the former Premier of the Eastern Region visited this river and promised that Government would give some help to this District Council. (*The Premier: When was that?*) I ask the Premier to remember when he came there in 1958 the people prepared a very big reception for him. I hope the Premier will remember the other day he said:

“The question of ballot box is not a true test of the people who wish to support the Government.”

You know amenities are not given to areas because of whom they vote for but for the taxes they pay. I am saying that the people had made appeals times without number to this Eastern Government for a grant to build a bridge over this river. I am saying that if it is true that Government believes that the Annang people and the Ibo people who are settling in the Ngwa part of the area are one people and that they should continue communication as has been the case in the past, there should be a link connecting the two people.



Therefore it is very important that this bridge should be built. This is the appeal I am making.

**Mr A. O. Chikwendu** (Bende Division): I have always maintained that the people of this Region think in terms of their Divisions and in terms of their Local Council areas. I have always maintained that the multiplicity of District Councils is not healthy, and the ideal thing would have been what is done at Afikpo and Orlu where the County Council is all embracing. If there were all embracing County Councils for the whole Division it would be better than having many of these District Councils. As a matter of fact, in my own opinion, the ideal thing would have been to set up an all-purpose County Council for the whole Division and then to devolve a measure of responsibilities to Local Councils. I would ask the Minister to have that in view. It may not be today but some day it may be possible to do it because it will reduce the amount of money wasted in setting up buildings and Headquarters and reduce the number of staff. If we saved the money we are spending on buildings and paying staff, it would go a long way to provide the other amenities which the people are very much after.

I have always maintained that Local Government is a very important arm of the Government. I need to be convinced that Local Government is not fulfilling Government functions. If the Local Government staff are satisfying the conditions for which the Councils are set up I do not see any reason why there should be any disparity between a Local Government servant and a civil servant. The idea of paying civil servants at a different rate and Local Government staff at another rate should be stopped. If Government is making 10 per cent, 20 per cent and 15 per cent award it should embrace both the civil servants and the Local Government officers.

When the Minister was introducing the new Local Government Law he emphasised the point that votes should not be transferred from one item to another. The people who are actually experienced in Local Government will agree with me that the imposition of this law or regulation will result in crippling the progress of Local Government. I think that what should have been the idea is that where a

Council transfers a vote from one item to another and the Minister finds out that that transfer is not reasonable, such Council should be surcharged. The Law should be applied there. But if the money is reasonably transferred and reasonably spent, I do not see why the Minister should prohibit it because what we are going to experience in due course is that there will be floods of Supplementary Estimates to the Ministry of Local Government. And the Ministry of Local Government is, I regret to say, very slow in handling Supplementary Estimates. It results in Councils sending telegrams and telegrams; writing letters and letters or even sending delegations before the Supplementary Estimates are considered.

When I was speaking on the Speech from the Throne I dealt with, very strongly, the question of Tenders Board for Local Government Councils and the Minister has emphasised that no Council should give out contracts which will be worth more than £50. I am saying here that this is one of the things which retard progress in Local Government. Often a temporary bridge will break down and the Council cannot repair it because they cannot award a contract for timber worth more than £50. A matter which is urgent to the Council is not equally urgent to the Tenders Board which is an independent body. The result is that often you find that the Local Government Body cannot fulfil its objective. The people complain here and there that the hands and feet of the Councils are tied. They cannot move to the right nor to the left. It is this fact that causes what the Minister called "the splitting of contract." In order to find that an urgent repair is done or that a matter is dealt with quickly and in time, the Council resolved to split contracts but the Minister has said in this House that he does not want any more contracts split. If the Minister does not want the splitting of contracts and if he does not want the work of Local Government retarded, he should give the Council some powers. He should limit the contract they should award either to £100 or £200 but limiting it to £50 is still retarding the progress of Local Government.

I will now have to deal with the matter of delegation of powers. Certainly, no sane person will not see the wisdom of the Minister



[MR CHIKWENDU]

in delegating his powers to Local Government Commissioners. But the Minister should warn these Commissioners that they should be careful in advising Councils on matters dealing with policy. It is most embarrassing that the Local Government Commissioner should give advice on policy to a Council and the Council carries out that advice and then later, after two or three months, the Ministry writes blaming the Council and asking them to revise everything they had done based upon the advice of the Local Government Commissioner. The Minister should ensure that before any Commissioner gives advice on policy, he should contact the Ministry.

Another point I want to mention is that Councils experience a lot of difficulty because of undue delay in the reply to correspondence from the Ministry of Local Government. That is one of the things which stop Councils from functioning. Some Councils have to wait for six months, five months; at times up to a whole year and no reply will be given to a particular correspondence and then when the Council takes action, the Ministry writes again blaming the Council. Similarly, most of the Local Government Commissioners do not deal with correspondence in time. If they want Local Governments to function, let them give adequate response to their letters. Experience has shown that either the Local Government Commissioner or the Minister himself will make it almost impossible for the Council to provide a single service for the whole year; not because they do not like such development but because they will either delay in replying to letters or create loopholes and other conditions which will make it impossible for the Council to function. If they want Councils to do their job they should give them adequate response.

**Mr N. O. Onwudiwe** (Okigwi Division): I just want to make a few points as my colleague has covered most of the points I wanted to make. Sometime ago, the Local Government Association decided that they should have a sitting allowance whenever they attended the Council meeting. A delegation was sent to the Minister who reminded them that it would be expensive to demand two guineas and the association decided on accepting whatever the Minister thought was good for them in

order to allow the Local Government Councillors to have some allowances too. But up till now, we have not heard anything about allowances for Local Government Councillors. You know many of them suffer terribly in coming to the Local Council meetings and I would like the Minister to consider whether he could grant them about 2s 6d as sitting allowance or say, 5s. That will encourage them than to leave them without any allowances.

The other point is about giving much power to Local Government Advisers. According to my Friend, he pointed out that a lot of difficulty is experienced by asking a District Council to see the Local Government Adviser and from the Local Government Adviser to the Minister. I think much time is wasted by going to the Local Government Adviser who in turn asks the District Council to arrange a delegation to the Minister. I think if we want to progress quickly in this Region, it will be fair that District Councils having some matters of vital importance should go straight to the Minister and tell him what their necessity is. As you know, some of these matters are urgent and they do not want any delay, and by going straight to the Minister much delay will be minimised.

The other point which I consider very important is that I do not know whether the Minister of Local Government realises the advantages derived from direct labour in some of the District Councils.

I am giving one striking instance. Sometime ago there was a job we wanted to give to a District Council and it was sent up to the Tenders Board. It was decided in the Tenders Board that the work should be done with £800. We felt that this money was exorbitant, and that if we did it by direct labour it would be much less. The job was done by direct labour and only £450 was used in completing the job. You can see now how much has been saved in this way. So I would ask the Minister of Local Government to think very seriously about allowing District Councils to do some work with direct labour.

The other point is that in my Division we have Local Councils that are so big in size that if they continued in this way they would not do anything of interest and I think that splitting



up these Councils would do a world of good. For instance, in my District Council we have one clan which has a population of 42,000. They have one Local Council and I do not know how it would look like to have this Council to continue in this way. I would suggest that very big Local Councils should be split into two. Much would be achieved as a result. There are other Councils, for instance, Ihitte, which has a population of about 23,000; Uboma, 24,000. Each of them has a Local Council and we would like these councils to be split into two in order that better progress may be made.

Another point is that in a District Council the Chairman and Vice Chairman, are expected to attend all meetings of the Committee and some of these chairmen have cars and travel a long distance from their own homes to the District Council. According to the Councils' Bye-laws the Chairman and the Vice Chairman are entitled to allowances just as other members. Other members of the Committee attend their committees once but the Chairman attends all committees and he has a car and comes from a long distance. What I am saying is that I would like the Minister to reconsider this point so that the Chairman and Vice Chairman who attend all committee meetings should have allowances. They are not asking for an allowance for their cars.

**The Chairman:** Are you not done yet? I consider that the Minister of Local Government should reply to points.

**The Minister of Local Government:** Several points have been raised by hon. Members. I shall do the best I can to reply to as many of them as possible and the ones left out could be safely referred to my Ministry as the doors of my Ministry are open to all hon. Members.

Hon. Abengowe did raise a number of points. First of all he spoke about the tendency of people to split their councils into several district councils and asked the Ministry to review its policy of granting to the people the permission to split their councils. If you refer to paragraph 81 of the Speech from the Throne you will find the present attitude of the Ministry. Mr Chairman, with your permission I quote:

“My Government believes that fragmentation in Local Governments has gone far enough and that the time has come when Councils must make an effort to work together for the common good rather than seek an elusive refuge in fragmentation. To that end my Government proposes in the coming year and in the years ahead to concentrate in improving the existing Local Government units and in making them work more efficiently.”

So I agree with the hon. Member that the time has come when we should check this growing tendency and we all do know why different units are crying for the splitting of their District Councils. That was due to the policy announced here last year about the award of scholarships on District Council basis. Some people thought that the only way of getting amenity was to split their Councils into small inconsequential district councils. Those who are thinking in these terms should now revise their thinking because the Government has already taken a decision that amenities will in future be distributed on population basis. I agree with the hon. Abengowe that some of our District Councils are not viable. There are very small ones among them. We are thinking of suggesting to some of these Councils to combine to form stronger units.

The second point raised by the hon. Member is the disparity that exists in the Mbanefo Award between the Government servants and Local Government servants. It will be appreciated, Mr Chairman, that Local Government Councils are autonomous bodies just as Voluntary Agencies and although we admit that they play a very important role in the administration of the Region we must not lose sight of the fact that they are autonomous bodies which have their own way of making revenue, employing their staff and supervising them and whatever Government does in the way of assistance to these bodies should be appreciated. It will also be noted that the Mbanefo Salary Commission did not recommend anything for Local Government employees. It is out of the generosity of the Eastern Regional Government that 12½ per cent was approved for the Local Government staff. Nothing prevents the members of any local government bodies who wish to give more awards to their employees from doing so. The hon. Member also complains about transport facilities to the chair-



[MR NWOGA]

men of councils. I think hon. Onwudiwe also belaboured himself very much about this question of chairmen's allowances. I would like hon. Members to realise that there is a provision for chairmen's allowances. Some of them receive a consolidated allowance of up to £300 while others receive £1 per meeting or 15s per meeting. These allowances given to council's chairmen are supposed to compensate them or to help them to pay their out-of-pocket expenses in attending various meetings. Everywhere I have visited I have received this complaint—why must the chairman that attends every meeting for more than thirty-six times not receive allowance for all meetings attended? The Chairman does not only receive this consolidated allowance of sometimes up to £300 but also receives £1 as a member attending meeting and according to the Local Government Regulations a councillor is supposed to receive not more than the allowance for thirty-six meetings in a year. In urban areas councillors can attend meetings as many as forty-eight times but it is considered that if a member attends meeting for thirty-six times in a year he has attended enough and his duty ought to have been accomplished within this time. Mr Abengowe also went on to say that there should be provision in the law making it possible for hon. Members of the House to attend meetings of councils as *ex-officio* members and he gave as his reason that this will help to eliminate corruption. I do not agree with him that this will help to eliminate corruption.

Hon. Morphy would like unmarried midwives together with married ones to be paid when on maternity leave. This cannot be done. What I would like the hon. Member to know is that it is not intended to encourage immorality in our establishments. An unmarried girl who is found to be pregnant is given three months maternity leave after which she is asked to resign. The married ones are given maternity leave at the end of which they are re-employed.

Hon. Akilo did complain that there are certain villages in his District that have been suffering disability because of poor representation. I would like him to know that the cutting of districts into wards is not done in my Ministry. If he feels that there is any area that is inadequately represented in the Council, he should write to the Ministry through the Local Government Commissioner.

He also wishes that employment and promotion of Local Government staff should be left exclusively to the Local Government Service Board because there are abuses. I certainly agree with hon. Members that there are abuses in the question of employment and in their recommendations for promotion. But these are exceptions rather than the rule. In any case he will appreciate the fact that recommendations pass through the Local Government Service Board and they look into the suitability of the staff recommended. But this is in connection with staff from Scale 3 upwards. Members of the staff such as daily labourers or staff on Scales 1 and 2 are employed by councils with the approval of the Local Government Commissioner to whom power to do that has been delegated.

The Member for Nsukka did complain about insufficient allowances paid to councillors. I have already replied to that. Then he spoke about local councillors too. Everywhere I go I have tried to reply to the question why it is not possible to pay local councillors at the moment. Hon. Chikwendu did recommend that we should do something for these councillors, not in way of allowances but in organisation. I must assure him that this is receiving very serious consideration in my Ministry. But it is not possible for Government to pay these Local Government Councillors. They are too many. If we are to pay them it means increasing the block grant. Another step is for councils to raise their rates and you know exactly what the repercussions will be.

**Mr Ekpe:** Standing Order 34 (1) (a). I rise to move that Chairman do report Progress. Many Members of the Opposition want to speak to this Head; but when the Minister has made his reply, they may not have the opportunity to speak again. So it is our suggestion that this Head be adjourned till tomorrow to afford Members an opportunity to speak on the Head.

**The Chairman:** That Standing Order says:

“Subject to the provisions of paragraph (18) of Standing Order 77 (Appropriation Bill) 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 a Committee of the Whole House "That the Chairman do report progress." If such motion is agreed to . . ."

Is it agreed to ?

**Hon. Members:** No.

**The Minister of Local Government:**

Hon. Ihekwoaba did bring to the notice of this hon. House the request of his people to split Orlu District Council. I have already given reasons, but I think it would be necessary to answer in more detail to the hon. Member's point. The Orlu District Council resolved in July, 1959 that at the end of its present term of office the Division should be divided into four District Councils. This resolution was made as a protest against Government policy in allocating amenities on a District Council basis. By this method Orlu with a very heavy population was always at a considerable disadvantage compared with other Divisions with less population and several District Councils. The matter was referred to Government and the following decision taken:

"...decided that the distribution of amenities should in future be made as far as practicable on a population basis so as to discourage a growing tendency towards fragmentation in the Local Government organisation."

It would appear that the foundation on which Orlu District Council was building its argument for the split has been demolished. Therefore I do not think they have a case.

Hon. Chikwendu complained about the restriction on transfer of a vote from one Head to another. There was a reason for that. Every concession that is given is subject to abuse, and we do not make regulations in the Ministry just for the purpose of making regulations. A majority of the Councils have been abusing that privilege of changing votes. After all, what is the need of having our Estimates here in the House—i.e., each Head or Item? A Council which finds a need for a change can ask for permission to do so, and it may be granted.

He complained about restriction limiting councils to carry out work of not more than £50. But he forgot another aspect of it. There is provision in the Law that a Council can carry out work, by direct labour, up to £500, or even more, with the approval of the Ministry, provided that the Ministry is satisfied that the Council has adequate executive capacity to carry out the work. We do not want the tax-payer's money to be frittered away by irresponsible contractors or Local Government Bodies.

He made a complaint about advice from Local Government Commissioners being at variance with what we say in the Ministry. No specific case has been referred to us. When we have specific cases we shall be prepared to look into them.

He also spoke about delays in answering to correspondence as well as in approving Supplementary Estimates. There may be exceptions. But it does not mean that the Ministry delays answering correspondence from every Council. We have 102 District Councils in the Region, and he cannot imagine the volume of correspondence coming to the Ministry. Officers of the Ministry are mortals. There may be over-sights at certain times. Certain correspondence might have been overlooked, but it is not the rule that the correspondence sent to my Ministry is deliberately delayed to punish the Council. What I said before still applies. If he feels strongly about anything, let him come to the Ministry and we will discuss it. I cannot think of any hon. Member that has been refused audience in the Ministry.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Head 439.—Grants to Local Government Bodies**

*Question proposed: That a sum not exceeding £1,377,000 for Head 439—Grants to Local Government Bodies—stand part of the Schedule.*

**The Chairman:** We have two names on the Amendment List.



**Mr D. E. Akilo** (Udi Division): I do not move the Amendment standing in my name on the Order Paper.

*Amendment by leave withdrawn.*

**Mr J. M. Ito** (Ikot Ekpene Division): I have got very little to say on this Head. I only want to state the fact that the machinery for granting loans to Local Government Bodies should be re-examined because the grants are not fairly distributed. For instance, the Council in my Division has been applying for grants but nothing has been heard. What I am trying to suggest is that a chart should be prepared by this Ministry in order to guide the Minister in the distribution of grants to Local Government Bodies. If that is not done I think some people will be taking greater share at the expense of others. That is my only observation.

**Mr A. J. Ekpe** (Opobo Division): I discover here that the grants proposed for the District Councils in Opobo Division are most inadequate. I would like to refer to the figure, before I come to the policy of these grants to Local Government Bodies. The Opobo town Urban District Council has a grant of £1,827 for its services during the year. Everyone knows that it is just impossible for an Urban District Council like Opobo town to be able to fulfil its services with such a grant, and, besides, there is no provision for the payment of allowances to the President of the Council. There has been a complaint that the Presidents of the District Councils in Opobo Division have not received their remunerations for some three years now and I would like the Minister of Local Government to give us the reasons why there has been no provision for the payment of remunerations to the Presidents.

Another point is how the funds of these District Councils are accounted for. It is very significant that the Secretary-Treasurers in the various District Councils have been muddling up the accounts of the Councils. I would like an explanation from the Minister as to what has happened to the accounts of

the Ibibio District Council and I would also like him to tell this House what is the latest Audit Report on the accounts of that Council. My information is that as a result of the mismanagement of the accounts of the District Councils not only in Opobo Division but also in various other Divisions there has been an agitation that people should not pay rates because they cannot keep on paying rates when the accounts of their District Councils are not properly handled. Who would be happy to keep on paying rates when it is known that the money he is paying is not being used for the purposes for which he pays it. I am expecting a statement from the Minister of Local Government on this matter because my people feel very strongly about it. Some time ago, I think some two years ago, Mr Hammond was asked to inquire into the position of the Egwanga township in connection with the Government's proposal in the White Paper to merge it with the Opobo Town Urban District Council. The Ibibio people who are the owners of Egwanga township have made the position clear that as the owners of the land they will never agree, except over their dead bodies, to have the Ibibio township merged with the Opobo town.

**The Minister of Local Government**  
Standing Order 30 (2):

"A Member must confine his observations to the subject under discussion and may not introduce matter irrelevant thereto".

I do not see now what the hon. Member is saying because we are talking of block grants.

**Mr Ekpe:** I am dealing with the policy for the administration of grants. The main purpose of block grants is for administration, and you cannot separate the question of administration from the grants, the strict supervision and inspection of the funds of the Council.

My argument is that the people of the Ibibio District Council will not allow the Egwanga township to be merged with the Opobo Town Urban District Council for purposes of administration. I can see in the grants proposed for the Ibibio District Council that there has been a slight increase of about £100.



My point is that the people of Opobo will never allow their town to be administered by the people who are strangers. We also want the Minister of Local Government to release the Hammond Inquiry Report. We want this Report published.

**The Chairman:** What has that got to do with the Ministry of Local Government?

**Mr Ekpe:** If I may explain to you, the Opobo town is on the other side of the river and for purposes of administration they want to bring Egwanga to join the two together. That is why there has been some increase in the Grant for Opobo town to cover this increased administrative responsibility. I hope, you see the point I am trying to bring. I think I have made my point. In connection with administrative and financial responsibilities, 11 Annang villages have been excised from Etiekpe Local Council, and if you look at the grant for Obowo you will find that there is a slight increase to meet up this extra responsibility, and I want to say that these 11 villages live on the Opobo land. Whoever made the mistake to excise them and add to Opobo shall face a greater difficulty in the initial administration of this place; because somebody cannot live on another's land and it is administered from another place. Nobody would like it. That is the second point I had wanted to make.

I would like to refer to the grant for Annang District Council. Annang District Council, is between Opobo Division and the Abak Division and it has been an area where there has been a great deal of discontent because of its sturdy neglect by this Government. The people were so dissatisfied with the treatment the Government has given to them that in revolt they have refused to join the Annangs of Abak. Even though the Minister of Internal Affairs and the Minister in charge of Establishments and Chieftaincies have done everything possible overtly and covertly, they still would not go back to Abak Division. I hope that the Ministry of Local Government will look into the demand of the village groups to be created into separate Local Councils. The whole idea of Local Councils is to inculcate in the people the feeling of oneness, the feeling of living together, and the whole of Opobo villages are prepared to work together, to have their own Local Council (and mark you, these

Local Councils have no financial responsibility). Their main duty is purely to stop nuisance, to bring about community development through love and unity of purpose. Our people are prepared to live together and discuss their common social problems.

**The Minister of Local Government:** Hon. Ito, I think, made this same statement last year about discrimination in granting of loan to Local Government Bodies. I have tried again and again to say that there is no discrimination whatsoever in the granting of loans to Local Government Bodies. As a matter of fact, we have passed a circular to all Local Government Bodies, advising them to apply, telling them how they should apply, and for what projects they should apply. We told them how much we have to give them as loans. So I ask him to tell his people to take the fullest advantage of the offer that we have made to them. Let them see Circular No. 10 of 1959. That will give them exactly the manner and method of applying for these loans. They might get it. They will not be discriminated against.

Hon. Ekpe is asking for increased block grants. We have a general formula for the making of block grants to Councils and it is based on the census for 1953. So that if he can prove that the people are not getting their share of the Regional block grants in accordance with their population, then he can come back and accuse us; but so far, in every Council there has been no discrimination whatsoever. They have been treated one just like the other—for Municipality 6s 6d per head of population; for Urban areas 4s 6d per head of population and for Rural areas 3s per head of population. That is exactly the formula.

*Question put and agreed to.*

#### Head 440.—Ministry of Town Planning

*Question proposed: That a sum not exceeding £227,140 for Head 440—Ministry of Town Planning—stand part of the Schedule.*

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** As hon. Members must have observed from the Estimates of Expenditure under Head 440—Ministry of Town Planning—this Ministry has now been arranged into five Divisions.



[MR MOLE]

During the 1959-60 financial year, accounting and administration were grouped under the Administration Division, over which the Accountant exercised control. It is now desirable to have a separate Accounts Division so that the Accountant may concentrate on the greatly increased accounting work of the Ministry and leave administration in the hands of an Assistant Secretary.

The staff position of the Ministry which I deplored in my speech during the last Budget Session of this House will now be greatly improved by the proposals under Head 440 of the 1960-61 Estimates. The post of Surveyor-General and Principal Land Officer have now been substantively filled. A number of Nigerian Officers undergoing training at the College of Technology and abroad will soon complete their studies and return to the Ministry.

In the Survey Division, during the year 1959-60, there was considerable increase over the previous year in the number of Cadastral Surveys carried out and the Licensed Surveyors plans examined. Seven Layouts were demarcated at Port Harcourt, Enugu and Abakaliki. Eight Government acquisitions were surveyed including the Independence Layout at Enugu and a large area of about 14 square miles at Port Harcourt. Ground control was established at Port Harcourt, Aba, Oron, Eket and Nnewi for new mapping and revision from air photographs.

Owing to lack of funds and equipment, it was not possible to undertake any real topographical mapping, but some minor triangulation was established to control the mapping of the Enugu escarpment from air photographs at a scale of 1/5000. Ground control was also established for the mapping of the Anambra-Do area in Onitsha at a scale of 1/25000.

Seven Town Plans were revised at Port Harcourt, Enugu and Calabar, and four new Enugu sheets of 200 feet to 1 inch were surveyed.

Levelling has been carried out at Trans-Amadi Industrial Layout and the beaconing of internal roads of the layout has begun. A level of net-work has also been established at Nsukka.

During 1960-61, it is hoped to produce 400 feet to 1 inch plans covering Enugu, Aba and Owerri with the assistance of the Federal Survey aircraft and the Directorate of Overseas Surveys, and to commence the much needed revision of the 1/100000 topographical sheets.

In the Land Division, one of the most important achievements during 1959-60 was the expansion of towns to accommodate the large urban population flowing in from the rural parts of the Region in response to the pull of employment and trade. The need for residential accommodation has in the past led to the building of rough habitations on the verges of Crown lands, but many of these have been demolished and replaced by planned development.

In Port Harcourt, the old town was extended by the creation of layouts in Orije, Oregbum, Wobo and Gborokiri, which provided approximately 800 residential plots, while the Government Reservation was also expanded by the provision of fifty plots in the Amadi and Recreation Ground Layouts.

In Enugu, the Uwani Southern Extension has been developed and a total of about 400 plots allocated. Plots in other pocket-layouts in Enugu have also been allocated.

By far the most outstanding achievement was the acquisition of about 2,400 acres of land in Port Harcourt for an industrial estate and about 2,200 acres in Enugu for the Independence Layout. I shall say something more about these layouts later. Government also acquired 10,000 acres of land at Nsukka for the University of Nigeria agricultural and industrial estates, and notices have also been given for acquisition of more land in Port Harcourt for the future expansion of Port Harcourt, and around the Niger Bridge-head in Onitsha for a layout which would form an attractive gate-way to this Region.

Future acquisition of land will depend upon the economic and social forces at work, and it is not safe now to indicate where and when more acquisitions will be made.

The activities of the Town Planning Division were most remarkable. Although it was not possible to find a suitable candidate to fill the



post of Principal Town Planning Officer, Government was able to engage the services of a competent Town Planning Adviser. The adviser arrived in Enugu in August, 1959 and by last December he had:

- (a) completed a statistical land-use survey of Port Harcourt as it exists today and produced a plan illustrating it;
- (b) produced a plan of future Port Harcourt, including some orientation in existing Port Harcourt and an indication of the pattern of future development, and submitted a report on the scheme;
- (c) produced a master-plan of the Trans-Amadi Industrial Layout and submitted a report on the scheme;
- (d) designed a layout of some 400 plots around the Shell Clinic area on the Aba-Port Harcourt Road as an extension to the congested Government Residential Area in Port Harcourt and submitted a report on the scheme.

With particular reference to the Trans-Amadi Layout, the master-plan submitted by the Adviser on Town Planning included about 280 acres of land designed as high-density, medium-density residential layouts to accommodate 20,000 people, many of whom would be working in the industries for which the main layout is intended. The estimated cost of developing these residential layouts is £190,000.

The remaining 1,720 acres of the industrial area was designed for industrial purposes to meet the increasing demand for sites by industrialists. It is hoped to develop this industrial layout in two stages at an estimated cost of £137,000 for the First Stage and £152,000 for the Second Stage.

The total cost of developing the whole of the Industrial Estate will be in the neighbourhood of £1 million. The Government has approved the scheme and has provided £½ million for work to be started. The access road to the Estate, for which the Government had previously provided £40,000, is now under construction. In addition, Government has provided £100,000 for services to the Industrial Estate. The internal roads of the Layout are being beaconed and surveyed before contractors

can start work. Already, two Industrial Companies have been allocated sites in the area.

The Adviser on Town Planning has also started work on the design of the Independence Layout and has submitted a preliminary report. This layout is being planned as a self-contained neighbourhood of Enugu. The main features of the Layout will be the multi-storey block of Government offices, the Legislative Houses, the Ministerial Quarters and the Premier's Lodge. Provision will also be made in other sectors for schools, places of worship, museum, sports, clinics, shops, civic centres and high-class, medium-class and low-class residences. A site has also been reserved there for a Hotel of international standard to be built by the Eastern Nigeria Construction Company at an estimated cost of £500,000. The sites for Ministers' quarters have already been located and building will start soon.

It is hoped to design a suitable layout for the land around the Niger Bridge-head in Onitsha which will serve as an attractive gateway to this Region.

There is a great increase in the number of Town Planning Authorities in the Region with corresponding increase in interest and enthusiasm shown by various localities. The main difficulty facing many of these authorities at present is lack of technical staff. The Government is doing everything it can to help by way of subventions. £20,000 was paid as subventions to Town Planning Authorities during the year.

I wish to express great appreciation for the excellent work which has been done by Mr Yochanan Elon, the Adviser on Town Planning. It was hoped that Mr Elon would fill substantively the post of Principal Town Planning Officer, but his University in Haifa could not spare him for permanent appointment in our Public Service. He has therefore been seconded to us for only one year and will be returning to his University next September or October. I am sure that hon. Members who have had the opportunity of examining his work in Port Harcourt will agree with me that he is a highly competent man with a very high sense of duty.

During the year the Accountant toured all the Provincial Offices checking all the registers



[MR EMOLE]

and reconciling them with the Headquarter's records. The control of rents on Government Quarters which was previously the responsibility of the Accountant-General, was transferred to this Ministry. In addition the Ministry acts as an agent for the Federal Land Office and is responsible for the payment of rents on behalf of the Federal Government to its lessors and collection of rents for that Government from its tenants.

The result was that the staff of the Ministry could not cope with the volume of work thrown upon it. Many tenants would not pay rent unless prosecuted despite demand notices and reminders. A total of £150,138 was collected up to December, 1959 as Crown Rents, Penalties, Temporary Occupation Licences and rent on Government Quarters.

It is hoped that with the increase of staff envisaged in the 1960-61 financial year more accurate and complete records will be maintained and more prosecutions instituted. And with the rapid development of Crown lands resulting in a large increase of leases, it is hoped to exceed the target of more than £200,000.

Finally, I wish to repeat what I had said in this House about a week ago regarding Government acquisition of land. The main purpose of Government acquisition of land is to guide the rapid development that is taking place in the Region, and the extent of acquisition in any one place is dictated by the tempo of development in that place. Haphazard development has always resulted in chaotic conditions detrimental to the healthy growth of any community, and the Government deems it its duty to prevent such chaos in the Region.

Acquisition of land by Government is, of course, never popular anywhere, but Government must discharge its duty in the general interest of the people of the Region. In doing this, careful consideration is always given to the needs of the local people whose land it is intended to acquire, so that no hardship is inflicted. This is a delicate and difficult task, and I wish to appeal to hon. Members again that when they make comments on this subject they should always do so with caution and restraint.

**Mr M. N. Onwuma** (Aba Division): The Minister of Town Planning need not be afraid of debating this Head because he has done remarkably well and we should say something in congratulating him. There is one important point which I would like the Minister of Town Planning to give very serious consideration. It is becoming more and more impossible for the people on income group of £400 - £500 or less to obtain plots in various townships in the Region. What is the Minister going to do to encourage people who cannot afford to pay £100 - £120 to obtain plots because all sorts of fees are aggregated, like planning fees, etc. It is going to happen in such a way that those who have these plots will continue to have more and those who have not will never have. I am pointing this out because it seems to me to be a top-sided development of society. Perhaps the Minister will do something to encourage these people.

Secondly a large number of people in Aba township are crying because of the frequency with which the Minister of Town Planning, through his officers re-enters plots even where people pay the land fees quite regularly. If a person pays his rent regularly there is no reasonable justification for the land to be re-entered because all sorts of things make it impossible for people to build their houses at the time they would like to do so.

I cannot be satisfied with the Minister's explanation sometime ago during this Session about the filling of the post of Principal Land Officer. It is not a technical post at all. If the person who has been holding that post for a year or eighteen months should not fill it we would like to know why. (*Some hon. Members: Is he one of the minority people?*). It is a fact that the former Principal Land Officer... (*Interruptions*).

**The Chairman:** Let us hear the hon. Member, please.

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Justice (Mr D. A. Nnaji):** Point of Order, Standing Order 24. This matter was dealt with during the current Session.

"When any motion or bill is under consideration in the House or a Committee thereof, an amendment may be proposed



to such motion or bill if it be relevant to the question or matter then under discussion.”

**The Minister of Town Planning:** This matter was raised by hon. Etuhube during the debate on the Speech from the Throne and I did reply.

**The Chairman:** Mr Onwuma you are now aware of that.

**Mr Onwuma:** Yes, but in this Head 440 you will see at sub-head 1, item 25, Lands Division, one Principal Land Officer, Group 7. I have not reopened the matter; if it is a question of reopening the matter, it is the Minister of Town Planning who reopened the matter. It is not myself. Civil Service is not a question of minority or majority; as a matter of fact, there are departments in this Region where the majority are victimised. What I am trying to say is that the present system is not a good system. I am always agitated when an African is appointed to a post and he cannot hold it, especially, a post like Principal Land Officer. It is very annoying and we would like to have an explanation whether it is impossible for an African to hold it. Are Africans incapable of holding posts of integrity? If it is so, I do not know . . . (*Interruptions*).

**The Chairman:** Order! Order!

**Mr Onwuma:** Mr Chairman, I am addressing you and I really want to get this information from the Minister.

Again, it is alleged that the Ministry of Town Planning is allowing a plot of land in Aba for the erection of a customary court. There should be no customary court in Aba . . . *Several hon. Members:* Why? No land will be allowed in Aba for customary court. The Minister of Town Planning should take the piece of land and give it to any person who wants to build. We emphasise that in Aba Township, we will not tolerate any customary court.

The Minister of Town Planning should investigate what is happening in the stores of the Survey Division because there was a time when we understood that in the stores of the Survey Division a large amount of survey stores were lost. It came to our

notice that in the Survey Division, stores worth a lot of money got lost. We would like to know whether that is true or not; if it is, what step or special effort has the Minister of Town Planning made to see that such does not recur, and has he appointed a new person to hold the post of storekeeper; if so, has he made adequate provision to see that the salary attached to the post of the storekeeper of the Survey Division is adequate in order to discourage anybody who would like to pilfer survey stores?

Finally, the Minister of Town Planning should see to the planning of new urban areas. In the planning of new urban areas, we would like him to step in and make sure that these new urban areas are not planned anyhow. He must come in and make sure that the regulations as stipulated by the survey and the Ministry as a whole, are strictly carried out.

*And it being 2.15 p.m. the Chairman interrupted the business and left the Chair to report Progress and ask leave to sit again.*

(Mr Speaker resume the Chair)

Committee report Progress: To sit again Tomorrow.

(2) The Native Courts (Interim Provisions) Bill, 1960—Second Reading.

*Further deferred until Tomorrow.*

(3) The High Court (Amendment) Bill, 1960—Second Reading.

*Further deferred until Tomorrow.*

(4) The Magistrates Courts (Amendment) Bill, 1960—Second Reading.

*Further deferred until Tomorrow.*

## ADJOURNMENT

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until 10 a.m. Tomorrow. In moving this, I beg leave to make two announcements: one is to say that after the adjournment this afternoon, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association will meet here. It is a



[MR EMOLE]

very brief meeting and only one item will be discussed. That is immediately after the adjournment now.

The second announcement is that the E.N.I.S. Camera-man is shooting a film entitled "Government at Work". The indoor one was shot yesterday, and the outdoor one will be shot tomorrow in front of the House of Assembly, depending on the weather, of course. Members are advised to be in whatever colourful dresses they have tomorrow. This will be done in stages: *Stage one:* The hon. Premier and his Cabinet. *Stage two:* The Leader of Opposition and Opposition Chief Whip.

*Stage three.*—Government Chief Whip, Deputy Speaker and hon. Members.

*Stage four.*—Premier and Leader of the Opposition.

*Stage five.*—Crowd, i.e., hon. Members chatting with each other.

*Stage six.*—Premier enters his car followed by his Ministers, then the Leader of the Opposition and other hon. Members.

Hon. Members are asked to co-operate with the Camera-man for the success of the film. If they do not co-operate, it will not be a success.

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

#### ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

##### Classification of Chiefs

**Mr I. I. Morphy (Ogoja Division):** The matter that I am going to raise is not a matter that we should have to play politics with. It is the question of Third-class and Fourth-class Chiefs in the Eastern Region. I want to refresh the memories of the Members of the House that in 1957, when we were in London, a decision was reached that an agreement should be reached when we come back from London in 1957, so that we will evolve a formula from which our Chiefs will be classified and recognised.

I want to refresh the memories of Members of the House by referring to the agreement reached in London, and with your permission, Sir, I beg to read the relevant portion in the White Paper: *House of Chiefs in the Eastern Region, Eastern Region Official Document No. 1 of 1959*, paragraph 4:

"During the Nigerian Constitutional Conference which was held in London in the months of May and June, 1957, the delegates from the Eastern Region advanced proposals for the creation of a second chamber of the Eastern Legislature and, with the agreement of the Conference, these proposals were first discussed between these delegates and United Kingdom representatives in a Committee which was presided over by the Right Honourable Lord Perth, Minister of State for Colonial Affairs. After discussion in Conference of the Committee's proposals it was agreed to recommend as follows:—

- (a) "There should be a second Legislative House in the Eastern Region named the Eastern House of Chiefs with a total membership of about sixty.
- (b) "Owing to the considerable doubt surrounding the existing chieftaincy titles and their complexity, it would be necessary, before this House was created, to evolve a formula for the classification of Chiefs in the Region which should be agreed so far as possible by all interested parties in the Region and accepted as satisfactory by the Governor."

When we came back from London we held a meeting in Enugu and a formula was reached. I beg to refer you again to this same White Paper Official Document No. 1 paragraph (5).

"At the Conference on Classification of Chiefs in the Eastern Region which was held in the Committee Room of the House of Assembly on 26th and 27th May, 1958, it was agreed that Chiefs in the Eastern Region should be classified First, Second, Third and Fourth-class; it was further agreed that all Village Heads should be graded Fourth-class Chiefs, Village Group Heads Third-class Chiefs, and Clan Heads Second-class Chiefs."



What I am trying to bring to the notice of this House is that an agreement has been reached that Chiefs should be classified as First, Second, Third and Fourth. What Government has done is to classify the First-class Chiefs and the Second-class Chiefs, what is left now is the Third and Fourth-class Chiefs. I would like to let Members know how important this question of chieftaincy is by referring them again to the report of the Resumed Conference, paragraph 61 and I beg to read:

“The 1957 Conference agreed to recommend (Paragraph 23 of Comnd. 207) that there should be a House of Chiefs in the Eastern Region, but that before constitutional provision for it was made, a satisfactory formula for the classification of Chiefs should be evolved and should be the subject of Regional legislation. The Conference took note that the Government of the Eastern Region and the opposition parties in the Region have evolved a formula for the classification of Chiefs and that the Governor has accepted this as satisfactory.”

**Mr Speaker:** I think we better try to come to an end so as to give the Minister the opportunity to reply if he wishes.

**Mr Morphy:** What I am saying is that right from 1957 London Conference we did not agree on a formula because of the complexity of chieftaincy in the Eastern Region. In 1957 we came back to Enugu and a conference was held and this conference agreed on a formula and this formula was accepted in London; that is why I am referring you to all these documents. This also goes to prove that agreement has been reached which must be carried out.

**Mr Speaker:** I am afraid you have to stop and the Minister has only five minutes to reply.

**Mr Morphy:** I am winding up. We want the Minister to make a statement on the Third and Fourth-class Chiefs. These Third and Fourth-class Chiefs exist and have not been classified. Yet Government wants to prevent people from being addressed “Chiefs”.

**The Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies) (Mr O. U. Affiah):** It is not at all difficult to appreciate the motive behind this motion. As a matter of fact for sometime now Mr Morphy has made himself to be known as a Chief. It is a pity that when selections of Second-class Chiefs were conducted a few months ago, Mr Morphy failed to emerge as one of the Chiefs in this Region. Why he moves this motion now is because yesterday, I told him that as far as this Government is concerned he is not a Chief, because he has not yet been recognised as a Chief. It is true that in this Region so many people have claimed to be Chiefs whereas in actual fact they are not, and the Government does not know whether Mr Morphy belongs to this class or not.

Turning to the second point, he seems to create the impression that this Government is not prepared to create other categories of Chiefs—Third and Fourth classes. I want to tell this House that as soon as we have been able to finish with all the Second-class chieftaincy disputes we will go straight to selecting other categories of Chiefs. I hope that when that time comes Mr Morphy will present himself to his people to be selected as either a Third or Fourth-class Chief. If he is so selected by his people this Government will recognise him as a Chief and it is then and not until then that he will be known as a Chief.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Adjourned, accordingly, at twenty-five minutes past two o'clock p.m.*



EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 13th April, 1960

The House met at Ten o'clock a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ORAL ANSWER TO QUESTION

Scientific Inventions

41. Mr E. U. Eronini asked the Premier, in view of the increasing progress in scientific inventions of destructive weapons and in view of unreliable peace talks among the Great Powers, will the Government advise the Federal Government to discontinue the concentration of major industrial installations in Lagos and Apapa, and henceforth make it its policy to locate such major installations in different parts of the Federation, and also encourage prospective entrepreneurs to do the same.

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier (Mr J. O. Umolu):** I am directed to answer as follows:

This Government is already encouraging prospective entrepreneurs to locate their industrial undertakings elsewhere than in Lagos and Apapa, but its reasons for doing so are because it wants such industries to be established in this Region, not because it is alarmed at the prospects of their destruction if the Lagos area is bombed. The decentralisation of industry is an excellent thing not only from the point of view of defence against enemy action, but also as a means of creating more even prospects of employment throughout the Federation. Unfortunately too great a decentralisation is prohibitively expensive for a country only just becoming industrialised, and it can be encouraged at this time in Nigeria only to a limited degree. I feel that at this time the Federal Government should be encouraged not to be so defeatist as to assume that with independence our cities will be destroyed by the weapons of war, but rather to follow a policy of non-alignment with any of the Great Powers in such of their disputes as may lead to war between them so that, if war does come, Nigeria will be the committed ally of none of them and so that no power

in possession of the destructive weapons to which the hon. Member refers will wish to use them against Nigeria.

NOTICE OF THE PRESENTATION OF  
A BILL

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice (Mr M. O. Ajegbo):** I beg to give notice of my intention to present to the House tomorrow a Bill entitled "The Loans Law, 1960".

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(1) The 1960-61 Eastern Region  
Appropriation Bill

*Considered in the Committee of Supply.*

*(Progress 12th April).*

(SEVENTH AND LAST ALLOTTED DAY)

(In the Committee)

Head 440.—Ministry of Town Planning

*Question again proposed: That a sum not exceeding £227,140 for Head 440—Ministry of Town Planning—stand part of the Schedule.*

**Mr V. K. Onyeri (Port Harcourt Division):** I think that the Minister of Town Planning deserves the praise of every hon. Member in this hon. House. In fact, as a Member representing part of the areas so far planned, it is with the unanimous opinion of my constituency that I have to praise the Minister in this hon. House.

In 1950 I advocated through a motion passed in the Port Harcourt Town Council for the extension of Port Harcourt to include up to mile 8 Diobu area. I had then the support of the Chamber of Commerce in Port Harcourt, but unfortunately the Government then did not approve same. Today I am very happy that the Minister and the Government of the day have taken the bold step in the right direction for the acquisition of land up to about mile 10 on the Port Harcourt-Aba road for administrative and commercial purposes.

There is one thing I have to suggest to the hon. Minister and that is the question of distributing plots in the areas known as the



Commercial Areas so acquired. It is our intention as the Government to encourage Industrialists in the Region especially in Port Harcourt area and in doing so, we have as a gesture of goodwill on the part of the Government not only giving them some capital, but at the same time giving them enough land to establish. Here is where I have to advise the Minister to be very careful in allocating residential plots to these firms that come into the Region. The Minister should give these Industrialists land for establishing an Industry but not for building living houses. I will just make one suggestion here. My own opinion is that these investors who are coming here (I do not want anybody to say I want to scare away investors for investors must come immediately after our Independence) must try to be reasonable and give the local people a breathing space to feel that they are coming to help us as well as their own industry. I am suggesting to the Minister that in the allocation of residential plots, great care must be taken that these plots are not given to them but to indigenous natives of this Region so that these natives when they build on the land, the firms will go to them and rent the houses. This is only one of the ways the people would participate in these industries indirectly.

There is another thing that I will like to bring to the notice of the Minister and that is that since we are developing the area known as Port Harcourt, it means that the Port Harcourt Town Council will be called upon to bear an extra financial burden. That is when we are developing an area and finish the planning, naturally, we must call upon the Port Harcourt Town Council to take over its maintenance. Here is where I call the attention of the Ministries of Local Government and Town Planning to see that the Council is given enough finances to maintain these areas as adequately as the Government would like.

Another thing that I want to bring to his notice, is the delay in the Ministry for the execution of leases. I hope that the Minister will have to check up and see that when leases are submitted that they are stamped and executed immediately. In my own opinion, I see no reason why a lease should stay for

more than six months before it is executed and given to the owner before he will know the type of building required of him in the lease to build. If plans and leases are delayed and no buildings put up in time, the Government and the Town Council lose revenue because they cannot collect rates.

Another thing is that I have to appeal to the Minister that in appointing the Members of this Town Planning Authority, people with the knowledge of the area, people who can argue most effectively with the authority are the right people to be appointed. I do not say that everybody must be a Ph.D. before he is appointed to the Authority but people who can offer suggestions about planning and needs of the area should be appointed members of the various Town Planning Authorities.

**Mr J. W. E. Anaba** (Obubra Division): I rise to make some points about this Ministry. It would be noted that whenever I spoke about amenities for my Division, I had always used Ugep town as a context of my argument.

Ugep is the largest town in the whole of Ogoja Province, I mean the old Ogoja Province—not the new political Division. I need not tell you much about Ugep but I would just say it has expanded twice since you knew and saw it last in those days when you were a Supervisor of Schools.

On the floor of this hon. House last year, I spoke with all the emphasis at my command imploring the Minister of Town Planning to visit and see Ugep for himself and to arrange re-planning. With the exception of Owerri, I would like to say that the population of Ugep is by far larger than that of any of the newly established urban towns. It has always been the policy of Government to help those who help themselves but instead of Government to apply this principle in the case of Ugep, it went all out to organise the people of other smaller urban areas who have no interest in living together to do so. I am really very anxious that this town should be planned. I would like the Minister to make provision in the Estimates for this purpose. When I contributed my quota of thanks to His Excellency's Speech from the Throne last year, I did say that I would not like Ugep to be a



[MR ANABA]

sham urban area but should be an urban area with a real urban status and with equal amenities as her counterparts in other Divisions. I would like the Minister to take a serious view of my humble submissions.

**Mr J. O. Ihekwoaba** (Orlu Division): I want to associate myself with those who started by praising this Ministry for its good work. I would like to point out to the Minister of Town Planning that the people of Orlu Division have praised him very much for his good work to the Division. But I am appealing to the Minister to see that the planning rate for the newly developed area in Orlu Government station, which was planned three years ago, is reduced.

Another point is that in my Division there are no amenities. There is no electric light, no water supply, nothing whatsoever is being provided for the people of the area. It costs one from £170 to £200 to get a plot and the people feel this is too exorbitant. They pray that the Minister should allow them to pay one-quarter of this and include the rest in the yearly rent to be completed in 10 years time. If you go to this area which was newly mapped out for building about two or three years ago, there is no building whatsoever because of the high planning rate. In such an area where building experiments are carried out the fee should be as low as possible, in order to give people the chance to develop the area. Another trouble with the Ministry of Town Planning is that building plans are being delayed in the planning office. The Minister would do well to expedite building plans in future.

**Mr S. N. Alo** (Abakaliki Division): I just want to appeal to the Minister of Town Planning on one or two points. It is the fact that Abakaliki is fast becoming a slum area in that the town is overcrowded with buildings and the Government has got a vast area of unoccupied land. On behalf of my people I am strongly requesting the Minister to speed up planning and allocation of plots on the new layout. About two years ago applications were invited by the Ministry—I am sure they received about 200 applications—but because plans were not ready these applications were abandoned. I therefore ask the Minister to set up a Department of Planning Authority in

Abakaliki and we shall be grateful to have one of his clerks posted to Abakaliki to handle this job.

I would also appeal to the Minister not to grant the Abakaliki Urban District Council's application for a temporary occupation of the trenching ground. This trenching ground has become a nuisance to the public because it is situated at the centre of the town and there is a lot of dwelling houses near it. There is a vast area of land there and many people have applied for a temporary lease to farm on this area but the Agricultural Department would not attend to the people's applications in time. We want the Minister to attend to these applications because this will bring more revenue to the Government, possibly £1,000 a year.

I want to bring it to the notice of the Minister that the people of Ishielu District Council have proposed to bring a new layout nearer the Cement Industry. I would ask the Minister to assist them to get the job done.

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** I must start by thanking the hon. Members who praised my Ministry. In reply to the points raised I would like to start with the hon. Member for Aba Division, Mr Onwuma. The first point is about some stores which were stolen in the Survey Department. Some time last year, I think it was in June, in a rainy night, thieves broke into the Survey garage store and removed two tyres and two wheels. The matter was reported to the Ministry of Finance and the Police according to Financial Instructions. The Police investigated the matter but could not find the culprits. A Board of Inquiry was then set up by the Ministry of Finance which recommended that no one could directly be held responsible but that in future the night-watchmen should be provided rain coats so that they could move out in the rain at night if necessary. This has been done.

There are many applications coming from the people of Aba township for the allocation of plots. Everybody knows that when a plot is allocated to an individual, one of the conditions is that he must build on the plot within a space of 2 years. If at the end of this period no building is put up the Minister is entitled to



order that the plot be re-entered by Government. In some cases people have been asking for extensions and I have had to grant these according to circumstances. When an extension is granted and at the end of that period you are still not able to build, the plot is then taken away from you and given to a more suitable man who has the means to build. It is not advisable to keep plots in an undeveloped condition for many years.

On the question of building Customary Courts I wish to say that this is not a matter for my Ministry. If it is decided to build a Customary Court in any part of the Region then it will be my business to give the people concerned the place on which to build. The hon. Member also wants the Ministry of Town Planning to plan new urban areas. I think that is being done. That is the reason why we engage the services of a Town Planning Adviser.

Another hon. Member, Mr Onyeri, suggested that only commercial and industrial plots should be allocated to foreigners who are coming to the Region to develop industries and that no residential plots should be given to them. If the hon. Member has observed what is being done in my Ministry it is not even necessary to raise this point. What we are doing now is to see that commercial and industrial sites are given for the economic development of the Region. I can only say that I have taken note of what the hon. Member said. The hon. Member also said that the Port Harcourt Municipal Council should be given some more money to maintain the numerous roads which are being developed in its own area. I agree with the hon. Member and I think that this is a matter for my hon. Friend, the Minister of Local Government. They are entitled to collect more rates for developing these roads. •

Another point the hon. Member raised is the delay in approving the building plans. I want to say that before building plans are finally approved they must go through three processes. First the Land Officer on the spot must approve the building plan concerned, and make sure that the plan conforms with the layout as published in the *Gazette*. Then, secondly, the plan goes to the Health Authorities to ensure that it conforms with the Health

Regulations. It also goes to the Town Council concerned to ensure that the plan conforms with the building bye-laws. I have, however, decided to go into the whole matter to see if any method can be adopted whereby things can be done quicker. I would like to say that I do not control the Health Authorities or the Town Councils and that there is little I can do to avoid the delay if it arises in these two places. As regards leases, whenever there is a delay, that delay may be due to the individual concerned or it may be caused by the time used for stamping. The individual concerned must make all the necessary payments before any work can be started on the lease. As regards the stamping, I would like to state that the office where leases are stamped is at Port Harcourt and not in Enugu. The result is that if plots are allocated at, say, Abakaliki, the leases must go back to Port Harcourt for stamping. I have contacted the Ministry of Finance to see whether the office should not be removed to Enugu. Perhaps when the office is transferred to Enugu matters will be considerably improved.

Another hon. Member wants me to visit Ugep. I am going to visit Ugep and I am sure that when I visit it and discuss with the Local Councils in Ugep it will be possible for us to arrive at a formula whereby a Town Planning Authority can be set up. There is no reason why a Town Planning Authority should not be set up there. But I would like to emphasise that every thing depends on the people themselves. It is for them to set the ball rolling.

Hon. Ihekwoaba is asking that rates should be reduced. This is precisely indirectly what an hon. Member for Aba said. The hon. Member said that we should reduce rates so that people within the £400 income group can get plots and develop them. This is a matter in which the Government has no choice. The policy is that when an area is developed the people who benefit from this development, that is, the plot holders, must contribute to the cost of it. Government does not subsidise this kind of scheme.

That brings me now to the second point raised by hon. Ihekwoaba about Orlu layout. Government does not subsidise layouts. Government would like to know how far the



[MR EMOLE]

local people will be able to defray the cost of development. Orlu layout is the only one in the whole Region which Government is subsidising, but unfortunately people are unable to take plots there because they find it too costly. People who are asking that layouts should be started in their places must know that they will have to defray the cost.

Hon. Alo complained about the delay in Abakaliki layout. I agree with him that there has been a delay, but that is due to various factors which I cannot go into now. But arrangement is being made now to start the work. The P.W.D. is working on it, and as soon as the papers are ready in the Ministry of Works, work will start and the area will be ready for use.

*Question put and agreed to.*

#### Head 441.—Ministry of Works

*Question proposed: That a sum not exceeding £1,443,370 for Head 441—Ministry of Works—stand part of the Schedule.*

**The Minister of Works (Mr P. O. Ururuka):** In introducing this Head of Expenditure, I really wish to speak briefly on the achievements and future plans and projects of the Ministry. But before doing this I would like to divide the short speech into five heads—first the preparatory work done by my engineers before any actual construction is started. Then I will talk about what we have done on the roads and bridges, and then urban water supply and rural water supply, then building generally, and then lastly the Inland Waterways, all of which are within my portfolio.

As I said in the debate on the Speech from the Throne, the staff of my Ministry have concentrated on surveys, planning and preparation of drawings, bills of quantities and contract documents. In this connection it is pertinent to point out that not so many years ago the P.W.D. did nearly all construction by direct labour. This is not now Government policy, but contrary to popular belief, a contract project demands more Engineer's time than one undertaken by direct labour. The contractor is influenced by profit motive, and it is therefore most important that he is given

very detailed drawings and specifications and the project is very strictly supervised. In a direct labour project it can be left to the discretion of the Engineer, but with a contractor this would be disastrous. For example, if a contractor only put down .4 of a gallon of tar per square yard and only put a base course of 8" instead of 9", he would make an extra unwarranted profit of £40,000 on a 100-mile road contract. If of course my Ministry did not specify what was required, and left to the contractor to decide, one of two things would likely happen. Either the contractor would charge Government for a lot of unnecessary work, or he would skim the work with resulting failures. In neither case would Government get value for money.

I have been diverted from my purpose, but I think it is important that the facts are realised by hon. Members and the public. I was saying we have concentrated on preliminary work during the last year, but much has also been achieved on the ground.

Turning now to roads, my Ministry has taken over the maintenance of all tarred roads and all Trunk Roads B and now maintains 1,468 miles of Trunk Roads B, 509 miles of which are tarred, and on an agency basis we maintained 688 miles of Federal Trunk Roads, 495 of which are tarred. £196,000 has been allocated for Trunk Roads B maintenance (sub-head 27, page E 115), and when it is realised that £136,000 per annum is really required for maintaining sealed roads and £163,000 per annum for earth roads, it will be seen that not only has my Ministry not enough funds for rehabilitating the Trunk Roads B previously maintained by Local Government Councils, but also that there can be no question of adding to this mileage at present.

As regards road and bridge construction carried out in 1959-60, the Ekwulobia-Umunze and the Awka-Orlu-Owerri roads, costing £237,000, have been completed, as have some smaller direct labour projects such as the Ogwe Railway Station road, the Imo River Railway Station road, the roads leading to Independence Layout and Queen's School and the Nigerian College in Enugu, and roads leading to the Hospitals at Abakaliki and Opobo. Work continues on the Ikom Obudu road, which



has now reached mile 36. Good progress is also reported on the Ahoada Mbiama road, which is costing Government over £300,000. Twenty miles of the Calabar-Arochuku road and eleven miles of the Ikot Ekpene-Itu road have also been finished and work proceeds on other projects shown at pages E 126 and E 139 of the Estimates.

As I stated in the Speech from the Throne, progress on some of these projects has been disappointing and some contractors have as a result been expelled.

Turning now to new work, hon. Members will see that the allocation for road and bridge construction has been increased from £2.4 million to £3.5 million, and that all the projects listed in the original Development Programme and mentioned by me in my last year's Budget Speech, have now been given a sub-head of expenditure and a token vote. This means that as surveys are completed on each project, the estimated cost will be inserted so that work can proceed. On the other hand, I do not imply that all these projects can be carried out for £3.5 million. Far from it, but it does mean that as more funds become available, more of these roads will be constructed and in the meantime a programme of surveying can proceed. The present position is as follows:—

**New Projects for which contracts have been signed and work started. (This will cost Government about a little over £½ million)**

- Trans-Amadi Road and Bridges.
- Asa-Azumini Bridge.
- Chokocho Bridge, Ahoada Division.
- Abbaomege-Itigidi Road and Bridges.
- Ozubulu-Atani Road, Embankment and Bridges.
- Ukpo-Aguleri Road and Bridges.
- O'Connor Street extension and Bridge at Enugu.

**Projects presently out to tender and for which contracts will be awarded in a matter of weeks**

- Umuahia-Alayi-Ohafia Junction, Road and Bridges.

- Aba-Umuaro-Olokoru Court (Umuahia) Road and Bridges.
- Iyahe-Ogoja Road and Bridges.
- Enugu-Ozala-Udi Bridges, first phase.
- Umuna-Owerri, Road and Bridges.
- Asa-Azumini Road.

In respect of the Umuahia-Ohafia Junction road, this contract will be extended to Arochuku.

**Projects for which surveys have been completed and for which contract documents and drawings are presently being prepared**

- Degema Hulk-Ahoada-Oguta.
- Obubra-Ediba.
- Owerri-Emekuku-Umuahia.
- Obolo-Eha Amufu-Nkalagu.
- Amike-Effium.
- Eket-Oron.
- Abak-Uyo.
- Mbiama Bridge.
- Umuyota-Ofugiri-Nkanta.

**Projects for which surveys have been ordered and have in many cases started, include the following:—**

- Ihube-Amuda (Mballa)-Achi-Umuabi.
- Orlu-Amaigbo-Amaraka.
- Ikom-Isabang-Obubra.
- Ozala-Agbani-Okposi-Afikpo.
- Iwollo-Owa-Ebenebe-Awka.
- Aba-Obohia.
- Nnobi-Adazi.
- Okpuala-Nguru-Umuezeala.

Others in the Estimates will be undertaken as the above are surveyed.

The contractors Government is going to employ on these projects are those, both indigenous and expatriate, who have shown that they can carry out work efficiently and quickly. It is anticipated that the rate of capital expenditure on roads in 1960-61 will be nearly £1½ million, and it is confidently



[MR URURUKA]

expected that this rate of expenditure will be maintained in 1961-62 and in the next Development Programme, with a resulting road network which will meet the requirements of the Eastern Region's expanding economy.

### Urban Water Supplies

Capital expenditure during 1959-60 on Urban Water Supplies is estimated to be over £300,000 and considerable improvements have been effected, especially at Aba, which now has a daily consumption of 800,000 gallons per day, and Calabar with a daily consumption of 600,000 gallons per day. Work has also continued on the new Port Harcourt supply, and the work here is proceeding according to schedule and by August 1960, 2½ million gallons per day will be available. At Umuahia production is presently at 70,000 gallons per day, but new reservoirs and new mains have now been laid and double this quantity of water will be available within the next month. At Abakaliki, production has doubled as such times as the Electricity Corporation have been able to provide a regular supply of electricity, but the reconditioned generators they have installed there from Onitsha and Warri have given a lot of trouble, which has resulted in the town being not only without electricity but without water on several occasions during the last month. As regards Enugu, our plans to extend the Iva Valley intake were fraught with delays occasioned by the objections of the Ngwo people to the acquisition of the Ochei sacred stream.

These difficulties have now been overcome and work on the extension is proceeding apace, and already there has been an improvement in the supply. A further improvement which should increase the Enugu supply to 1½ million gallons a day should be realised this month. However, such is the growth of Enugu and Onitsha that further schemes must be embarked upon to make further substantial increases in the water supplies for these towns and hon. Members will see that new sub-heads of expenditure have been provided in the 1960-61 Estimates for this purpose.

Turning now to new urban water supplies, schemes costing £400,000 have been prepared for the six towns of Uyo, Ikot Ekpene, Owerri, Okrika, Orlu and Nnewi. Work at the first

three mentioned places has already started, and when all these schemes are commissioned it is expected that 10 million gallons of water will be supplied daily to over half a million persons.

The following statistics may be of interest in respect of progress on urban water supplies.

Sixty miles of pipe have been laid in 1959-60. Ten reservoirs with a capacity of 13 million gallons have been constructed, 4.4 million gallons of water have been provided on an average daily. As a result of what I have just stated, there should be considerable increases in all these figures next year.

*Rural Water Supplies.* 1959-60 has been a successful year and an estimated sum of £600,000 has been spent on new construction. 528 wells and spring improvements were constructed, 72 miles of pipe have been laid for the pumped and piped schemes and a reservoir storage of 800,000 gallons has now been largely constructed and in the coming year these pumped and piped schemes will come progressively into commission.

Rural water supplies are a very much desired amenity, especially pumped and piped schemes, and it is proposed to embark upon a new programme as soon as the existing one is completed. For this reason the Secretary of State has been approached with a view to providing technical assistance after 1st April, 1961, so that the experienced staff which has been recruited with such difficulty will not be disbanded. Government has also provided a further £100,000 for new construction, which is in the nature of a token figure until the next Development Programme is drawn up (Sub-head 102, page E 130 refers).

The Ministry is now responsible for the maintenance of all rural water supplies in the Region, and during the past year equipment has been ordered, staff recruited and trained, and in the coming year it should therefore be possible to make real progress in reconditioning wells and springs which have been neglected for so long by Local Government Councils. In this connection, although my Ministry wrote to all Councils asking for lists of all wells in their area, few have replied and hon. Members will be doing a service to their constituencies if they ensure that up-to-date lists of all well points are forwarded without further delay to my Ministry.



I want to say a few words in connection with the Inland Waterways. We have provided four 40 feet launches which were constructed at the Opobo boat-yard. One is being used by my Ministry in connection with rural water supply work, and the other three have been handed over to the Bonny, Nembe, and Southern Ijaw District Councils, whilst a 36 feet launch has been handed over to Northern Ijaw, and two more are on the stocks for Okrika and Ogbia. The total cost of these launches is £21,200. A steel lighter costing £1,500 has also been received and is used for moving construction materials in the creeks. A £20,000 touring launch and a £5,000 mobile workshop for Cross River ferries are both under construction.

As hon. Members will know, most Eastern Regional waterways are a Federal responsibility and there have been a series of meetings with the Federal Ministry of Transport concerning the reconstruction of piers, especially those at Brass, Opobo and Yenagoa—surveys have been carried out and I am now awaiting to hear how much the Federal Government has allocated this Financial Year for their construction. It must be remembered that waterways are in many cases a cheaper means of transportation than roads, and are a natural asset of the Region which must be utilised more fully than at present, and for this reason the Eastern Region Government co-operated with the Federal Ministry of Transport in providing launches so that N.E.D.E.C.O. could make a full survey of the Eastern Niger Delta areas, similar to the one they have made on the Niger and Benue Rivers. I am confident that in this report they will recommend much greater utilisation of the Eastern Delta waterways, which are also becoming of increasing importance due to the oil exploration activities in these areas.

Finally, may I seize this opportunity of thanking and encouraging the members of my staff here in the Headquarters and also in the Provinces for working so hard in order to wipe out the prejudices inherited from the old P.W.D., then unfortunately known as the Public Waste Department. Although members of the public may not always be satisfied for they may have their complaints now and then, it is surely true that when one looks round the

Region and sees all the work that has been done or is being done, whether it be on roads and bridges, urban and rural water supplies, or on different types of buildings, one cannot fail to include the Ministry of Works and the staff of the Ministry when crediting the Government for the amenities that have been and are being provided. Special mention should be made of my Permanent Secretary who spends two thirds of his time in the office in order to meet the needs of the Government and public.

**Mr Morphy:** We come here every year to talk about Ogoja Road. We would like the Minister to try and think seriously about Ogoja Road. That road needs care. No doubt, all of them have been to Ogoja and they know how much people suffer, and they fear going to Ogoja again because of that bad road. I think it is high time the Minister thought seriously about the road; and not only providing roads for fellow Ministers. The roads that are given priority are not as important as the Ogoja road. So we want him to look into it.

Turning to Water Supplies, the Minister told us that he has taken over from the Councils water supply in the rural areas.

We would like him to consider the following Clans of Ogoja. Ukele North and South areas need water, Akajuk, Yachesabu, Yalla-Okpoma (Okuku) Afenke, Bekwarre, Nkim Nkum, Ndube. It is only during the rainy season that they have water and during the dry season they do not have any water to drink. Nobody will doubt the importance of water to life. Hon. Agba will give some of the other important points.

**Mr J. O. Okeh (Ahoada Division):** I have to thank Government for implementing their policies and effecting good construction. I thank also the Minister of Works for the active implementation of the various schemes now in progress. I also wish to convey the gratitude of Ahoada Division for the Rural Water Scheme there. About Ahoada-Yenagoa road, I would like Government to extend the road from Ibima to Yenagoa so that Ahoada may be connected with Brass Division to renew their age long trade relation and so, give the people of Brass Division a good avenue



[MR OKEH]

to Port Harcourt. For instance, the Commissioner for Yenagoa comes very late every time because of lack of direct route.

We are happy that Government have taken over Degema-Hulk, Abua-Ahoda-Omoku-Oguta road and Etche-Aba road, but we would appeal to Government to speed up work there because this road is permanently closed to traffic in the rainy season. We expect that the work of widening the road will be properly done preparatory to tarring. We are also very happy that the story of Chokocho bridge is fast coming to an end.

The people of Ikwerre District Council area have a difficulty about a bridge at Rumuji. Rumuji bridge has been surveyed and the cost is estimated at £26,000 but this amount is too much for a District Council to undertake and the District Council is appealing to the Government for help by Grant from the Ministry.

**Mr J. A. Etuhube** (Ikot Ekpene Division): I have only one or two points to make. Last year, my division was placed first on the priority list for the Urban Water Scheme and a sum of £10,000 was voted for that. Towards the close of the year, little or nothing was done with the result that over 300,000 people of my division are still suffering to-day.

**The Chairman:** I will like very short speeches.

**Mr Etuhube:** At any moment I stand up here to speak I am asked to make a very short speech. I may add that I have always been making very short speeches. I want to make it clear that my people are still suffering and there is no point in placing us on the top of the priority list every year whilst nothing is done in the long run. The Minister is not happy about that and what I am now saying is also the opinion of the Commissioner there as well as the views of the many thousands of people of my division at home. I am now asking the Minister to speed up work. I know that about £45,000 has been allotted for this work but the point is the actual implementation of the work so that the thousands of people of my division will be relieved of their suffering.

The next point is about electricity. We know that Government cannot claim that it

does not know the use electricity in large towns all over the world today. I think my division is big enough to have electricity and all we are asking is that Government should do something to subsidise the Electricity Corporation of Nigeria to install electricity in my division. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

**Mr E. U. Eronini** (Owerri Division): I see that the Ministry of Works is the Agent of the Federal Government as far as roads are concerned in the Eastern Region. In the Eastern Region, we have less of Federal roads as compared with the West and the Northern Regions and the Minister of Works should do all in his power to see that more of the roads in our own Region are under the Federal Government's control.

I am glad to note from him that the 2½ million gallons of water construction for Port Harcourt is approaching completion but the Minister should still realise that Port Harcourt has by far extended its boundary and has now taken over Mile 2 Diobu, which is more populated than Port Harcourt itself and this means that as this present construction for water is completed a new one should be taken up again to meet the need of the increasing population.

The second point is about Awka-Orlu-Owerri road. He said that work has been completed but I am sorry to say that the work done is poor and it seems to me that there was no P.W.D. supervision when that work was carried on. The work ought to be taken up again and given out on contract under proper supervision. The only work worth mentioning is the bridge across the Njaba River. Trees cut were not removed sufficiently from the road and the stumps were left in the holes and most of the holes were not filled. They are now dangerous; in fact, you cannot manoeuvre your car without colliding with another car or your car getting into a big hole. I must say that the work is very poor. When rain falls, the road is covered with mud and sand with the result that no car can easily move over there. Of all the bridges, only one is wide enough, the others are very narrow.

There is no water in the rural areas of Mbaitoli. I take this opportunity to remind the Minister of the need of Mbieri town which is one of the most populous areas in Mbaitoli and with over thirty thousand inhabitants.



There is no water point and no bore-hole. Last time the Minister of Commerce who at one time was the Minister of Works promised that he was going to see that we got a bore-hole through the E.R.D.C. who built their oil mill at the headquarters of Mbaitoli. It was not only this Minister who has made this promise, there was also another strong promise to them by the E.R.D.C. that it was going to build a bore-hole which would supply water to the oil mill and also to the headquarters of Mbaitoli District. That was an agreement made in 1948. If the E.R.D.C. is now not prepared to give them water, the Government should undertake to supply water to the people. Another thing which I want to say is that the people of Mbieri contributed money for water supply and I will ask the Minister of Local Government to investigate into that matter and see where the money is, so that the needs of the people for water supply would be met.

**Mr S. O. Achara** (Okigwi Division): I would like to refer the hon. Minister of Works to the policy which the Western Government adopted in the matter of the installation of electricity supply in that Region. As his Ministry is the agent of the Federal Government in matters affecting electricity supply, he should approach the Government to set aside a sum of about £1 million with which the Electricity Corporation should undertake the supply of electricity to our many major towns in this Region. The Western Region Government made a grant of £1.3 million free of interest to the Electricity Corporation of Nigeria to carry out the task of electricity supply to the people of Western Nigeria. If we are going to wait for the Electricity Corporation to undertake the supply of electricity to the major towns in this Region we are going to do nothing in the near future. I should like the Minister to take into very serious consideration this important point. We cannot suppress the importance of electricity in a growing Region such as our own.

The other point which I want to make is in respect of rural water supply in the Region. I would want the Minister to place before this House a White Paper showing the details of water supply in the various Divisions. Yesterday, I was happy to hear him reply to the question which a Member for Aba Division

raised in which he said that as many as 336 rural water supply points are located in Aba rural area, that is excluding the township of Aba. I would want him, on the same basis to indicate, Division by Division, how many rural water supply points he intends to supply all these Divisions.

I think I should congratulate him for his ability in reading through several pages on roads and bridges, but what matters to us as the representatives of the people is not his ability to read this list every year but the ability of his Ministry to undertake these works and bring them into operation. I should be prepared to congratulate him as soon as these works get started and are finished. In undertaking to tar Regional Trunk B roads, I would like the Ministry to take into consideration the need for widening these roads. To follow the old narrow roads used when Administrative Officers used hammocks in travelling through the Region is not very good. Some of these roads are 5 feet wide. I will cite the instance of the Enugu-Awgu road which is very narrow and all the corners are death traps. I want the Ministry to emulate the Federal Government in making its roads wide enough for heavy traffic. Finally, I would want him to take particular note on the following roads in Okigwi Division and to include them in his long list which he reads every year:

Umuchieze-Uturu Road.  
 Mile 4 Okigwi/Afikpo-Ovim Ahaba.  
 Okigwi/Umulolo-Ndizuogu.  
 Okigwi-Umunze.  
 Ngodo-Ubahu-Umuawa Road.  
 Amuda-Umuaku-Umunze Road.  
 Amuda-Lekwensi Roads.

These are very important roads through which palm produce and palm kernels are transported through the Division. I would like the Minister to take particular note of, and undertake work on, these roads.

**Mr S. E. K. Iwueke** (Okigwi Division): I must first of all thank the Minister of Works for the much progress that has been made in this Ministry and for taking over all the Trunk "B" roads from the Local Government Councils as from last year. I am also to thank him for the efforts made by his Ministry to take over the



[MR IWUEKE]

rural water supply in the rural areas. I have to make a request and that is an exceptional one. Much as I would not like the Minister to undertake all the roads that have satisfied the need as laid down in the White Paper No. 2 of 1959, there is one particular road in my own Division which we have on several occasions raised in this House. That is Okigwi-Ezinagu-Uboma-Ahiara-Owerri Road. The problem of this road was raised in this House as far back as 1954. I do not want to waste the time of the House, Mr Chairman, but if you can permit me I would read the relevant reply made by the then Minister of Works.

**The Chairman:** I think I can do without that.

**Mr Iwueke:** Okay. I am appealing to the Minister; he himself is an eye-witness of the importance of this road. It is too much for a Local Government Council to undertake. So that if he can make the effort to undertake the road and include it we shall be very grateful.

I do not agree with the last speaker, my Friend from Okigwi Division, when he said that the Minister was reading all the lists of roads. Much as I disagree with him on that point, I think from the Estimates, one needs to be very grateful to the Government for undertaking to include as many as twenty-six or twenty-seven roads and bridges within this year's roads and bridges construction scheme. But I think, in taking over some of these roads which the Minister said that are under survey, priority should be given to some roads, in view of their importance. To cite an instance, we have Owerri-Emekuku-Umuahia Road. This is an all-important road; it connects Owerri, Calabar and even Onitsha and if this road is tarred it will save a great deal of difficulty. We have also Orlu-Amaigbo-Amaraka Road; this is an all-important road also. As it is, this Orlu-Amaigbo-Amaraka Road will connect Umuna-Owerri Road with Onitsha-Owerri Road, so that one travelling from Owerri via Amigbo to Onitsha will go on a tarred road throughout. We have also Nkwerre-Umuduru Road. This should also receive priority attention. And then we have Uruala-Okwelle Road. This road cuts short the distance from Awka to Calabar, via Orlu, so that when you are travelling from Awka to the

Rivers area you have a short cut. I have to remind the Minister also of the importance of this road: Mgbidi to Oguta which connects the tarred road from Oguta to Ezianya.

About rural water supply, in the Estimates I notice that a sum of £1,900 is allocated for the urban water supply as against £11,750. By this, I think there is too much allocated for the urban water supply as against rural water scheme.

**Mr H. U. E. Edelduok** (Eket Division): I have just only a point to raise. In last year's Estimates it could be found at page E 116 that provision was made for the sum of £75,000 for tarring of Eket-Oron Road, but, this year, not much is made available; only £100. I am surprised and I would like the Minister of Works to give me his reason why last year £75,000 was made available for tarring of that road, but this year, only a token figure of £100 is put down here in the Estimates. In last year's Estimates, Eket-Oron Road was 22 in the order of priority but this year, it has dropped to 34 in the list of priority. I want the Minister to give the reason for doing so. I think that may be calculated to amount to injustice or victimisation. If the Minister has any reason, I hope he will give it to me to tell my people.

The next point I want to raise . . . (*An hon. Member: He said he had only one point*) . . . is the question of water supply in my Division. There is no water supply there. I hope the Minister will see to it that in Eket Division water supply is made available to the people.

**Dr W. N. Onubogu** (Onitsha Division): Thank you, Mr Chairman, because, I am afraid that if we do not hear the voice of Onitsha Division, then things are incomplete.

We have nothing but praise for the Minister of Works because for many years this question of vigorous road policy meant nothing to Onitsha; we were never benefitted until this year, and because of that I have to congratulate him for remembering Onitsha Division. Many years ago, whenever we mentioned Onitsha hon. Members would say: "Everything goes to Onitsha." The people of Ozubulu and Atani are very grateful because this road is a very important road. Another one is the one from Ukpo to Aguleri; it is a trade route and a very important Firm of Contractors is now



busy on it. But there is another road which if the Minister—I hope he is paying attention—there is another road which will complete the circle and make the work complete. This road starts from mile 7 on Onitsha—Awka road to meet this road that is being widened and tarred at Nteje. This road passes through Ogbunike from Ogidi and meets this present road at Nteje. I hope the Minister will bear it in mind. It would not cost much; it is a very short road and without it the other one cannot function efficiently.

Another point is that my people of Ogidi would like to know what the position of their water supply is at the moment. It is a pity that the contract was awarded to a fraud but it was not my people's fault. It was awarded with the help of the Ministry of Works; because of that what is to be done with this fraud? Our people would like to know what the position is at the moment and when water will flow in the taps in Ogidi. It is a very important question. When the Minister winds up, I would like him to answer this question. This scheme has been on since 1954 or 1955 and others who started very lately will soon have water. What is the position of Ogidi Water Supply?

I hope that the Minister of Works is still in charge or still represents the Federal Government in matters of telephone communication. If he is, I will like to draw his serious attention to the fact that telephone bills in this Region are becoming unbearable. I do not know how these things are recorded. I mentioned this last year in this House. It is a pity I have not got a bill here but I can give an example. They just mention one day, say, 2nd of February or something and will say 10s 6d. Where and which number you phoned, they will not mention. This is very dangerous indeed. I do not know who is recording it. They can just put £1 10s and you pay. Where did you phone; what number did you phone? These things are not recorded. Why should details not be shown so that the people will know that they are honest men? At times you get your telephone bill and you get so annoyed. The Minister of Works should please make a sort of inquiry to see how these things are done. I am told that as soon as automatic telephone is installed things will be corrected, but I do not believe it will be corrected. I want the Minister of Works to look into this.

It is a very serious thing which is in the minds of everybody.

**Mr M. U. Etuk** (Uyo Division): I would very much like to join others in praising the Minister of Works, but I cannot do so because those who praised him have got three, four or five roads or water pipes installed in their Divisions. But the one oldest road in my Province for which I have been pleading for three and half years now has not been done. How can I praise him? The saying goes: "Ask, it shall be given to you, knock and it will be opened onto you, seek and ye shall find." I have gone through all these processes but nothing has been done. The Minister has even given me a promise; the Premier has even given me a promise. (*The Premier: Myself?*) Your predecessor. The road I am referring to is one of the oldest which was first started in 1899 and that is Uyo—Etinan—Ekparakwa Road where you have Etinan—Ekpene Ukpa Bridge. Last year the promise was made that that road would be taken over by the Regional Government. I am now appealing to the Minister once more. We have been requesting, if he does not do anything else he should please tar this road for us. Everybody knows that road is very important. So long as we cannot get it as our ordinary right I am begging and appealing that something should be done to tar this road.

The second point, Mr Chairman, is that in 1957 when the Rural Water Supply Scheme was made certain areas in Uyo Province were said to have enough streams, so they need not bother themselves about wells, and the promise was that there would be a provision for them to improve these streams which in many cases are not clean enough. I would like the Minister to look into it. If the Minister wants me to write and mention the names I will do so, so that something is done to improve them.

**Mr I. U. Imeh** (Abak Division): I would like to bring to the notice of the Minister right away that he is not taking into consideration the reasons why we speak on the issue of giving priority to tarring roads. I think one of the most important reasons should be roads where produce are conveyed from their buying station to the Bulk Oil Plants. When I say this I have in mind the road leading from Abak



[MR IMEH]

to Uyo. A few months ago that road was too bad and it was given out on contract, but up till today it has not been done. If you look through the Estimates page E 126, you will see that only £100 has been earmarked for that road. The contract for that road was out and it was so announced and gazetted. I would like to have the explanation from the hon. Minister of Works why that contract has been withdrawn.

One other point is about Ikot Okoro Bridge. Ikot Okoro Bridge was in progress but automatically the work was stopped. All the workers have gone away. I am quite sure the Minister will not be able to give the reason why the workers there were withdrawn. The bridge there is to link up the Division which the Qua-Iboe River divides into two. At Ikot Okoro we have the Joint Hospital. How can people convey patients down there? It is always very difficult to go round 30 or 40 miles with patients. I will like the Minister to give that contract priority. I will like to bring to the notice of the Minister the poor work done by the contractor on the Umuahia-Ikot Ekpen-Abak Road. Of all the roads tarred in this Division that is the poorest. The most hopeless work ever done! I will ask the Minister not to give out any further contract to that very contractor or firm that did it. Who did the Oji River-Awgu Road, and the Okigwi-Umuahia Road? They are the most decent and up-to-date roads.

Last point, Sir, I will like the Minister to have these roads on the priority list. The road leading from Abak to Ekparakwa because of the produce conveyed between Abak-Ekparakwa. Abak to Etinan Road should be given priority. It is one of the oldest roads in the Calabar Province, and I am to call upon him to take note of Abak-Ikot Okoro Road as one of the roads to be tarred. As soon as the Minister comes to our aid we shall be very grateful.

**Mr A. G. Umoh** (Enyong Division): I just want to use this opportunity to thank the Minister of Works for the progress that is being made in the tarring of the Ikot Ekpen-Itu Road. There is only one thing I will like to remark about that road and that is that the contractor whoever he is, is not strengthening the road as it should be. There are many dangerous corners along the Itu road and I believe much danger would be averted

if the contractor were asked to strengthen the road wherever possible. The speed with which this work is being done is not fast enough, and I hope the Minister will be good enough to see that the work is expedited.

**Itu-Arochuku Road:** the road that has up to 18 bridges, it is a very old road and very much used. The Cross River happens to be overflowing so that this road becomes useless for a good part of the rainy season.

I am calling on the Minister that he should give his kind consideration to taking over the repairs of that road. It is also gratifying to hear that the Minister has taken over all Trunk "B" Roads. I wanted to speak during the debate on the Ministry of Local Government and to point out that there are certain bridges and roads which are not being well maintained by Local Government Bodies simply because they have not the funds. In my own area, there are at least five bridges; one in Ikot Offiong, one in Iyere, one in Nsai and one at Esuk Ntan. These bridges are too wide to be the responsibility of Local Government bodies. I do not know if the Minister himself would in the near future think of taking over what might be called Trunk "C" Roads. In the event of his not willing to undertake that, I would appeal to him that something should be done to help to bridge these places.

I would like to associate myself with hon. Imeh with regard to the award of contracts to indigenous contractors. Certainly the move to give contracts to natives of this country is just in keeping with our Nigerianisation Policy. I have always felt that wherever a competent Nigerian was found, he should be given senior service but we cannot give senior service to everybody simply because he is a Nigerian. If there are competent contractors to undertake the work of our roads and bridges, they should get it but it does appear to me that we are sacrificing efficiency on the altar of Nigerianisation and the example of the road quoted here by hon. Imeh is patent to show how badly the money of the Region can be spent by attempting to please relatives who are contractors. (*Interruptions*). If I may continue, I would like you to take note that every time I get up to speak, people interrupt unduly. I cannot speak when they are speaking. I want to claim your protection to carry on my speech.



**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Justice (Mr D. A. Nnaji):** Point of Order. Standing Order 30 (5).

**The Chairman:** He will soon finish. But Mr Umoh, I would like you to make the right use of words.

**Mr Umoh:** Well, I was speaking on the universal brotherhood of the country. I mean if we are giving contracts to Nigerians in preference to Europeans, we are trying to help our brothers unless you feel I am making the wrong use of words. I am not in any way suggesting that the Minister of Works has given contracts to his brothers.

Now, I would like to remind the Minister about the acute shortage of water in the rural areas. In my Division, there were several water points which the Minister promised to repair and a number of wells which were to be sunk. I have taken note that for the past two years, the rural water supply has extended to other areas and not to Enyong Division. I recently had to go to the District Officer to find out why this was so. The reason that was offered to me may not be acceptable in this House but I would like to ask the Minister that something should be done to expedite rural water supply in Enyong Division. I am making my last point by asking the Minister to see to it that the water supply at Okopedi is expedited. Last year in this House it was agreed that the Government was going to undertake pipe borne water system at Okopedi and the people were expecting that by now they would be enjoying good water. So far, the people are drinking from the Cross River that passes to Itu. I think that in this water scheme Okopedi should be given priority as the people themselves are suffering very much.

**Mr J. M. Ito (Ikot Ekpene Division):** I do not intend to say much as most of the items under this Head have been covered by the Minister. There are few points I wish to raise and one of them is the conspicuous absence of bridges in my own Division, in the Estimates—for instance, bridges like Nto Edino connecting us with Aba and Mbiase; a road which is just next to the Otoro District Council. A very important one is that of Ekpenyong Atai, a road linking Abak and other places up

to Aba. No mention is being made in the Estimates about any bridges in our area. It is a great disappointment. After all, if all the other places could be enumerated, I see no reason why bridges in our side should not be taken into consideration.

I also want to say something about the Sub-Treasury at Ikot Ekpene and the Internal Revenue Office. The Sub-Treasury and the Internal Revenue need expansion.

In the case of rural water supply, I made mention of this in this House that the people are drowning and the best way is to order for the erection of water pipes or to have the wells covered in order to avoid people falling into them.

Another important point is the case of a contract awarded to a young man by name Silas for the digging of wells in my Division. This man has finished with the contract job given to him and wants more contracts but it appears the Ministry concerned does not pay any further attention to give this man another chance whilst the demand for wells is increasingly being made.

*Sitting suspended at 12.00 noon.*

*Sitting resumed 12.30 p.m.*

**Mr N. Nweze (Abakaliki Division):** I want to thank the Minister of Works for mentioning so many roads that have been taken over by his Ministry. I also want to thank him for having mentioned the Amike-Efom Road. Much has been said on this particular road since 1955 and up till now nothing tangible has been done about it. I want to say that this road is being regarded as the most important road not only in Abakaliki but also in the whole Region. I am going to say why it is so. In the first place this road connects about five towns in Abakaliki. If the Minister of Works were to come to this road in the morning he would see a lot of lorries coming from Onitsha, Aba and Port Harcourt to the market. Before somebody can say that a road is important the road must be regularly used by lorries and it must serve as a connecting link with important towns in the Region. If you go to witness these lorries going to Abakaliki, you will see the large number of passengers from all parts of the Region conveyed by these lorries. These passengers go there to buy yams, rice, and so forth. I would like to



[MR NWEZE]

remark that we started to talk about this road from the time the late Mbonu Ojike was the Minister of Works. He visited this road to see for himself and before he left he met the Abakaliki County Council, as it was then called, and promised that the road must be tarred. This road is so important that the community concerned has extended it up to Iboko. It is not only for the benefit of Abakaliki: the people of the Eastern Region are also concerned. Nobody will deny the fact that Abakaliki is the most important food producing centre in this Region and that without food none of us here can be in this House.

I am appealing to the Minister of Works to fulfil the long standing obligation which the Government has undertaken in connection with the Amike-Iboko Road. If the Minister is of the opinion that action on this road is to be delayed, then I shall be glad if the money to be spent on the tarring of this road will be handed over to the Ishielu District Council to get the road tarred. Another road I would like to suggest in Abakaliki Division is the Izamgbo-Afikpo Road. It links Izamgbo and Afikpo. If one wants to get to Afikpo that is the shortest route. I would like the Minister of Works to see that these roads are tarred as the other roads.

**Mr J. A. Agba** (Ogoja Division): I just want to say a few words. I want to call the attention of the Minister to the fact that there is one important road connecting this Region with the Western Region and also with the Northern Region. A branch of it starts from Onitsha to Calabar. That section has been tarred. Another branch runs from Onitsha to Enugu and then to Abakaliki. The tarring is stopped at Abakaliki and this portion of the road is supposed to connect the Eastern Region with the Cameroons. I would like the Minister to take a drive to Abakaliki and to travel 2 miles from Abakaliki to see the number of lorries that are stuck on the ground.

The next point I would like to raise is that the Ministry of Works is the only Ministry that is keeping Ogoja backward because if the roads had been tarred Ogoja would have easy connection with other parts of the Region.

There is a very important road running from Bansara to Okundi and on to Ogoja. This is also a very important road to the Government itself and the people of the area, because there

we have the Pioneer Oil Mill. It is really a pity that no attention is given to that road, much less to talk of one from Ogoja to Obudu, which is also a very important road. Somebody has just said that the importance of the roads should be taken into consideration when considering the roads to be tarred. The Minister has given us a list of the roads to be attended to, but I would ask him to take these roads according to their importance to the Region, not necessarily to the people of the area. Although I will not dare to say that Ogoja is the most important food producing area in the whole Region, but if I made that statement I would not be very wrong. Somebody mentioned rice, and it is on account of this rice that you have the Rice Mill at Abakaliki. But this rice is imported from Ogoja, Obudu, and the Tiv country. So, I am repeating that at the end of the Session, I will buy petrol for the Minister to drive with me to Abakaliki to see what is happening on the road to lorries and cars.

**Rev. M. D. Opara** (Owerri Division): It will be very surprising and also shocking that the Owerri-Emekuku-Umuahia Road is not included in the list of roads to be tarred. It is just put under token votes. This Owerri-Umuahia Road joins two Provinces and it is such a very important road that the Minister himself should have not been told that it should receive priority.

**The Minister of Works:** On point of explanation. I think the hon. Member was not present when I was making my speech. If he was present then he was not listening. If he can read through the *Hansard* he will see that I mentioned Owerri-Emekuku-Umuahia Road as one for which a contract is being prepared and soon will be given out.

**Rev. Opara:** Thank you very much.

I would like to bring to the notice of the Minister that we have a road from Mgbidi to Oguta and from Owerri there is another road to Oguta, and that there is a lake at Oguta on which a ferry boat should be put to facilitate travelling through that lake. Some of the Members have travelled to that place and will agree that a pontoon or ferry boat is necessary on that lake.

I wish to mention again that the Udo bridge which I have often mentioned in this House



should be put on the list of bridges to be constructed.

The last but not the least is the team that is digging well in Owerri Division. Before the end of the financial year, I was made to understand that a sum of £8,000 remained out of the sum earmarked for Water Supply Scheme in Owerri Division. But the Inspector of Works has informed us that he has been stopped from working because of lack of money, and in fact some members of the team have been laid off. I want the Minister to investigate why the work has stopped and what has happened to the £8,000.

**Mr M. A. Idoko** (Nsukka Division): I only want to make two observations on the Ministry of Works, and I will start from rural water supply. In this connection, I want to stress the point that a good many people, especially in our area, have not got enough water supply. This water supply is a matter of very great necessity because in my Division there are certain sections of people who travel over twenty miles in order to get water. I am appealing to the Minister of Works that it is worth-while for him to pay a visit to this Division and see for himself what I am speaking about.

Another point is the maintenance of the bore-hole in our area. This is being worked by some kind of engine, and sometimes in the middle of the dry season every year the engine gets spoilt. For example, this year the three engines in our Division got spoilt at the same time. So I am appealing to the Minister to provide spare engines for use when the spoilt ones are being repaired.

Another point is the road maintenance. When the Minister was delivering his speech on roads, I noted with great surprise that the road from Nsukka to Ogrugu for which a promise had been made for its tarring, is not even on the list of those to be surveyed, not to talk of tarring. There is another from Nsukka to Etteh which is not on the list of roads either to be surveyed or to be tarred.

I want to point out that we have a number of bridges in Nsukka Division which require the attention of the Government. They are the

Adada Bridge, the Eshi Bridge and the Eboyi Bridge. I shall be grateful to the Minister of Works if attention is given to these important bridges.

**Mr A. J. Ekpe** (Opobo Division): I want to ask the Minister of Works under what conditions an area can qualify for electricity supply from the E.C.N. I have been wondering why Egwanga township which is one of the oldest towns in the Region should not be supplied with electricity. I also want the Minister to take up the matter of telephone installation in the Division. It is remarkable that in the whole of Opobo Division we have no telephone in so many houses other than the Post Office and the commercial houses. It is the desire of the people of my Division that telephone service should be extended to Ikot Akan, Esene, Four Groups and Annang District Council areas. (*An hon. Member: It is a Federal responsibility*). Yes this Ministry is acting as an agent of the Federal Government and that is why I am asking the Minister to take the matter up with the Federal Government. It is significant that in the whole of Opobo Division, apart from Aba-Opobo Road, there is no other road maintained by the Regional Government as a Trunk B road. I have a list of roads which I want to suggest that the Minister should take over from the Local Government bodies, because these roads link up divisional headquarters. There is a road from Ete Native Court, through Ikot Akpaden, to Eket. That is the shortest road that links the Opobo Divisional headquarters with Eket Division. There is another road, too, which connects Ikot Akan, through Annang District Council to Ikot Ibritam and it shortens the journey from Aba to Opobo by 15 miles. The Government has already spent £5,000 by way of grants towards the building of a bridge at Ikot Esang and I want to say "thank you" to the Minister of Works and to the Community Development Division for the building of that bridge. I would like the Regional Government to take over these roads.

As far as the Inland Waterways Service is concerned, I think the Opobo Division is very much neglected. I would ask the Minister to see that the creeks and inland waterways in the area are surveyed with a view to cleaning up the debris in the creeks



[MR EKPE]

in order to allow canoes and outboard engines to go through them. I did mention during the last meeting of the House that the people of Opobo are lacking in the supply of water. They just have no water to drink and so I would like the Minister to see that new wells are dug in the villages in the area.

**Mr G. I. Oko, M.B.E.** (Awgu Division): My point is very, very simple but very important. I beg to appeal to the hon. Minister of Works to see to the important bridges in Awgu Division, the most important of which is Ike bridge on the Awgu-Ndeaboh Road. I must point out that the Minister gave his consideration to this bridge some years ago and a contractor was assigned to construct the bridge. But my disappointment is that up to this moment the contractor has not done anything to justify the need for the construction of the bridge. My appeal is that if the present contractor is unable to do the work some other contractor able to do the work quickly should be employed and the present one dismissed. The importance of this road is so much that the Oil Mill, the Rice Mill and the evacuation of seed crops in the Ndeaboh area have been stopped since two years ago.

Now, the second point is about Rural Water Supply. I pointed out a few days ago the need for the supply of water to the following institutions in Awgu Division:—

1. Awgu Secondary School at Lengwe.
2. The Girls Teacher Training College at Mgbowo.
3. The Awgu District Council Teacher Training College at Ihe.
4. The Achi District Council Secondary School at Achi.
5. The Elementary Training College at Agbogugu.
6. The Awgu Joint Hospital at Awgu.

These institutions have not got enough water, more particularly those in the area where one has to travel about five to six miles in order to get a bucket of water. I therefore appeal to the hon. Minister of Works to see to it that these institutions get their share of water supply.

**Mr J. O. Ihekwoaba** (Orlu Division): I am happy you have called on me to point out

the importance of three roads the Minister has mentioned this morning, viz.—

1. The Orlu Amigbo—Amaraka Road.
2. The Nkwerre—Umuduru Road.
3. The Uruala—Okwele Road.

I want to state further that these roads are carrying heavy weight of lorries transporting palm produce in that Division. We have palm Oil Mills in that Division, plus five palm produce grading stations. There is no Division in this our Region that is having five grading stations besides Orlu. All the palm produce and everything else are being transported through these roads and it is unfortunate that this year the Orlu Amigbo—Amaraka Road has nothing in the Estimates besides £100. Last year, there was £7,000 earmarked for that road and the original estimate was for £35,000. This year the £7,000 has disappeared entirely. I would like the Minister to note that the £7,000 which was earmarked for this road has this year entirely disappeared. If I go back to tell my people this, I wonder how I will be treated. I am asking the Minister to consider this matter, although he has mentioned that survey is being carried out on this road, but how can survey be carried out with only £100? After the survey what amount do we have for the road? £100 instead of the £35,000 earmarked for that road!

Another point that I want to talk about is the need for water supply in Orlu Division. I mentioned last time that in Orlu Government Station, £50,000 was earmarked for the building of a Water Reservoir and we requested that £100,000 should be earmarked for extending it up to a six or seven miles radius in order to serve some of the institutions in that area. Unfortunately this year we only see £40,000. So I am appealing to the hon. Minister to see to these things.

Another thing is the extension of Orlu Post Office. We know that it is a Federal subject, but as an agent of Federal Government we want the extension of Orlu Post Office, and the installation of high frequency telephone operating equipment there in order to serve the areas that are nearby. Another point is that over 300 applications have been lying with the Government for installations of telephone services in Orlu Division. We want action to be taken by the Government on them.



**Mr D. E. Akilo** (Udi Division): I want to give my congratulations to the Ministry of Works. I congratulate this Ministry for the good work being done throughout the Region and especially in my Division. As far as we are concerned, we are unlike other Divisions who fold their arms and ask everything from the Government. We have been trained to use our hands, and what the people are now saying is simply to ask the Government to come to their rescue and maintain some of their roads. I should ask the Minister to tar some of the roads. For example, from Eke to Egede is a very very important road, where the people go to buy foodstuffs. The next one is the extension of Ozala-Udi Road to Ezeagu Headquarters, which is another important road, and then when fund is available, we have another very important road—that from our Headquarters Ezeagu to Ugwuoba passing through Umumba and Obunofia. The road saves us about seventeen miles. If a person is travelling from Afo Ugwu, right down to Udi, then go down to Oji, then to Ugwuoba, it is seventeen miles but only four miles from Afo Ugwu to the same Ugwuoba. This road has been constructed by community development effort. That is so far about roads.

Coming to water supply, the Ministry has worked a miracle at Iwollo. This site has been the object of anxiety and curiosity to so many people coming to see what the Ministry has done. And for that purpose the people are prepared now to contribute money to help the Government to provide water in the areas where the people have not believed that water could be got from the soil. In fact, we are prepared to answer the Government quota when it is our own turn. At present the work is coming to completion and as soon as it is completed I will ask the Minister to turn his attention and send these workmen to Owa Imezi and Umana that have already contributed their own quota of the money.

**Mr S. N. Aio** (Abakaliki Division): I just want to speak to the Minister of Works about the acute shortage of water in my Division, Abakaliki. The Minister has already admitted that two old machines from Onitsha and Warri were sent to Abakaliki for water works. These two machines are worn out machines and are of no use to the people of Abakaliki or E.C.N. Now, I want the Minister to tell us what is his

next move as to whether E.C.N. will undertake to extend power from Oji which has now got up to Nkalagu Cement Industry, to Abakaliki station. If that is done, the question of those machines stored at Abakaliki will be entirely out of the way. I would also like the Minister to give us an interim measure of providing the people of Abakaliki with water bore holes. A geologist has told us that there is sufficient water for the people of Abakaliki station if bore holes are provided. Now other members have said that in their own Divisions they have got three or more water bore holes but my people in Abakaliki have not got water bore holes in any of the District Councils. The people of Abakaliki have started village integration scheme and it is only by way of Government coming to their aid to drill water bore holes that they can make this scheme a success. And I want to suggest to the Minister that there are areas where the people have agreed to live together, and if this is accepted, then the Minister should make it possible to drill water bore holes at places like Umuogbaru, Onyikwa Nkaliki in Nkaleke Clan; the County Secondary School at Isieke; the Teachers' Training College at Ezzamgbo; Ndiofia in Inyimagu; Agbaja Native Court; Catholic Teachers' College, Igbagu; and at Onueke Ezza.

I was surprised to hear somebody from the Rivers area asking for water. With due respect, I have to mention the Member from Opobo. (*Mr Ekpe: It is salt water!*). Last week there was a serious shortage of water at Abakaliki. I tried to mention that then, but it appears that the Minister has now realised the shortage of water, and he should do something to help the people of Abakaliki Division.

**Mr U. Enyi** (Afikpo Division): Whilst speaking on the debate on the Speech from the Throne, I mentioned Abakaliki-Afikpo Road, and the Minister did admit that this road was very badly tarred by Messrs Costain and Co. This road needs re-tarring. It is made worse than before it was tarred; and I want the Minister to make a statement on the next move he wants to take on this road. I also mentioned Osso-Bende Division Road which was closed to traffic since the last rainy season. I do not think I have heard mention of it made by the Minister when he was introducing his Ministry's Estimates.

Also, in my constituency, we lack water. The whole of last financial year, nothing was



[MR ENYI]

done to provide us with water. I would also like to know whether the Minister intends to do anything this financial year.

**Mr Onyeri:** I have to thank the Government for the provision of roughly £400,000 for provision of about 2½ million gallons of water for Port Harcourt which we are getting in about August, but I would tell the Minister that the work, if continued at the present rate, will take the Minister up to about December before it will be finished. In Port Harcourt, there are many houses being built and the people are being told that they are to discontinue with the old system of conservancy and change to water system. All these houses—some about three, four or five storey buildings—have no water and one can imagine how an individual will just spend his earnings to put up a building of about £20,000 to £50,000 and find no water for use in the house.

There is another place to which I will call his attention and that is Awka Division. Unfortunately, the Members for Awka Division are all incapacitated to speak in this House because they are Ministers. I am from Awka Division and I know what they are suffering. Awka Division as seen in page P.E. 140—a total sum of roughly £9,000 is provided for water supply. There are two areas—Aguata area in Njikoka Division and Aguata area in Aguata District Council. What I am saying is that the Minister, in co-operation with the District Officer, will have to certify that these people need nothing now than water. One bottle of water in this area costs 3d and if you give them water they will all appreciate it more than anything you will like to give them.

**The Minister of Works:** May I take this opportunity to thank the hon. Members who have shown special interest in this Ministry. I have also to thank them in return for thanking the Ministry for the efforts it has put in trying to execute some of those projects. I know, if I may summarise the speeches of all hon. Members, they are all very anxious to hear what we will say about their anxiety about seeing roads in their different areas constructed.

Secondly, those ones whose roads have not been included in the list will be included. I

have also noticed the desire that everyone really wants water supply to be extended to his own area especially in the areas where you have dearth of water supply. I have taken note of these and I can assure all that my Ministry is doing everything possible to attend to their needs as they arise.

If I may go one after the other, as much as I can, answering to the questions of some hon. Members, I may start with hon. Morphy. He wanted to know why the road from Abakaliki to Ogoja has not been started and why nothing has been done about it. I should really like some hon. Members to listen very carefully to what the Ministers in each particular Ministry is saying. When I was making my speech, I said that this road from Iyahe to Ogoja is simply awaiting the award of contract. It would soon be given out on contract. If Government has taken survey of the roads and prepared contract documents and sent out the tenders and is now ready for award of contract, I think Government has done something by way of special interest to see that it wants the road to be constructed from Abakaliki to Ogoja.

He also wanted to let us have some idea about his area being infested with guinea-worms. I need not say much on this. What I want to say, and this may have to include the answer I will give to other Members who have said something in connection with their rural water supply, is that my Ministry is preparing a comprehensive scheme which will contain every nook and corner of the Region. We are surveying the Region to find out where there is need for water. We know quite well that some places want water supply and we know too that during the time that the first scheme was prepared only very few places were included, but now we are going to make a comprehensive scheme whereby we will include all the areas which will need water. So, in this case, I have to ask Members to be patient till such a time we prepare this scheme, because in it we are not going to forget any place and we shall even call on Members to give the names of their places.

Hon. Okeh thanked the Minister, and here, may I also thank him for thanking the Minister and the Ministry for their efforts. He wanted to know about Mbiama-Yenagoa Road. He also wanted to know when this road will be



constructed. May I say that at the moment the road from Ahoada to Mbiama is nearly finished and if he listened to my speech he would have heard that we have made provision for the construction of a very big bridge over Uiasi River in Mbiama. When this bridge is constructed, it will be easy to construct a road from Mbiama to Yenagoa. At the moment it will be absolutely impossible or rather, should I say, it will be very, very difficult, to do any work from Mbiama because there is no means of conveying materials for work; so I have taken the first step to see that the bridge is constructed before the next step.

Hon. Etuhube from Ikot Ekpene—I do not now whether he is here—said that his people are suffering at Ikot Ekpene for lack of water and he did *not* mention that water works have been started in Ikot Ekpene. When I was making my speech, I said that there are about six towns and of these six towns, three have had their work started and Ikot Ekpene is one of the three. I thought he should have mentioned this in his speech. If we have started work there, it really stands to reason that we have started to help.

He also wants electricity to be installed in his area. Government is looking into this. He knows quite well that some areas need electricity but we are trying to look into that.

Hon. Eronini said that the Eastern Region has less Federal roads than the Northern and the Western Regions. I think he is right. (*Mr Eronini: I am always right!*) I want to tell him that we in the Ministry or in the Government have noted that and we are doing everything possible to bring this before the Federal Government to see that we have sufficient Federal roads as required in this Region. In addition to what we have been doing, we shall also extend the desire of this House to the Federal Government, letting them know that we want some of the Federal roads in this area.

He also said something about water in Mbieri. I think what I have answered in the first case will stand for the whole water supply.

Hon. Achara wants our roads to be widened. I think everybody appreciates the need for

widening roads, and very strongly constructed roads for that matter. He wants our roads to be of the same size as those of the Federal Government. We would like to do this but I would like the hon. Member to realise that one must cut ones coat according to ones size. We are constructing roads according to our needs. We are trying to raise the quality of our roads by giving the roads the right size. In the case of the Federal Government Trunk roads I would like to inform the hon. Member that they cost between £15,000 to £20,000 per mile. On our own roads we are doing something which is within our means. I am sure that in time to come we may even make our roads wider than those of the Federal Government.

I have noted what the hon. S. E. K. Iwueke said about Okigwi. I have noted that he wants priority to be given to roads. My Ministry takes into consideration the importance of each road before choosing any roads which would be constructed. We shall, however, take note of this.

Hon. Edelduok said we voted £75,000 for the Eket-Oron Road but that he has now seen only £100. I do not know from where he got this figure. I said that this was merely a token amount and that the £75,000 which was in the Estimates that year was not even for that work. I said in my speech that when survey has been done, the right amount of money which the road will cost will be inserted in the Estimates. There is no need to speak on this now.

Hon. Onubogu wants to know when the supply of water to Ogidi will start. I want to say that work is going on at the place and electricity is being installed and as soon as the work is completed—that is work on electricity—certainly water will be supplied to the people.

Dr Onubogu was also talking on the high bills which he pays in connection with telephone. As he very well knows, this is the responsibility of the Federal Government. What I can say in this connection is that I will refer the matter to the right quarters. (*An hon. Member: Do so for the Region*). My advice to the hon. Member in this matter is that in future he should keep a record of every telephone call which he makes so as to be able to



[MR URURUKA]

assess any over-charge. (*Dr Onubogu: I do this*). Hon. Imeh wants roads to be given priority. He said that he wanted to know why the road from Abak to Uyo has not been started. We wanted to start this road and had given it out on contract but the price was rather too high and for this reason Government did not want to spend too much money on such a short road. We want to give out the work on modern specifications and that is why the contract, that is the former contract, was cancelled. With regard to Ikot Okoro bridge, the work is being done already. It is true that sometime the Engineer might not be found at the place but this does not stop the work. (*Mr Etuk: What about mine?*) Hon. Umoh (sorry he is not here) wants the Government to take responsibility of the Itu-Arochuku Road. If he looked at the Estimates he would see that we put it up and it is going to take its turn when roads of its size are considered. Government will certainly consider that road.

Hon. Members may not want me to answer their points one after the other because the answer I would give is almost going to be the same. Lastly, I wish to thank hon. Members who praised my Ministry and I wish to assure them too that we will take into consideration all that they have said in respect of their different constituencies.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*First Schedule agreed to.*

SECOND SCHEDULE

**Head 801.—Building**

£1,958,910 for Head 801—Building—agreed to.

**Head 802.—Road and Bridge Construction**

£1,464,850 for Head 802—Road and Bridge Construction—agreed to.

**Head 803.—Urban Water Supplies**

£312,360 for Head 803—Urban Water Supplies—agreed to.

**Head 804.—Industrial and Commercial Development**

£679,680 for Head 804—Industrial and Commercial Development—agreed to.

**Head 805.—Development, General**

£969,890 for Head 805—Development, General—agreed to.

**Head 806.—Colonial Development and Welfare Schemes**

£897,770 for Head 806—Colonial Development and Welfare Schemes—agreed to.

**Head 807.—Renewals**

£55,660 for Head 807—Renewals—agreed to.

**Head 808.—Loans**

£334,000 for Head 808—Loans—agreed to.

*Second Schedule agreed to.*

**Postponed Clauses**

*Clauses 1 to 7 agreed to.*

*Bill to be reported.*

(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)

*Bill reported without amendment, read the Third time and passed.*

**(2) The Native Courts (Interim Provisions) Bill**

*Order for Second Reading read.*

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice (Mr M. O. Ajegbo):** I beg to move that the Bill be now read a Second time.

Subsection (3) of section 31 of the Native Courts Ordinance provides that:—

“Any person aggrieved by any order or decision of a President, made or given upon appeal from a District Officer or from a Native Court or a Native Court of Appeal may within thirty days from the date of such order or decision appeal to the Governor.”

This law was enacted in 1934 and is no longer in keeping with the constitutional position of the Governor.

Secondly, with the establishment of Customary Courts in all parts of the Region, Native



Courts will disappear. Appeals will go from District Courts to County Courts, Magistrates Courts, High Courts and the Federal Supreme Court.

In the interim period, that is to say, before Customary Courts are established throughout the Region, Native Courts will continue to function and appeals from Native Courts will continue to go through the channels prescribed by Native Courts Ordinance.

The main object of this Bill is to enable the Chief Justice or a Judge of the High Court to hear such appeals from Native Courts as would have lain to the Governor.

Opportunity has been taken to make some consequential amendments and to repeal sections of the Ordinance that deal with the powers of the Governor or the Governor in Council over Native Courts.

**The Minister of Education (Mr G. E. Okeke):** I beg to second.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill accordingly read a Second time and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.*

*Bill immediately considered in Committee.*

(In the Committee)

*Clauses 1-9 agreed to.*

*First Schedule agreed to.*

*Second Schedule agreed to.*

*Bill to be reported.*

(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)

*Bill reported without Amendment: read the Third time and passed.*

**(3) The High Court (Amendment) Bill**

*Order for Second Reading read.*

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice (Mr M. O. Ajegbo):** I beg to move that the Bill be now read a Second time.

The main object of this Bill, as stated in the "Objects and Reasons", is to amend the Law in order to bring it in line with the Nigeria (Constitution) Order in Council, 1954 to 1960, (hereinafter called the "Constitution Orders"). The High Court Law came into force in January, 1956. Changes that have taken place as a result of our constitutional advance have made some sections of the Law out of date.

The High Court of Justice of each Region is now established by virtue of subsection (1) of section 142A of the Constitution Orders. It has become necessary, therefore, to alter, in clause 2 of the Bill, the title of the High Court Law from "A Law for the Establishment of a High Court of Justice of the Eastern Region of the Federation of Nigeria" to "A Law relating to the High Court of Justice for the Eastern Region of the Federation of Nigeria".

Subsection (2) of section 142A of the Constitution Orders provides that the High Court of a Region shall consist of the Chief Justice of the Region, who shall be the President of the Court, and six other judges or such greater number as may be prescribed by or under any Law enacted by the Legislature of the Region. Clause 6 empowers the Governor in Council, if it becomes necessary, to prescribe a greater number of judges than the statutory minimum.

Paragraph (a) of subsection 5 of section 142A of the Constitution Orders prescribes the qualifications for a judge of the High Court. As the Constitution Orders prevail over a Regional Law, clause 7 of the Bill repeals section 5 of the Law which deals with qualifications for the appointment of a judge.

Clause 8 deals with the qualifications for acting judges and clause 9 with the precedence of judges.

Clauses 11 and 13 repeal subsection (1) of section 37 and subsection (5) of section 40 of the Law which define "Regional matter" as "Regional matter" is now defined in clause 3.

Clause 12 amends section 39 of the High Court Law by removing the provision that on an appeal against an acquittal or dismissal "the Court may order that the decision of the



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magistrate be set aside and convict the accused person of the offence of which he might lawfully have been convicted upon the evidence and sentence him accordingly". It has liberalised the Law and improved the drafting.

Clause 14 makes provision for the representation of the Crown or a Ministry in a criminal matter or in a civil action and clause 16 deals with the constitution of the High Court Rules Committee.

**The Minister of Education (Mr G. E. Okeke):** I beg to second.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill accordingly read a Second time and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.*

*Bill immediately considered in Committee.*

(In the Committee)

*Clauses 1-17 agreed to.*

*Bill to be reported.*

(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)

*Bill reported without Amendment: read the Third time and passed.*

**(4) The Magistrates Courts (Amendment) Bill**

*Order for Second Reading read.*

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice (Mr M. O. Ajegbo):** I beg to move that the Bill be now read a Second time.

As stated in the "Objects and Reasons" the object of this Bill is to bring the Magistrates Courts Law, 1955, in line with the Nigeria (Constitution) Orders in Council, 1954 to 1960 (hereinafter referred to as the "Constitution Orders").

Power to make appointments to the posts of Chief Magistrates and Magistrates now vest in the Governor acting on the recommendation of the Judicial Service Commission. This provision in section 180 E of the Constitution, makes subsection (1) of section 6 of the Magistrates Courts Law which provides

that "it shall be lawful for the Governor on the recommendation of the Chief Justice" to appoint Chief Magistrates and Magistrates obsolete. Clause 3 amends the Law.

Clause 10 provides that an appeal shall lie as of right to the High Court in any criminal case where a person is sentenced to imprisonment by a Magistrate's Court even for a day. It removes the disqualification in the Law that where a person has pleaded guilty to an offence he forfeits the right of appeal.

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

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill accordingly read a Second time and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.*

*Bill immediately considered in Committee.*

(In the Committee)

*Clauses 1 to 13 agreed to.*

*Bill to be reported.*

(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)

*Bill reported without Amendment; read the Third time and passed.*

**ADJOURNMENT**

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

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

**ADJOURNMENT DEBATE**

**Nto Etok Urom Village in Aba Division**

**Mr Imeh:** I have one point here to make about the inclusion of Nto Etok Urom, a village in Abak Division under Aba Division. When Local Government was to be introduced in Abak Division sometime ago, some of the villages which were in Aba Division were transferred to Abak Division. One of the villages, Nto Etok Urom, remained in Aba Division. Later on, a majority of the



people petitioned and asked to be transferred to Abak Division. There were series of inquiries going on about this particular village and of recent a Commission of Inquiry was set up to ascertain the views of the people whether they like to remain in Abak Division, or in Aba Division.

**Mr Onwuma:** Point of Order. Standing Order 18. This matter is controversial and is not a subject to be raised on Adjournment.

**Mr Speaker:** The question of its being controversial remains with the Speaker.

**Mr Imeh:** I am reliably informed that during the evidence before the Commission, two families of Nto Etok Urom—Nto Onono and Nto Ocho—who are in majority agreed to be merged with their brothers in Abak Division and one family which is only about one-third of the villagers wishes to remain in Aba Division.

**Mr Onwuma:** Point of Order. Standing Order 18. The matter is not of public importance.

**Mr Speaker:** The question of its being of public importance remains with the Speaker.

**Mr Imeh:** The point I am trying to make is that since the last announcement that this village is to remain under Aba, there has been a lot of unrest in that area. I want to bring that to the notice of the Government that for peace and good government, the people should be allowed, as the majority of the people wish now, to remain in Abak Division. The people should be allowed to remain in Abak Division. Furthermore, this Government is the Government of the people and this Government always respects the wishes of the majority; that is why I am making this call. If a Commission of Inquiry was appointed to ascertain the wishes of the people and during the evidence before the Commission, it was proved beyond all doubt that a majority of the people wish to remain in Abak Division, there is no reason why this Government should not respect the wishes of the majority. May I add that for some time now, whenever the Annangs who are scattered about want to go

back to their own people certain people always go to scramble for them here and there. Some-time ago, in Opobo Division, the Annangs wanted to return to Abak Division but certain people went and gave evidence before the Commission that these people do not want to return to Abak Division. I will then ask: what is the need of appointing a Commission of Inquiry with terms of reference when the Government does not respect the terms of reference given to the Commission? I will ask that the Government should respect its own terms of reference and therefore, call upon them to re-examine this case under the terms of reference and allow them to go to their brothers in Abak Division.

**The Minister of Local Government (Mr P. O. Nwoga):** The village Nto Etok Urom comprises the three Efik sections two of which according to the hon. Member wanted to be transferred to Abak Division while the third wish to remain in Aba Division. There has been a great deal of agitation in the area and inquiries were held in 1952, 1954 and 1959. The Public Petitions Committee of the House of Assembly also sat over the matter in 1955 and after going into all the recommendations of the report on the petition recommended that the village should continue to be administered from Aba. Two points of importance which emerged from the inquiry (the two important points, really determining factor in all the decisions that has been given) were:

- (i) that the simple solution of transferring the two Efik sections that wanted to go to Abak Division could not be done because the three sections are inextricably mixed up and it was found quite impossible to trace a boundary between those who wanted to be transferred and those who did not; and
- (ii) a Court case in 1931 clearly established that the land on which the village is situated belong to the people of Azumini.

We regarded the 1959 inquiry conducted by Mr Harden as the last one because each time this matter had been coming up and it was essential to get this matter settled once and for all and as a result of Mr Harden's report the Government decided that the village people of Nto Etok Urom should remain in Aba Division.



*Eastern House of Assembly Debates*

927

[*Shooting of Film*]

13 APRIL 1960

[*Shooting of Film*]

928

**Mr Speaker:** Before putting the Question, I wish to remind hon. Members that the House will sit tomorrow. Perhaps some hon. Members may have the impression that every work has been done; it is not done yet. We want you back tomorrow.

May I also remind hon. Members about the announcement made by the Minister of Town Planning yesterday in connection with the shooting of a film entitled *Government at Work* by the E.N.I.S. camera-man. The indoor one was shot yesterday and the outdoor one will be shot today in front of the House of Assembly building. We shall now go to see that done, as I suppose hon. Members are properly dressed. The first stage will be the Premier and his Cabinet together with the Clerk of the House and the Speaker of the House.

Stage two will be the Leader of the Opposition and the Opposition Chief Whip. I am sorry they are not here.

The third stage, which is going to be the second now, is the Government Chief Whip and the Deputy Speaker and hon. Members.

I think I will alter this. He puts down stage four as the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition; I do not think that is necessary. The Premier is in the Cabinet; that is where his dignity is.

The last stage is the crowd—hon. Members chatting with each other. I suppose Members will remain here and we take it stage by stage.

Let me announce this again. First stage, the Cabinet followed by the Officials of the House. The second stage will be the Provincial Commissioners and Parliamentary Secretaries. The third will be the Government Chief Whip, the Deputy Speaker and hon. Members. The last will be the crowd chatting with each other.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Adjourned, accordingly, at five minutes past two o'clock p.m.*



EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 14th April, 1960

The House met at Ten o'clock a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

PAPER

Presented:

The Revised Development Programme of the Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1958-62. Official Document No. 13 of 1960. (*The Minister of Town Planning*).

*Ordered:* That the said Paper do lie upon the Table.

THE REVISED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, 1958-1962

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** I rise to move: "That this House approves the Revised Development Programme of the Eastern Region for the period 1958 to 1962" which has just been laid on the Table of this House.

The Revised Development Programme is being published as Eastern Region Official Document No. 13 of 1960.

Hon. Members will recall that when the hon. Minister of Finance delivered his Budget Speech, he made the following statement which appears at page 12 of the printed Budget Speech and, with your permission, Mr Speaker, I beg to quote:—

"I propose to issue, within the next few days, a White Paper setting out in greater detail the changes which have been made in the Programme and indicating the means by which it is now hoped to finance it. But hon. Members can get a good idea of the Programme by looking at Heads 801 to 808 of the Capital Budget and at the Summary on page E 122 of the Estimates.

A statement of the expected receipts into the Capital Development Fund appears under Head 800 but it must be borne in mind that the receipts shown under that

Head do not include the funds which were applied towards capital expenditure under the consolidated 1958-59 Budget. This expenditure formed part of the Programme but the money was provided and spent before the Capital Development Fund was actually set up."

This House approved the Capital Estimates yesterday. The Revised Development Programme formed the basis upon which the capital Estimates were drawn up and repeats in greater detail much of what is contained therein. This House is therefore called upon to formally approve the Revised Development Programme which is already reflected in the Capital Budget which this House has passed.

The Programme has been arranged in five parts. Section A is introductory in nature, Section B contains a general statement on the Revised Programme, Section C deals with the revised financing of the Programme, Section D gives a brief Progress Report in general terms under each sector of the revised Plan and Section E deals with the pattern of expenditure in each of the four years of the Programme.

It is essential, in order that the Region may raise part of the finance for the Plan by means of loans, that this House should approve the Revised Programme. It is a pre-requisite for borrowing for development projects, that the schemes on which the sums borrowed are to be applied must be within the Development Programme which has received the approval of the Legislature, whether we are borrowing direct from the U.K. Exchequer or through the Federal Government.

In this Programme, there has always been a gap between the total planned expenditure and the resources in sight to finance it. In a four-year programme of this magnitude, this is permissible, because it is impossible to forecast exactly the rate at which construction and other development activities are fulfilled.

The gap in the original Programme was £1.25 million; in this revision it has widened to £1.71 million. This is roughly proportionate to the increase in the total expenditure envisaged in the Programme.

Hon. Members will recall that the loan element in the original Plan was £3.35 million.



[MR EMOLE]

The loan element in the Revised Programme, is estimated at £3.6 million, thanks to the windfall which we hope to receive from the premia on oil leases. In other words, even though we have expanded the Development Programme by about £1.3 million, we have succeeded in increasing the loan element by about £250,000 only because of the improved initial transfers to the Capital Development Fund and the expected receipts from the premia on oil leases.

I have no doubt that hon. Members will endorse Government's action in improving upon the original Development Programme. I only hope that as soon as this House approves the revision, the various Ministries will go into the field with more vigour to ensure that all the projects are accomplished before the period of the Programme runs out.

**The Minister of Education (Mr G. E. Okeke):** I beg to second.

**Mr S. G. Ikoku (Enyong Division):** I would like to draw attention to the fact that we have just got hold of this Revised Development Programme and I would have thought that the Government would be kind enough to give us time to study this Revised Programme. It is true that the hon. Minister of Finance did indicate that he would be bringing forward a White Paper of this nature, but I think it is a bit unfair to this House that this White Paper is brought out today, the last day of our sitting. It does not enable the House to do justice to the White Paper and I am suggesting that we allow this thing to stand over until when next the House meets. Then we can have a healthy debate on it. I for my part, and I think I am speaking the mind of the Opposition, am not prepared for any debate on this White Paper today and I only hope the Government will co-operate in this matter.

**The Premier (Dr M. I. Okpara):** I would be grateful if my hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition would really reconsider his view, because on this depends our getting the £1,000,000 loan from Her Majesty's Government. We merely brought this Programme to the House to round off what has

already been agreed to by the House. This merely gives in a nut-shell the Capital Estimates, as my Friend the Minister of Town Planning has just indicated. This is not a new Programme; it is an old Programme approved by the House, with minor amendments that have already been approved by the House. It is not a new Programme at all. If you look at Table I you will find that there are only very minor and welcome changes. Roads and Bridges have gone up from £3.5 million to £4.6 million. Rural Water Supplies have gone up from £1.5 million to £1.6 million and all these changes have been reflected in the Capital Budget, which has already been approved by the House; and it is only as a matter of formality that it is being brought to the House to give the O.K so that we can go ahead and get the £1,000,000 to help to augment what we have for the Capital Budget. I hope my hon. Friend will reconsider his former submission in the light of that. It is not a new Programme at all; it is merely the old Programme with the additions that have been approved by the House. And I would say that if after passing this, my hon. Friend thinks there should be any major amendment later on—let us say during the Supplementary Budget meeting—we can all meet and consider it. No holds whatsoever are barred, and we should approve this now and go ahead.

**Mr Ikoku:** I was taken in by the word "revised" on the Development Programme, because it at once suggests something new.

The Premier has made two important points. The first is that the passing of this White Paper is important as regards the raising of the £1 million loan. The second point he made is that the revisions are not major and he drew attention to one or two. I think there must be some measure of confidence in this matter. We have to take him on his word, particularly as he has given us an avenue of re-opening a debate on the Development Programme later on in the year if we consider it necessary. I think that on the strength of that we will accept his explanation, but what I said earlier that we cannot conduct a debate still remains true.

*Question put and agreed to.*



**ORAL ANSWER TO QUESTION**

**Crime Wave in the Eastern Region**

48. **Mr S. E. K. Iwueke** asked the Minister of Justice, what are the comparative figures of the incidence of crimes in this Region for the past three years; and what extra measures are being taken to combat the rising wave.

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Justice (Mr L. O. Uzoigwe):** I am directed to answer as follows: Comparative figures of the incidence of crime in this Region for the years 1957, 1958, 1959 are as follows:—

	1957	1958	1959
Total cases			
Reported ...	31,979	34,608	38,453
True Cases ...	24,374	27,329	30,585
Murder ...	177	253	292
Stealings, etc. ...	9,576	10,508	11,777
Burglaries ...	1,640	1,806	2,398
Housebreaking	636	644	744
Other Cases ...	12,345	14,118	15,374
Detection ...	49%	53%	50%

The increase is not of alarming proportion and compares favourably with other Regions. At Enugu, Port Harcourt, Onitsha, a Wireless Car system was started and is in operation. The Police telephone box system at Enugu was started and is in operation. Control Rooms for rapid reply and assistance to members of the public have been inaugurated in all Provinces. Land Rover patrols have been started in remote areas, and rural patrols increased in all Provinces. There is a general increase in establishment of Police throughout the Region; special constabulary have been brought into line with Regular Police and women Police have been introduced at Enugu and Port Harcourt.

**BILL PRESENTED**

**Loans**

Bill to authorise the Raising from Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of one or more loans not exceeding in the Aggregate one million pounds for the purposes of Capital Expenditure on a Development Programme of the Government of the Region,

presented by the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, Mr M. O. Ajegbo; read the First time; to be read a second time Today.

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Adjournment sine die**

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** I beg to move that this House at its rising Today do adjourn *sine die*.

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

*Question put and agreed to.*

**ORDER OF THE DAY**

**The Loans Bill**

*Order for Second Reading read.*

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice (Mr M. O. Ajegbo):** I rise to move that the Bill be now read a Second time. The purpose of this Bill is to enable this Government to borrow the sum of £1 million direct from Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom.

This amount is the agreed share of the Eastern Region in the £3 million Exchequer Loan and is shown under Sub-head 5 of Head 800 as a receipt into the Capital Development Fund at page E 121 of the Estimates recently approved by the House.

It had originally been intended that the Federal Government should borrow the whole amount of £3 million of Exchequer Loan in accordance with the Constitution and make available to this Region and the Northern Region the amounts due to them. But, for technical reasons connected with the wording of the United Kingdom legislation under which Exchequer Loans are made, it would have been necessary for the Development Programme of this Region and of the Northern Region to have received not only the approval of the Secretary of State but also that of the Legislature of the Federation.

Our Development Programme has not been submitted for approval by the Federal Legislature or by the Secretary of State and there is no



[MR AJEGBO]

time in which to go through the processes of obtaining such approval before we require the loan. The Secretary of State has therefore proposed, and the Federal Government has agreed that, as an exceptional measure, this Government and the Government of the Northern Region should be empowered to borrow direct from Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom.

To enable this to be done, the Federal Government is enacting an Ordinance to authorise the Northern Region and ourselves to enter into this direct obligation. We are required to pass the Bill now before the House, securing the loan on the Revenue and Assets of the Region in the usual way. The Federal Government, in its Ordinance, will give further security for the loan by creating a secondary charge on Federal Revenues and Assets.

I must impress on the House that this is an expediency designed to overcome a technical obstacle that has arisen in the case of this particular loan. This Bill does not empower this Government to raise any other direct loan. Future borrowings will be made on behalf of the Regions by the Federal Government in accordance with the Constitution.

**The Minister of Education (Mr G. E. Okeke):** I beg to second.

**Mr Ikoku:** I rise to say that we support the principle of the Bill and that in any case this hon. House cannot now oppose this Bill for the simple reason that we had approved the Budget and this borrowing was clearly stated or reflected as part of the Budget. Therefore, I only wish to raise two points. The first point is that this House has not been told the rate of interest at which this loan is being contracted. If it were not written into the Bill, at least the Government in moving the Second Reading of the Bill could have given us an indication of what we are called upon to pay. You will notice that in clause 2, subsection 3, you have the following:

“The rate of interest payable on those loans shall be such as is agreed upon between the Governor and the Secretary of State.”

I think that this hon. House should have been told what the rate of interest will be.

Secondly, we are not even told for how long this loan is being given us. If you look at clause 5 you have the following:

“The loans raised under section 2 shall be repaid by equal annual instalments of principal and interest combined so as to extinguish the loans within a period to be agreed upon by the Governor and the Secretary of State.”

So that we do not know for how long we are borrowing and we do not know at what rate of interest. The whole thing looks very much like taking a leap in the dark. Our only hope is that the Government will make sure that they do not do anything which is detrimental to the best interests of the Region. I would have thought that this Legislature would have been informed on these two points.

**The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:** I hope that my hon. Friend, the Leader of Opposition is aware that the Governor here means the Government of the Region, and that if it is now possible to give the exact figure I would have done it. But I am advised that the terms of the loan depend on the capital market conditions by the time the loan is drawn out. We have not got the money yet; it will take some time before the money can be drawn. But the present rate of interest is 5½ per cent and the period of the loan is five years. These figures are tentative; we have got to look at them later. (*Mr Morphy: 5½ per cent is too high!*). Has he any to give us?

**Mr C. A. Abangwu (Nsukka Division):** I should like to associate myself with the views expressed by my hon. Friend, Mr Ikoku, on the rate of interest and the period this loan is going to be in operation. The only point I would like to add is that I understand that this Government in conjunction with the Government of the Federation have a tremendous amount of money which has been invested or left with the United Kingdom Government at a rate much lower than we are now borrowing. I humbly submit that there is no reason why the Government should not realise at least a part of this money that has been tied up with the United Kingdom Exchequer. If we are going to borrow at a rate of 5½ per cent and we leave our own money to be lying there for years and years, at about 2½ per cent interest, I do not see the mathematics of it. I humbly



submit that now that we are coming to the period of emergence into independence, this Government should impress upon the Government of the Federation to realise all the money we have tied up with the United Kingdom Government and stop borrowing at a higher rate when we have got money.

**Mr I. I. Morphy** (Ogoja Division): We cannot understand why our £250 million is invested in U.K. while we still need loans. (*An hon. Member: Of this Region or your own?*) The country's £250,000,000 is invested in United Kingdom at 3½ per cent interest and we are borrowing money at 6 per cent. I do not think that is good enough. All we want is that this money should be brought to the country rather than Government borrowing at a very high rate of interest. This amount of £250 million is invested in United Kingdom at the rate of 3½ per cent. It is not wise to invest in U.K. and borrow from them at a higher rate of interest. We want our £250 million and not loan at a high rate.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill accordingly read a Second time and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.*

*Bill immediately considered in Committee.*

(In the Committee)

*Clauses 1-6 agreed to.*

*Bill to be reported.*

(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)

*Bill reported without Amendment: read the Third time and passed.*

#### ADJOURNMENT

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** I beg to move that this House do now adjourn *sine die*.

May I, seize this opportunity to thank you for your patience, diligence, sense of humour and magnanimity in discharging the very difficult duty of this hon. House. Also, I thank the Clerk of the House and the entire staff of the House for their co-operation and sense of duty and, above all, the success achieved at the completion of the work of this Session.

**Mr I. I. Morphy** (Ogoja Division): May I seize this opportunity to thank the Speaker of

this hon. House for his sense of humour and sense of duty in discharging his difficult task. May I also thank the Clerk of the House and the entire staff of the House. We sought this opportunity to thank them when we were discussing the Legislature but we were not given the chance, and I say this much that I wish all of them the best and long life to work with us. I have been authorised by the Leader of Opposition to speak on behalf of the Opposition. We need a deputy Serjeant-at-arms to understudy the present one. This is the practice in the Federal House.

#### ADJOURNMENT DEBATES

##### (1) Defence Pact

**Mr S. G. Ikoku** (Enyong Division): I would like to take this opportunity to raise a matter which I consider extremely delicate and at the same time most important to this country. It is all in connection with this question of the possibility of our Leaders being called upon to sign an agreement as regards "defence arrangement" between this country and the United Kingdom Government, when our Heads of Government visit Britain next month. I would like right away to say that I am convinced from the evidence at my disposal that subtle British diplomacy is at work and I would like this House to strengthen the hands of our Premier in whatever he is likely to do to resist this attempt to inveigle Nigeria into signing a "defence pact." I would like to say that the people of this country are very upset about the possibility of this "defence pact" being signed. They give it all sorts of names. Some call it "defence treaty," others call it "military pact" and yet others call it "defence arrangement." These are all various names for the same thing. This country is upset on two grounds: firstly, because such a pact is bound to detract from the sovereignty of Nigeria, and secondly, because we are satisfied from experience in the Middle East and other parts of the world that British imperialism is only anxious to extenuate its control over Nigeria by this means. The Premier took a stand which this House supports and I would like to take this opportunity to re-affirm the support of this House for the stand taken by our Premier. When he was talking on the 24th of March—he was replying to the Debate on the Address—he made it clear that he was not going to be party to any such thing. The relevant section in the *Hansard* reads:—"As



[MR IKOKU]

Representatives of the Government of the Eastern Region are invited, I can assure all the people of the Region, that my Government shall not be party to any agreement which will in any way have the effect of limiting Nigeria's sovereignty or independence." Since he made that statement on the 24th of March, certain developments have taken place. I refer hon. Members to events in the House of Representatives. In particular, I refer hon. Members to the debate in the Federal House on Tuesday, the 12th of April. There was a Private Member's Motion—by hon. Okafor of the N.C.N.C.—to the effect that the authority and the prior approval of the Federal House of Representatives must be sought before any sort of "defence arrangement" is entered into.

I would like to make it clear that even though the Motion was passed unanimously, the Prime Minister of the Federation took the opportunity to declare his stand. He never said he accepted the Motion or accepted the idea of referring everything back to the House before he signs. He made two significant statements. The first statement was that this "defence arrangement" was discussed at the 1958 London Constitutional Conference and all the Political Parties in Nigeria which were represented at this Conference accepted the arrangement. The second point he made was—to use his own words—that "he would not sign any pact which was not in the best interest of Nigeria."

I would like to take up these two points. Firstly, I would like to say, with all the emphasis at my command, that the 1958 London Constitutional Conference never, I repeat, never discussed in plenary session or in committee any "defence arrangement" with the United Kingdom Government. It was never discussed. What happened was that the Premiers and the Prime Minister were invited to No. 10 Downing Street. They held whatever discussions they thought fit; then when the Report of the Conference was being discussed, we suddenly saw a paragraph inserted that talks had been held with the Nigerian Leaders about the wisdom of certain "defence arrangements" being entered into between Nigerian Government and the United Kingdom Government.

That was inserted in the report but no such discussion ever took place either in the Plenary Session or in any of the Committees of the 1958 London Conference. Now the important thing is that the Prime Minister of the Federation is anxious to rope in all the political parties and all the governments of the country and that is why I think it fit that the arrangements be discussed and all the political parties express their opinion on them. The second point is that the Prime Minister said that he will not sign anything that is not in the best interest of Nigeria. This is clever and diplomatic phraseology which we cannot accept. Nigeria is not interested in that formula. We are not going to accept that. Is it the Prime Minister who is going to decide what is best for Nigeria in this regard? I would have thought that the Federal House of Representatives will be a more competent body to discuss what is in the best interest of Nigeria. It is quite possible, Sir, seeking coverage under this phrase, to sign anything and then come back to tell us that it was done in the best interest of Nigeria. As you are well aware, the best interest of Nigeria means different things to different politicians. (*An hon. Member: Exactly!*) Therefore I am suggesting that we do not accept that formula at all. What then is the way out? Our Premier is going to London towards the end of this month, but I think this House will take this opportunity to tell him that it is the opinion of the people of this country that Nigeria should not enter into any defence arrangement before it is independent. We cannot, as under-dogs, enter into any such arrangements. This Country must be allowed first to be sovereign; then, when we are satisfied that Nigeria is free, we can as equals go into any arrangement we choose with any country. I would like to add by way of advice that in view of the position in the world I can say without fear of contradiction, that if Nigeria is going to sign any defence pact whatsoever, surely commonsense demands that we should sign it either with the U.S.A. or with Russia. Why sign any agreement with a country that cannot defend us? Can Britain defend Nigeria against Russia? Can Britain defend Nigeria against U.S.A.? This is a sure waste of time to sign such an agreement.

I would like, Sir, in conclusion to arm our Premier because it is obvious that he will be subjected to all sorts of pressure when he goes



to London and all that I am doing this morning is to enable this House to strengthen him in his chosen line of action which he had enunciated in this House. He should be able to tell these pressure groups from Britain that this House, his Government, his Region are unanimous in saying that he should not sign any defence pact. Mr Speaker, Sir, several times President Eisenhower has gone overseas to conclude defence pacts with other countries but we have not heard that he had invited any of the State Governors in the U.S.A. We have not heard that he took with him the President of the United States Congress. I would like to make it clear that we are a Regional Government. Our argument is that defence is within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Federal Government. If the Prime Minister of the Federation is anxious to sign any defence pact let him go ahead by himself and then face the consequence. Why drag our Premier into it? Why drag the Premier of the West into it? Why drag the Premier of the North into it and why drag the President of Nigerian Senate, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe into it? If Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa is satisfied that his Government is going to sign any defence pact with Britain let him go ahead alone. We know that the British know that Sir Abubakar does not represent the majority opinion of this country. As a result of this the British try to rope in our political leaders namely: Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, Chief Awolowo and Sir Ahmadu Bello. When have they ever done such a thing in the past? If they are signing anything let them sign it with Balewa. I sincerely hope that as our Premier goes to London he will keep his mind at rest. He should never be in doubt as to what the opinion of the people of this Region is. All the people of this Region are one hundred per cent behind him in the demand for no defence pacts before independence.

**The Premier (Dr M. I. Okpara):** I would like to say a few words by way of reply to what the Leader of the Opposition has just said.

First of all the signing of any defence agreement between Nigeria and Britain, I would say, is entirely a Federal matter and therefore completely within the jurisdiction of the Federal Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa. But I do see the reason behind his endeavouring to take along with him the various political leaders of the country namely: Dr Azikiwe, President of the Nigerian

Senate; Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Leader of the Opposition in the Federal House; hon. Sir Ahmadu Bello, Premier of the North; Chief Akintola, Premier of the West and myself. I do see the point behind that because in 1958 the political leaders (as the Prime Minister admitted in the debate of the Federal House) did come to an understanding with Her Majesty's Government. I had better say it now so that the wool covering this debate will be cleared once and for all. They did come into some form of understanding with Her Majesty's Government—the four of them i.e. Dr Azikiwe, Chief Awolowo, Sir Abubakar and Sir Ahmadu Bello. I was not invited and so I was not there. I was not then the Premier.

I think if they have given an undertaking to remain on friendly terms with Her Majesty's Government after independence, we who have inherited these high offices will do well not to dishonour these pledges given in Britain. I do not think it is right to say that this is going to be a Pact forced right down the throat of a junior by a senior. This is not entirely true as I have said. Indeed, during the debate in the Federal House Tafawa Balewa did say that Awolowo was not giving the whole country the facts. He did talk a lot about going to London to sign agreement, but, he refused to mention that he, himself, did give an undertaking to Her Majesty's Government on this matter, and, as a matter of fact, has signed something. It will be up to Awolowo to tell us what he signed; let him tell the country what he signed! Personally, I can find it quite easy to come back without signing anything because I have not committed myself; but the people who raised this debate in the Federal House were not able to tell us all the facts. What did they sign in 1958? I myself regard Dr Azikiwe as my leader and if he has committed the country in any way, I regard it as my duty to stand behind him. But that is not quite the same thing as talking about signing agreement.

The country is not yet independent and I would accept the submission of the Leader of the Opposition that a Defence Agreement were better entered into with Britain after Independence. That does not mean that no preliminary negotiations should be carried out or that no discussions should take place. I do not think it means that at all. After all,



[THE PREMIER]

what is the purpose of a Defence Agreement? Provided a Defence Agreement is mutually beneficial to the two countries and without compromising our sovereignty and Independence, and provided we can come out of it any day I do not see anything wrong with it. I do not think that the picture that is being painted now is entirely correct. After all, these British people are not entirely villains, you know. They are still with us; they are not all that villainous and we may well find that if we went into the arms of Russia or even America, that would be going from frying-pan to fire. After all, not all the people in the Soviet realm are particularly happy, nor do you find people in the United States entirely happy; there, people cannot even eat with their neighbours because of their dark skins. So that we should consider these things very seriously before committing ourselves finally.

If it is the opinion of the Region that I should not go to Britain, what am I going to do there? (*Hon. Members: Go! But do not sign anything.*) We must trust these our leaders who have led us to this point of independence. If I cannot trust a man like Zik, and if I cannot trust Awolowo and the Sardauna, who brought us to the point of independence, we would be following the will-o'-the-wisp. It is precisely this that makes a good deal of the argument of my hon. Friend a little bit of—I would say—splitting hairs, and, in fact, unnecessary. We are following our own leader and wherever he goes, we will go. Ditto for the Action Group, I hope, and ditto for the N.P.C. What we really need to do is—after all, I am not the leader of the N.C.N.C. but I am the Premier of the Eastern Region—to call the three political leaders and tell them these things. It may well be that we may extract some points from them, but I do not think it will be right for us to give the impression that we are now at war with Britain. Their record in Nigeria is a fine one and as I used to say when I was a Medical Practitioner, one does not diagnose tuberculosis on cough alone. No! You have got to find all the other signs and symptoms and when you have taken them together, you arrive at your diagnosis. When we have taken together the work of the British and compared what they have done here with what some of the French have done in other places like Togoland

and Algeria, you will give the British credit for what they have done. They are the devils we know and it is better to be with the devils you know than to ask for a new one. I think we should try to temper our criticisms of Britain; I think it is getting too much. We are giving the impression that they are our enemies. They are not; are they? (*Hon. Members: No!*) (*Mr Ikoku: Are they your friends?*). The Leader of the Opposition was asking for the precedent in this continent of this sort of thing—our going to Britain to talk about independence and defence pact. Well, there can be no precedent whatsoever. For the last century, we have not been free. How can we then have a precedent? There is nothing to go by.

We are coming near the 1st of October and I would ask our people to cool down. Let us hasten slowly, as my hon. Friend Agba would say, *festina lente*. That is the only way of getting to that our goal.

My able Colleague from Bende Division, hon. Chikwendu, mentioned it the other day, that those who want any of these ideologies should wait. Let us wait; let us get our Independence first. Once that Independence is in our hands, we can do what we like. We do not want to spoil the great day of October by appearing now that we are enemies of Britain; they are the only people we know. This morning we passed a Bill authorising £1 million loan from Britain. How much have we got from Russia? (*Hon. Members: None!*) How much have we got from America? (*Hon. Members: Nothing!*).

I would like to leave the House with the assurance I gave before, that, if I reach Britain and find that they are pulling wool over our eyes, I will be sober enough to spot it and I will come back. It will be very difficult for anybody, at this my age of forty, and as sharp as I am now for anybody to deceive me. We should rest assured that our journey to Britain will be a cordial one. We want the British people to stay in Nigeria to help us.

In conclusion, it is really the terms of any Agreement which are finally entered into by the Federal Government and Her Majesty's Government that matter. In approaching this sort of problem we must remember that specifically we are dealing with friends—people who believe in the Africans and practise



that belief. I hope the Conference will be a success and that our Independence and sovereignty would be guaranteed.

## (2) Political Disturbance at Ugep Town

**The Provincial Commissioner, Abakaliki (Mr P. A. Onwe):** I seize this opportunity to raise an issue which affects the people of my Province seriously. In Obubra Division there have been constant unrest and disturbances for the past few months and till today the people of Ugep are not allowed to breathe the free air of their native land which is because we have the Opposition parties in majority in that town. Of recent, there was a disturbance caused by the Opposition meeting and plotting to destroy the Ugep Urban District Council Office. This plot was made and arrangement was made to attack both the Police and the supporters and members of the N.C.N.C. What happened that very day was that the Action Group Secretary went into the Council while the Council was sitting and called out members of the Action Group. They went into secret conversation and consequently led the women into the Council Hall to disturb the people there. The fact is that during the disturbance the Action Group leaders in that locality stood behind these women watching and directing the course of their action. Without bothering you further, I just want to read a section of the Police report on this issue. With your permission, Sir, I beg to read:

“On Friday, 11th March, 1960 a disturbance occurred at Ugep in the Obubra Division when approximately 500 women, believed to be members of the Action Group, marched to the office of the Ugep District Council, while the Council was sitting, and forced the Council to cease conducting any further business. They also attempted to rip the doors and windows

from the building in an effort to enter the offices.

“The background of the disturbance is solely political and was caused through the cancellation of the elections for a new Council which should have taken place on 24th March, 1960.

“Prior to the Federal elections, Ugep was considered to be an Action Group’s ‘strong hold’ but at the election the N.C.N.C. were elected. Feelings ran very high in Ugep town, which is still strongly Action Group, but no disturbance occurred other than minor incidents of assaults on members of the opposing parties.”

At this point a report was made by the members and supporters of the N.C.N.C. to the District Officer Obubra Division and the Police at Ugep. No action was taken till the plot of the Action Group members matured and on the day of the incident the Police were even dispersed because they took the Police unawares. I want to go further to explain the reasons why I say that Ugep is becoming quite unsafe for N.C.N.C. supporters.

**Mr Speaker:** I think I shall be correct to interrupt the hon. Member. The adjournment debate is really not meant for any controversial matter. I would have liked it if the discussion had not been on party bias. All I would say is that if the hon. Member raised a matter of some disturbance in any section of the Region it would be the duty of the Ministry of Internal Affairs to know what steps to take.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Adjourned, accordingly, at fifteen minutes past eleven o'clock a.m. pursuant to the Resolution of the House this day.*







## APPENDIX WRITTEN QUESTIONS

### Answers received during Adjournment (20th February to 3rd March, 1960)

#### Local Road Safety Committee

56. **Mr S. E. K. Iwueke** asked the Minister of Works, whether he does not think it expedient to appoint Local Road Safety Committees throughout the Region through the medium of District Councils, in view of many reported road accidents and of the general complaint that the Traffic Law is not being observed strictly.

**The Minister of Works:** I am all in favour of Road Safety Committees. In fact, Road Safety Committees have been in existence since 1952 and successful Road Safety Weeks have been held in Enugu and Port Harcourt. Lately, these Committees have not been active.

I am glad to announce that I have now set up Road Safety Committees at Regional and Provincial levels. These together with the departmental ones set up by the Police will aim at educating the public how best to use the roads without danger to themselves.

#### Tarring of Aba-Umuaro-Umuahia Road

163. **Mr W. Abengowe** asked the Minister of Works, what is holding up work on, and tarring of, the Aba-Umuaro-Umuahia road, and the Asa-Azumini road, approved in 1958; how soon will the tarring of these roads commence.

**The Minister of Works:** I am happy to report that tenders have been called for both these projects and a contract for the Asa-Azumini bridge has already been signed.

#### Water Supply

165. **Mr W. Abengowe** asked the Minister of Works, what efforts are being made by the Government in the implementation of its policy to make funds available for water supply to the following Institutions in Aba Division: the Ibo National High School, Ngwa High School, Ngwa Hospital, St Anne's (Girls) T.T.C., Mbutu (Boys) T.T.C., and Nsulu (Boys) T.T.C.

**The Minister of Works:** I refer the hon. Member to Appendix C in the Government White Paper No. 5 of 1958, containing the list of Institutions approved, under the first phase, of the Rural Water Supply Scheme. As none of the Institutions mentioned by the hon. Member is under this Approved List, it is not possible to include them in the first phase of Rural Water Supply Scheme.

However, the second phase of the Rural Water Supply Scheme, is now being considered, and, subject to the availability of funds, it is hoped that many other deserving places and Institutions will then be given a water supply.

#### Cashew Industry

181. **Mr D. E. Akilo** asked the Minister of Agriculture, whether the Government will be prepared to enter into partnership with a "Farmers' Association" which can find suitable soil for cashew industry; if so, what would be the terms of such partnership.

**The Minister of Agriculture:** The Ministry can make available technical advice at all stages in the establishment of a cashew plantation but can give no financial assistance.

#### Ajali Cashew Plantation

182. **Mr D. E. Akilo** asked the Minister of Agriculture, if the Minister is aware that the hand-processing method of cashew nuts at Ajali cashew plantation is rather wasteful and uneconomic in the world market; if so, how soon will the Government introduce mechanical processing at the plantation.

**The Minister of Agriculture:** The difficult problem of mechanically processing cashew nuts has been under investigation for some time. It is hoped that an experimental hand decorticating machine will be available in a few months.



**WRITTEN ANSWER TO QUESTION**

*Thursday 24th March, 1960*

**Community Development**

6. **Mr D. E. Akilo** asked the Minister of State (Information and Welfare) whether Mr E. R. Chadwick who paid an official visit to the Eastern Region about August, 1959, with a view to suggesting ways and means of improving community development in the Region has written any report on his findings; if so, how soon will the report be made available to the public.

**The Minister of State (Information and Welfare):** It is correct that Mr E. R. Chadwick was invited by this Government to

undertake a survey of community development in the Region and to advise on the question of modernising the community development programme.

Mr Chadwick has submitted a voluminous report without, owing to shortage of time, the necessary appendix on statistics and statement of the cost of his proposals.

The report is being closely studied by Government and it is hoped that it should be possible to publish it as a white paper.



**WRITTEN ANSWER TO QUESTION**

*Friday, 25th March, 1960*

**Experimental Farms**

31. **Mr H. U. E. Edelduok** asked the Minister of Agriculture, how many experimental farms are there in the Region; are these established on Provincial basis, if so, is the Minister preparing a scheme for extending this privilege to the newly created Provinces.

**The Minister of Agriculture:** There are five experimental farms established respectively at Nekede, Nkwelle, Abakaliki, Abak

and Abobiri. These farms were established when there were only five Provinces in the Region; with the increase in the number of Provinces from five to twelve, these farms now serve a group of Provinces designated "Circles" which coincide with the old Provinces. Besides there is now a Regional Research Station at Umudike which serves the whole Region.

It is not intended to establish experimental farms in the newly created Provinces in the immediate future.



WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Monday, 28th March, 1960

**Library Van**

7. **Mr J. W. E. Anaba** asked the Minister of State (Information and Welfare) how many times has the Library Van visited each Division in the Region; has Obubra Division been visited, if not why.

**The Minister of State (Information and Welfare):** From 19th May, 1958 when the Mobile Library Service was inaugurated to 31st December, 1959, the Library Van has visited:—

Abakaliki Division	...	131 times
Afikpo Division	...	39 times
Awka Division	...	104 times
Enugu Division	...	124 times
Onitsha Division	...	117 times
Orlu Division	...	41 times
Udi Division	...	123 times

Obubra Division has not been visited by the Library Van. It will be appreciated that the Divisions not mentioned above have also not been visited by the Mobile Library Van. Obubra Division has not been visited on account of the very poor conditions of the roads. Secondly, the Mobile Library Service is operated from Enugu and it is very difficult to do so effectively at a great distance from Enugu.

**Councillors' Allowance**

17. **Mr M. A. Idoko** asked the Minister of Local Government, whether the restriction on the total number of meetings a District Councillor or a Municipal Councillor can attend in a year for which he can be paid allowance extends to those members of the Council whose positions make it incumbent on them to attend all the meetings of their Councils; if so, what other inducement allowance does the Minister approve for this group of councillors.

**The Minister of Local Government:** The Regulations dealing with the payment of allowances to members of Local Government Councils specify that the maximum number of meetings for which a Councillor may receive allowances during a year are:

- (a) for rural Councils: twelve ordinary and six extraordinary Council meetings and the same number of committee meetings;
- (b) for urban Councils (including Municipalities) twelve ordinary and twelve

extraordinary Council meetings and the same number of Committee meetings.

Thus a councillor may draw allowances in respect of his attendance at up to a total of thirty-six meetings (rural Councils) for forty-eight meetings (urban Councils), and I consider that this is more than adequate—it is indeed generous, and it should normally be simple for a Council to arrange its meetings accordingly.

The only members whose position might, in the words of the question, make it incumbent upon them to attend more meetings than this are those Chairmen and, in some cases, Vice-Chairmen of Councils who are *ex-officio* members of all Committees. The Chairman of a Council receives, in addition to the allowances of an ordinary member for attendance at meetings, an adequate additional allowance known as the Chairman's Allowance for carrying out the duties of his office; I consider that the term "duties of office" includes attendance at any additional meetings in excess of the permitted maximum (without additional allowances) that he may consider desirable, and I am not, therefore, prepared to authorise the payment of allowances for such excess meetings.

As regards the Vice-Chairmen of Councils, it is *not* essential that they attend every meeting of every committee (even though they may be members), and they should arrange to attend only the important meetings at which they consider their presence to be essential; if the number of such meetings happens on very rare occasions to exceed the legal maximum, then I consider that the councillor in question should agree, as a public service, to attend without claiming allowances. Such an eventuality is not one for which I am prepared at present to make special arrangements.

**Food in Relation to Health**

32. **Mr H. U. E. Edelduok** asked the Minister of Agriculture, what types of locally-grown foodstuff are health giving; are these produced in sufficient quantity in this Region.

**The Minister of Agriculture:** The meaning of the hon. Member's question is obscure. Some foods are more nutritive than others but in the absence of any indication



as to the particular aspect that is in the hon. Member's mind, I am unable to answer this question.

### Fishing Industry

33. **Mr H. U. E. Edelduok** asked the Minister of Agriculture, how many experimental fishing stations have been opened in the Region and at what cost and what has been the result.

**The Minister of Agriculture:** There are four stations devoted to fishing, one for offshore fishing and one freshwater station. It is not possible without considerable research to give in detail the cost of operating them but the Development Programme allocates £110,000 for fishing development between 1958 and 1962. There has been some success at the inshore stations while the results for offshore fishing are promising. The freshwater station is not yet complete.



WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Friday, 1st April, 1960

**Scientific Fish Canning**

34. Mr H. U. E. Edelduok asked the Minister of Agriculture, when will the Minister consider it necessary to introduce scientific canning of fish in the Region as a scheme for improvement in the economy of the Region.

**The Minister of Agriculture:** When the amount of fish available at the points of production exceeds what can be locally consumed or transported economically to other places packed in ice.

**Help to Local Fishermen**

35. Mr H. U. E. Edelduok asked the Minister of Agriculture, what help has been

given to the local fishermen of the Region; who among them have been given loans or any other form of help to improve their trade.

**The Minister of Agriculture:** Twenty-four young men have passed through the inshore fishing stations. They were not given loans. They were paid wages and, in addition, received the money realised in the sale of their catches. This enabled them to purchase improved gear. In addition, the E.R.D.C. lent £2,000 to five operators namely: Messrs I. V. Clinton, E. M. W. Epelle, F. A. Lele, H. Bowari Brown and T. I. N. Owo.



WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Monday, 4th April, 1960

**Provincial Assemblies**

3. **Mr S. N. Alo** asked the Premier, how soon will the twelve Provincial Assemblies in the Region start functioning.

**The Premier:** The Provincial Assemblies Amendment Regulations were published in the *Eastern Regional Gazette* on the 18th of March, 1960 as E.R.L.N. No. 84 of 1960. The date of commencement of these Regulations was the 21st of March, 1960. Elections to the Provincial Assembly will begin almost immediately and are not expected to last more than a few weeks. The Provincial Assemblies will start to function as soon as elections are completed.

**Retiring Benefits to Local Government Employees**

28. **Mr H. U. E. Edelduok** asked the Minister of Local Government, whether it is a fact that there is a good number of retired Local Government Employees in this Region whose retiring benefits have not been paid; if so, what action has the Government taken to ensure that correct retiring benefits are paid to retired Local Government Employees promptly, and regularly.

**The Minister of Local Government:** A few complaints have been brought to my notice regarding the refusal on the part of Councils to pay their share of the retiring benefits of retired Local Government employees where the employees have served various Councils or their predecessors before retiring. Cases have also been reported to me where after approval for payment of retiring benefits to an employee has been given by my Ministry

the Council responsible delayed payment. In every such case I have thoroughly investigated the matter and ordered immediate payment.

Difficulties had arisen in the past over the sharing of the retiring benefits of employees who have served the Native Administration or Native Administrations in a Division before the introduction of Local Government, a County Council and two or more District Councils. Some Councils did not readily accept the apportionment of the liability to pay the retiring benefits of such officers, but my Ministry has recently issued a Circular (No. P.3/1960 of 23-1-60) clarifying the principles to be followed to avoid future dilatoriness in accepting responsibility for payment. No complaints have reached my Ministry about non-payment of retiring benefits since the issue of this Circular.

It is inevitable that retired employees have to wait for some time while the procedure for calculating and checking their retiring allowance and or gratuity is gone through. This procedure entails the submission to my Ministry of certain data relating to the employee's services. When all particulars have been duly supplied, my Ministry checks them and calculates the amount due. After that the calculation is sent with the employee's personal file to the Director of Audit for verification. There may be cases where my Ministry enters into correspondence with a Council to clarify some issues and such correspondence do involve some amount of delay. I can assure the hon. Member that my Ministry is doing everything possible to avoid delays and that I shall not hesitate to intervene where Councils fail to make prompt and regular payments.



**WRITTEN ANSWER TO QUESTION**

*Tuesday, 5th April, 1960*

**Amalgamation of District Councils**

29. **Mr H. U. E. Edelduok** asked the Minister of Local Government, whether he has taken notice of the recent comment made by the Local Government Commissioner, Eket Division, on the reduction in number of District Councils in that Division to three; if so, what step has the Minister taken on the matter or on the reports of Coatswith Commission of inquiry conducted in 1954 or thereabouts on the request of the inhabitants of the areas of Eket, Oniong-Nung Ndem-Awa and Ubium District Councils.

**The Minister of Local Government:** The Coatswith Commission of Inquiry conducted in 1954, recommended amalgamation of Oniong-Nung-Ndem-Awa and Ubium District Councils which were in deplorable financial position, with the Eket District Council. The principal argument in favour of the amalgamation was that overheads

would be reduced and that, therefore, there would be a decrease in the rates incidence. But there was at that time every indication that the high education rates would continue to increase and that to approve a merger, which the people thought would result in a considerable rate reduction, only to find that there would still be an increase in rates, would be misunderstood and cause Government to be accused of a breach of faith. In the circumstances, the recommendation could not then be implemented.

The present position is that although education rates are no longer levied in the area the financial position of the Ubium and Oniong-Nung-Ndem-Awa District Councils is far from satisfactory. Although, no action has been taken in my Ministry on the matter, I have not ruled out the possibility of a merger of Councils in this area to attempt to achieve the viability that appears to be impossible with the present organisation.



**WRITTEN ANSWER TO QUESTION**

*Thursday, 7th April, 1960*

30. **Mr H. U. E. Edelduok** asked the Minister of State (Information and Welfare) whether he is aware that unemployment is a growing menace in this Region; if so, will he make statistical and categorical statement on the following:

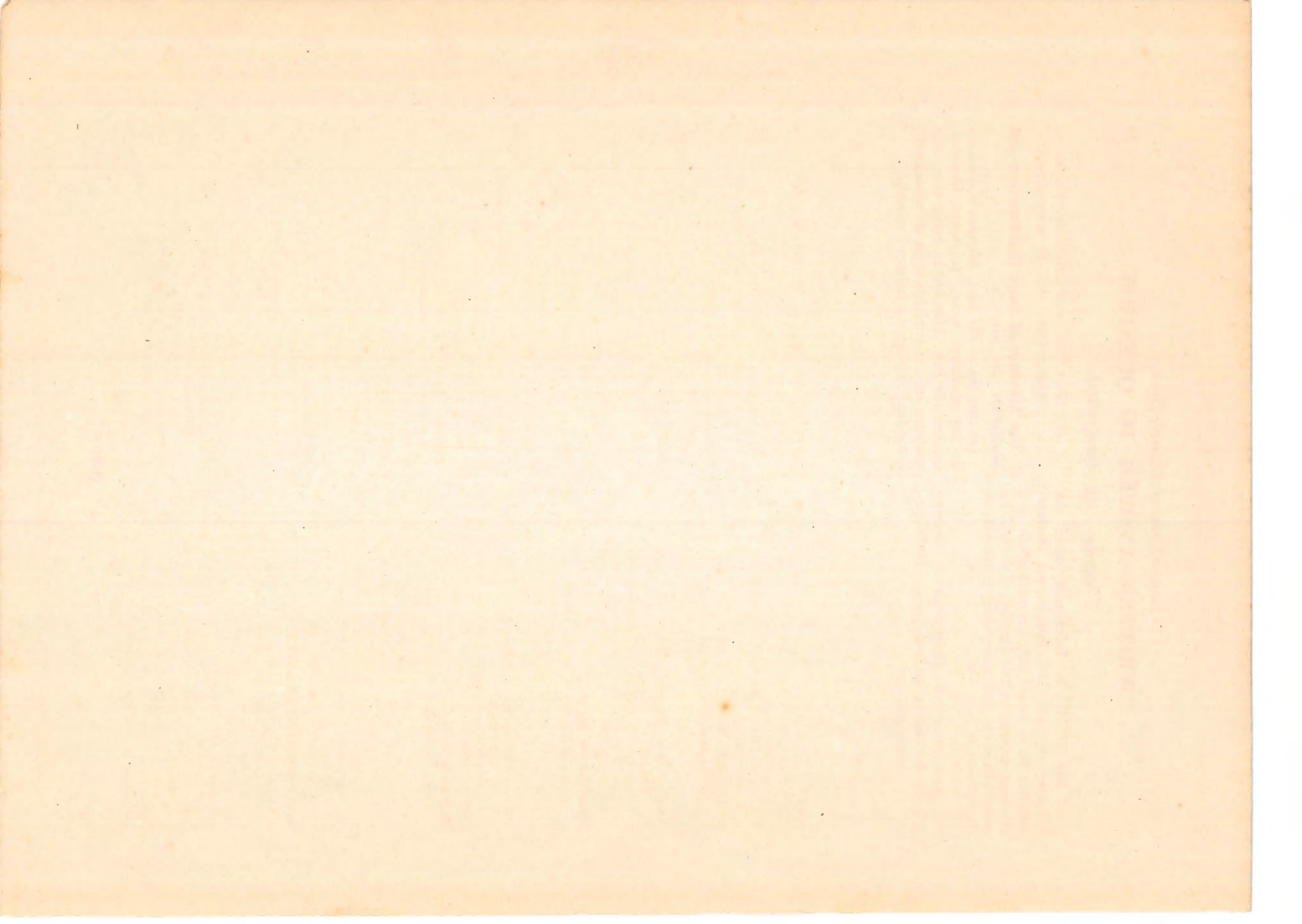
- (a) number of First School Leaving Certificate holders from 1954-58 unemployed, and

- (b) West African or Cambridge Certificate holders from 1957-58 unemployed.

**The Minister of State (Information and Welfare):** No, Sir.

(a) and (b) of the hon. Member's question do not therefore arise. It might, however, interest the hon. Member to know that such statistics are not available since all recruitment is not done through the Labour Exchange.











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