

EASTERN



REGION

NIGERIA

**Eastern House of Assembly
Debates**

OFFICIAL REPORT

SECOND SESSION

FOURTH MEETING

10th to 15th December, 1958



EASTERN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT
MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

PREMIER—Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe.
MINISTER OF PRODUCTION—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 TRANSPORT—Hon. P. O. Ururuka.
MINISTER OF INFORMATION—Hon. B. C. Okwu.
MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT—Chief the hon. A. N. Onyiuke.
MINISTER OF STATE CHARGED WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR CUSTOMARY COURTS AND THE APPOINTMENT AND RECOGNITION OF CHIEFS—Hon. R. O. Iwuagwu.
MINISTER OF COMMERCE—Hon. J. U. Nwodo.
MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE—Hon. P. O. Nwoga.
MINISTER OF EDUCATION—Hon. G. E. Okeke.
MINISTER OF HEALTH—Hon. E. P. Okoya.
MINISTER OF WELFARE—Hon. E. A. Chime.
MINISTER OF WORKS—Hon. O. U. Afiah.
ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE—Hon. M. O. Ajegbo.

OFFICE OF PREMIER AND MINISTRIES OF GOVERNMENT

Premier's Office:—

Premier: Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe.
Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. J. O. Umolu.

Ministry of Production:—

Minister: Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara.
Parliamentary Secretary: (Vacant).

Ministry of Internal Affairs:—

Minister: Hon. I. U. Akpabio.
Minister of State: Hon. R. O. Iwuagwu.
Parliamentary Secretaries: Hon. J. H. E. Nwuke.
Hon. D. O. Aligwekwe.

Ministry of Finance:—

Minister: Dr the hon. S. E. Imoke.
Parliamentary Secretary: (Vacant).

Ministry of Town Planning:—

Minister: Hon. E. Emole.
Parliamentary Secretary: Chief the hon. S. E. Onukogu.

Ministry of Transport:—

Minister: Hon. P. O. Ururuka.

Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. D. O. Nnamani.

Ministry of Information:—

Minister: Hon. B. C. Okwu.

Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. S. O. Masi.

Ministry of Local Government:—

Minister: Chief the hon. A. N. Onyiuke.

Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. M. U. Obayi.

Ministry of Commerce:—

Minister: Hon. J. U. Nwodo.

Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. E. W. Udonkim.

Ministry of Agriculture:—

Minister: Hon. P. O. Nwoga.

Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. D. A. Nnaji.

Ministry of Education:—

Minister: Hon. G. E. Okeke.

Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. L. O. Uzoigwe.

Ministry of Health:—

Minister: Hon. E. P. Okoya.

Parliamentary Secretary: (Vacant).

Ministry of Welfare:—

Minister: Hon. E. A. Chime.

Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. C. A. Okafor.

Ministry of Works:—

Minister: Hon. O. U. Afiah.

Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. R. O. Anoke.

Ministry of Justice:—

Attorney-General: Hon. M. O. Ajegbo.

Parliamentary Secretary: (Vacant).

OFFICERS OF THE HOUSE

The Speaker: (Vacant).

Deputy Speaker: Hon. C. A. Abangwu.

Clerk of the House: Mr A. E. Eronini, M.B.E.

Clerk Assistant: Mr L. O. Okoro.

Editor, Official Report (*Hansard*): (Vacant).

Assistant Editor, Official Report (*Hansard*): Mr S. B. C. Melifonwu.

Secretary-Typist: Mrs M. A. Greensill.

Sergeant-at-Arms: Mr B. O. Ajumogobia.

EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

PAPERS

Wednesday, 10th December, 1958

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

PRAYERS

(Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members, I have received a letter from the House of Representatives, Sierra Leone, which reads as follows:—

“I am directed to say that the Speaker and Members of the Sierra Leone House of Representatives have learned with regret of the death, on the 14th of August, of the Speaker of the Eastern House of Assembly, Nigeria, Mr Ernest Nwanolue Egbuna.

At the meeting of the House on the 26th of August it was resolved that a message of condolence for their great loss be sent, on behalf of the people of Sierra Leone, to the Eastern House of Assembly, Nigeria, and to the widow and family of the deceased. I have, therefore, to request that the necessary steps be taken to have this message duly placed before the House and conveyed to the widow and family of the deceased.”

I am sure it will be the wish of the House that a reply be sent to the House of Representatives, Sierra Leone, thanking them for their message of sympathy.

(Aye).

I have to report to the House that Mr John Olu Byron of the Eastern Nigeria Information Service has presented a water-colour portrait of our late Speaker to the Eastern House of Assembly. The portrait is now in hon. Ministers' retiring room, but in the course of the Meeting it will be transferred to hon. Members' retiring room so that they may have an opportunity of viewing and appreciating this work of art from the hand of a young Nigerian artist. I am sure hon. Members will wish the Clerk of the House to send a letter to Mr Byron, expressing the thanks of Members of the Eastern House of Assembly for this precious gift.

(Aye).

Mr Deputy Speaker: During the adjournment of the House a number of Papers were distributed to all Members. These Papers are deemed to have been laid upon the Table and will be entered in the Votes and Proceedings of today. They are:—

- (1) Nigerian Trade Journal No. 2, Volume 6.
- (2) Agricultural Department Annual Report, 1956-57.
- (3) Veterinary Department Annual Report, 1956-57.
- (4) Public Works Department Annual Report, 1956-57.
- (5) Report of the Fiscal Commission, 1958.
- (6) Local Government Estimates, 1958-59.
- (7) Report of the Minorities Commission, 1958.
- (8) Report of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference held in New Delhi, 1957.
- (9) Nigerian Trade Journal No. 3, Volume 6.
- (10) Forestry Department Annual Report, 1957-58.
- (11) Eastern House of Assembly Debates, First Session, First Meeting, 21st March to 10th April, 1957.
- (12) The Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology Calendar, 1958-59.
- (13) Eastern Region Staff List, revised to 1st October, 1958.
- (14) Department of Agriculture, Eastern Region, Technical Bulletin No. 2—Vegetable Growing in the Eastern Region of Nigeria.
- (15) Report by the Resumed Nigerian Constitutional Conference, September-October, 1958.
- (16) Annual Report of the Trade Department, 1957-58.
- (17) Nigerian Trade Journal No. 4.
- (18) Eastern Nigeria—Special Edition of the “Diplomatic Bulletin”.
- (19) Soil and Land Use Survey.

Presented

- (1) Eastern Region Official Document No. 4—University of Nigeria. (*The Premier*).
- (2) Draft Supplementary Estimates of the Eastern Region for 1958–59 including the Memorandum thereon. (*The Minister of Finance*).
- (3) Report of the Standing Committee on Finance for the period 21st March, 1957 to 20th February, 1958. (*The Minister of Finance*).
- (4) Report of the Director of Audit on the Voluntary Agencies Building Fund, 1956–57. (*The Minister of Finance*).
- (5) First and Second Annual Reports of the Eastern Region Library Board. (*The Minister of Information*).
- (6) Annual Report of the Eastern Nigeria Sports Commission, 1956–57 and the Report of the Director of Audit thereon. (*The Minister of Welfare*).
- (7) Produce Inspection (Amendment) Regulation, 1958.
- (8) Palm Produce (Inspection for Export) (Amendment) Regulation, 1958.
- (9) Cotton (Inspection for Export) (Amendment) Regulation, 1958.
- (10) Rubber (Inspection for Export) (Amendment) Regulation, 1958.
- (11) Cocoa (Inspection for Export) (Amendment) Regulation, 1958.
- (12) Second Annual Report of the Eastern Region Development Corporation, 1956–57. (*The Minister of Agriculture, temporarily holding Portfolio of Production*).
- (13) Eastern Region Official Document No. 5, 1958—Rural Water Supplies in the Eastern Region. (*The Minister of Works*).

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

REPORT FROM A SPECIAL COMMITTEE

The Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee (Mr A. J. Ekpe): Mr Deputy Speaker, the Public Accounts Committee which examined the Accounts of the Eastern Region of Nigeria for the year, 1956–57, the Accounts of the Eastern Regional Scholarship Fund for the years, 1954–55 and 1955–56, the Accounts of the Cinema Corporation of Nigeria for the period 1st October, 1954 to the 31st December, 1955 and for the year, 1956, the Accounts of the Eastern Nigeria Printing Corporation for the years, 1956 and 1957 and the Accounts of the Tourist Corporation of Eastern Nigeria for the year, 1956–57 have agreed upon a Report and have authorised me to lay the same on the Table.

Ordered: The Report to lie upon the Table and to be printed.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Loans for Rice Production

26. **Mr S. N. Alo** asked the Minister of Production, how many companies or individuals in Abakaliki have been granted loans for rice mill operation; what are their names and how much money was granted to each.

The Minister of Agriculture, temporarily holding Portfolio of Production: Only one loan has been issued for rice mill in Abakaliki Division. The recipient is Mr A. Ejidike, and the amount is £1,050.

Okpoha Bridge

41. **Mr S. N. Alo** asked the Minister of Transport, why the Okpoha Bridge was not built wider than it is at present.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Transport (Mr D. O. Nnamani): I am directed to answer as follows:

The Okpoha Bridge was built to Crown Agents heavy loading specifications, with an 11-foot clear deck between kerbs.

The volume of traffic would not have justified the additional cost of a dual carriage-way bridge which would have cost about twice as much.

It has been estimated that up to 240 vehicles an hour can cross the Okpoha Bridge.

Pioneer Oil Mills

84. **Mr J. O. Okeh** asked the Minister of Production, what is the total tonnage of Palm

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

5

[*Oral Answers*]

10 DECEMBER 1958

[*Oral Answers*]

6

Oil and Palm Kernels produced by the E.R.D.C. Pioneer Oil Mills in Ahoada Division during the years, 1956 and 1957, and how do these figures compare with those from other Divisions.

The Minister of Agriculture, temporarily holding Portfolio of Production: The total tonnage of Palm Oil and Palm Kernels produced in Ahoada Division by the E.R.D.C. for the

years, 1956 and 1957 are as follows:—

	1956	1957
Palm Oil	4,701	4,618
Palm Kernels	2,090	2,158

The comparative figures called for in relation to other Divisions involve a mass of detail and, with the permission of Mr Speaker, I will circulate the information sought in the official record.

<i>Division</i>	<i>No. of Mills</i>	1956				<i>Palm</i>
		<i>Fruit Milled</i>	<i>S.P.O. Produced</i>	<i>Tech. Oil Produced</i>	<i>Total Produced</i>	<i>Kernels Produced</i>
		<i>Tons</i>	<i>Tons</i>	<i>Tons</i>	<i>Tons</i>	<i>Tons</i>
Orlu	9	4,238.595	780.647	219.879	1,000.526	46.423
Okigwi	6	5,238.343	853.424	146.059	999.483	475.014
Calabar	7	10,157.574	1,775.150	—	1,775.150	711.988
Ikot Ekpene	5	2,587.583	383.964	4.416	388.380	198.085
Eket	3	2,952.946	491.358	12.526	503.884	230.669
Abak	2	514.273	77.537	3.282	80.819	37.942
Aba	9	10,471.834	1,473.138	101.326	157.464	665.898
Owerri	5	2,829.573	512.256	31.367	543.623	275.177
Bende	1	865.220	146.874	6.127	153.001	73.577
Awka	2	2,090.086	344.738	46.218	390.956	176.590
Opobo	4	5,543.906	908.660	—	908.660	342.660
Itu	1	311.596	49.491	2.457	51.948	22.066
Ogoja	4	2,063.374	313.621	21.966	335.587	179.484
Brass	2	2,242.223	164.717	91.796	256.513	178.487
Uyo	10	9,191.844	1,545.069	—	1,545.069	709.364
Ahoada	16	27,770.460	3,954.466	747.356	4,701.822	2,090.013
Obubra	2	3,206.272	578.388	—	578.388	274.827
Onitsha	6	4,618.393	728.037	133.778	861.815	385.474

<i>Division</i>	<i>No. of Mills</i>	1957				<i>Palm</i>
		<i>Fruit Milled</i>	<i>S.P.O. Produced</i>	<i>Tech. Oil Produced</i>	<i>Total Produced</i>	<i>Kernels Produced</i>
		<i>Tons</i>	<i>Tons</i>	<i>Tons</i>	<i>Tons</i>	<i>Tons</i>
Orlu	8	7,123.516	999.017	317.345	1,316.362	625.920
Okigwi	6	6,394.442	1,030.563	171.185	1,201.748	500.587
Calabar	7	9,517.315	1,714.753	31.624	1,746.377	734.585
Ikot Ekpene	5	3,128.955	420.851	37.500	458.351	269.170
Eket	3	3,203.037	543.057	12.631	555.688	260.389
Abak	3	801.663	88.149	25.847	113.996	49.150
Aba	9	12,400.623	1,661.556	244.469	1,906.025	855.808
Owerri	5	2,896.743	502.917	57.541	360.458	243.533
Bende	1	1,080.439	171.484	19.461	190.951	102.930
Awka	2	1,970.321	281.661	65.905	347.566	172.761
Opobo	4	5,400.428	861.517	—	861.517	356.896
Itu	2	887.831	139.251	10.709	149.960	81.317
Ogoja	4	1,627.670	215.531	46.550	262.081	128.346
Brass	2	2,225.691	159.805	107.666	267.471	261.432
Uyo	11	8,983.661	1,461.844	19.628	1,481.472	782.693
Ahoada	17	27,654.372	2,807.561	1,811.195	4,618.756	2,158.978
Obubra	2	2,224.531	387.355	33.339	420.694	208.163
Onitsha	6	5,488.874	830.622	154.177	984.799	469.811

Loans

88. **Mr M. N. Yowika** asked the Minister of Production, how many people from Ogoni Division have from 1953 to 1957 applied for loans; how many have been granted and what amount was granted to each.

The Minister of Agriculture, temporarily holding Portfolio of Production: Nine applications for loans were received from Ogoni Division out of which three were approved and six are now under investigation. The following three persons were granted loans:—

Mr W. O. Chithey—£450 for Cocoa Plantation.

Mr G. U. Udensi—£1,300 for Cocoa Plantation.

Ogoni Export and Import Company—£1,050 for Coffee, Cocoa and Banana Plantations.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Nationalisation of the African Continental Bank

The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke): Mr Deputy Speaker, it will be remembered that on 5th April, 1957, the hon. Premier made a statement in this House concerning the relationship between this Government and the African Continental Bank, in which the hon. Premier explained the then existing legal and constitutional difficulties in the way of nationalising the Bank, and continued—

“our plan is to seek an amendment to the Constitution as early as possible and then to introduce into this House a Bill to nationalise the African Continental Bank.”

The time has now come to explain to the House the progress made in implementation of the plan.

The first difficulty was the constitutional one. This required consultation with the other Governments of Nigeria and with the Secretary of State—all of which took time. In due course, however, the matter came before the Constitutional Conference; and by paragraph 43 of the Report of the Nigeria Constitutional Conference held in London in May and June, 1957 a recommendation was made that the

entry in the Exclusive Legislative List relating to banks and banking should be amended in the sense that:

- (a) the Federal Government should continue to have exclusive responsibility for central banking matters, exclusive powers of legislation concerning banks and banking, and exclusive power to supervise banks and banking;
- (b) the Regional Governments should be permitted to own or participate in commercial banks.

Following on this recommendation of the Constitutional Conference the matter was in due course embodied in the Constitutional Instruments themselves by means of Statutory Instrument No. 1957/1530, which was an amending Order in Council made by the Secretary of State. The effect of this amending Order in Council was to include a new Section 56B in the Constitution in the following

“Establishment of Banks by Legislatures of Regions and Southern Cameroons. (b) 56B. A law enacted by the Legislature of a Region or the Southern Cameroons may establish an authority for the purpose of carrying on (subject to and in compliance with the laws enacted by the Federal Legislature for the time being in force, and in particular such of those laws as relate to banks and banking) the business of banking in Nigeria or elsewhere, notwithstanding that banks and banking are not matters with respect to which the Legislature of a Region or the Southern Cameroons, as the case may be, is otherwise competent to make Laws, and may make such provision for the constitution of that authority, and for regulating the performance by that authority of its functions, as is not inconsistent with the laws enacted by the Federal Legislature for the time being in force.”

It will be seen, therefore, that first the recommendation of the Constitutional Conference, and then the formal action of the

Secretary of State in embodying this new provision in the Constitution Order in Council, has endorsed this Government's policy of liberalising credit for Africans by means of the introduction of an appropriate statutory body or authority to conduct banking business in accordance with the principles and policies required for the proper development of our country.

Thus, by means of the Constitutional Conference and the Constitutional Instruments, the legal and constitutional difficulties were surmounted. But these were not the only ones to be considered.

To nationalise a bank is an intricate legal proceeding in which, above all, great care must be exercised in so far as there is any question of acquiring existing private interests. On the one hand, it is most important that, if private individuals are asked to surrender some of their private property in pursuance of a Government policy, the private individuals should be properly and fairly compensated for the value of their property and should not be made to suffer unreasonable loss. On the other hand, the compensation paid by Government must be fair and reasonable to Government itself, and must not be too high a figure on the value of the assets required. In short, justice must be done between the two parties—the private interests from whom the property is being acquired for nationalisation, and the Government which, on behalf of all the people in the Region, is acquiring the property.

In applying these principles to the African Continental Bank, the first point that leaps to mind is that shares in the bank are not, like shares in the banks in the United Kingdom, freely and regularly dealt with in a stock exchange through which their value can be readily discovered because it is the value at which individuals buy and sell to each other. To find the value of the shares in the bank which is to be acquired in this case it is necessary to examine the value of the bank as a going business. This is clearly a difficult and intricate problem on which Government felt the need of the best possible expert advice.

Accordingly, once the constitutional position became reasonably clear, this Government approached the Secretary of State for the Colonies with a view to finding out the best source of technical and expert advice in this

field. On the recommendation of the Secretary of State for the Colonies the Government decided to engage the firm of Messrs Price Waterhouse and Co., who are accountants, operating in London, but with a world-wide reputation. This firm was commissioned in January, 1958. In May, 1958 their two expert representatives came to Nigeria; one of them remained here for six weeks until the middle of July; and the other made two visits during this time. They visited all the branches of the African Continental Bank and made many checks and studies.

After their return to London their report was prepared and this report was received by the Ministry of Finance in September, 1958 just before the opening of the Constitutional Conference. This report is now being studied by the Government.

Mr S. G. Ikoku (Enyong Division): We regard this as a very important statement and we just like to make it clear, Sir, that we want to state that we would like to make a reply to this statement.

The Premier (Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe): On Point of Order. The point of order is to be found in Standing Order 77. When a Minister makes a Ministerial Statement debate does not ensue but it so happens, Mr Deputy Speaker, that there is no provision for that. Standing Order 77 makes it quite clear that when there is no provision, the practice in the House of Commons would prevail. May I with your permission refer hon. Members to this particular Standing Order. It reads:

"(1) In cases of doubt the Standing Orders of this House shall be interpreted in the light of the relevant practice of the Commons House of Parliament of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

(2) In any matter for which these Standing Orders do not provide the said practice shall be followed, but no restrictions which the House of Commons has introduced by Standing Order shall be deemed to extend to the House or its Members until the House has provided by Standing Order for such restriction."

Mr Deputy Speaker, as my authority, I refer to *Erskine May* page 364. According to *Erskine May*, 16th edition, page 364 it reads as follows: "As no question is before the House debate on a Ministerial Statement is irregular". (*Applause*).

Mr Ikoku: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I like to make it clear that there is no debate. I am merely saying that we have taken notice of this statement and at a subsequent date we shall make a reply and if possible call for debate.

Mr Deputy Speaker: Order! Order! Under the Standing Order when a point is raised by any Member and he cites the relevant authorities it is for the Speaker to rule on that Standing Order. My ruling on this point is that the hon. Member, the Leader of the Opposition, has no right to make a reply. (*Hear! Hear!*).

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

The Minister of Commerce (Mr J. U. Nwodo): Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to move That pursuant to Standing Order 71—Suspension of Standing Orders—paragraphs (1) and (2) of Standing Order 4—Sittings of the House—be suspended until further notice so that the House shall sit on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. each day, and on Saturday the 13th of December, 1958, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

The motive of this Motion, Mr Deputy Speaker, is to make it possible for the House to sit on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. each day, and including Saturday the 13th December, 1958, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Hon. Members know too well that this is the Christmas Season and it is the intention of the Government that the business of the House should be carried on in a way to make it possible to finish in time.

Sir, I beg to move.

The Minister of Information (Mr B. C. Okwu): Mr Deputy Speaker, I beg to second.

Question proposed.

Mr E. O. Eyo (Uyo Division): Mr Deputy Speaker, while the Minister of Commerce was moving this Motion, we were waiting to hear why he would like to have the House to sit from 10 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. from Monday to Friday and 9 a.m. to 12 noon on Saturday. In the past, when such Motion

came up to the House, we attributed it to the fact that due to the tropical sun, Nigerians find it inconvenient to remain in the House from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. as provided in the Standing Order. Now that the House is air-conditioned, I suppose the Minister of Commerce will let us know the reason for this Motion. The main point to consider now is the fact that we will be losing one and half hours a day. If the Government really wants to expedite business, it should see that no second, no minute ought to be lost in a day. I do not see why we should be losing one and half hours a day. Further, it is hoped that the intention that the House is to sit on Saturday, 13th December, is not with a view to adjourn *sine die*. I think the Government should make it quite clear that if we do sit on Saturday that the intention is not to adjourn the House *sine die* until we shall have finished both the Government and Opposition business.

Mr Nwodo: Mr Deputy Speaker, in any case, I indicated earlier that this is Christmas season and it is our intention to expedite the business of the House, and I do not think that there are any other reasons which can be given.

We have no intention to adjourn the House on Saturday.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That pursuant to Standing Order 71—Suspension of Standing Orders—paragraphs (1) and (2) of Standing Order 4—Sittings of the House—be suspended until further notice so that the House shall sit on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. each day, and on Saturday the 13th December, 1958, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

BILLS PRESENTED

(1) 1958-59 Supplementary Appropriation (No. 1) Bill

Bill to make Supplementary Provision for the Services of the Eastern Region for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1958; presented by Dr S. E. Imoke, Minister of Finance; read the First time; to be read a Second time today.

(2) Purchase Tax

Bill to amend the Purchase Tax on Produce Law, 1954, presented by Dr S. E. Imoke, Minister of Finance; read the First time; to be read a Second time today.

(3) Goldsmiths

Bill to control and regulate the Licensing of Goldsmiths in the Eastern Region and for matters connected therewith; presented by Dr S. E. Imoke, Minister of Finance; read the First time; to be read a Second time tomorrow.

(4) Oaths and Affirmations

Bill to amend the Oaths and Affirmations Law, 1955; presented by Mr M. O. Ajegbo, Attorney-General; read the First time; to be read a Second time today.

(5) Agriculture

Bill to amend the Eastern Region Agricultural Law, 1955; presented by Mr P. O. Nwoga, Minister of Agriculture; read the First time; to be read a Second time today.

(6) Publications

Bill to amend the Publications Law, 1955; presented by Mr B. C. Okwu, Minister of Information; read the First time; to be read a Second time today.

(7) Eastern Region Development Corporation

Bill to amend the Eastern Region Development Corporation Law, 1954; presented by Mr P. O. Nwoga, Minister of Agriculture, temporarily holding Portfolio of Production; read the First time; to be read a Second time today.

(8) Local Government

Bill to amend the Eastern Local Government Law, 1955; presented by Chief A. N. Onyike, Minister of Local Government; read the First time; to be read a Second time tomorrow.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

**(1) The 1958-59 Eastern Region
Supplementary Appropriation
(No. 1) Bill**

Order for Second reading read.

The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):
Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to move that a Bill

entitled "A Bill for a Law to make Supplementary Provision for the Service of the Eastern Region for the year ending on the thirty-first day of March, one thousand nine hundred and fifty-nine" be read a Second time.

I should like first of all to point out to hon. Members that the Bill which they should have before them is a corrected Bill—pages C 147 to C 149. This Bill marks a departure from past practice necessitated by the new constitutional procedure for dealing with financial matters. It has normally been usual to have only two Appropriation Laws in respect of each financial year: one shortly before it commences, containing the main appropriations as reflected in the Approved Estimates; and one sometime after it has closed, to legalise expenditure incurred in excess of the original appropriations. During the actual financial year, all applications for the additional provision of funds have been dealt with by the Standing Committee on Finance appointed by this House and the expenditure has been incurred on their authority. The Finance Committee is now prevented from giving such authority by section 154B (2) of the Constitutional Order in Council, which provides that no warrant to incur expenditure may be issued except on the authority of a Law passed by this House.

The effect of this is that, with the exception of expenditure from the Contingencies Funds, for which there are strict rules of usage, no public moneys may be spent by the Government without the *prior* approval of the House, and I am sure that hon. Members will appreciate the greater degree of control that is thereby placed in their hands, and will use it with their customary discretion and responsibility. The change in the constitutional position will, I am afraid, involve more work for them since, however carefully the annual estimates of expenditure are prepared, it is impossible to take account of all possible eventualities in the coming financial year; and the Government will therefore certainly find it necessary to approach them twice, and possibly three times, a year with proposals such as those now before you for supplementary appropriations.

Before I comment upon the proposed additional expenditure as set out in the two Schedules to the Bill, and in more detail the Draft

[DR IMOKE]

Supplementary Estimates provided for the information of hon. Members, it may be helpful for me to give a brief exposition of our present financial situation, the more particularly so since no revised estimates of revenue, nor a fully revised financial statement, are incorporated in the documents now before the House.

You will recall that when the Annual Appropriation Bill was under consideration last April, the Government was faced with a difficult financial situation that necessitated the utmost economy in the use of our resources. While it would be irresponsible of me to pretend that the need for stringency in these matters no longer exists, it can certainly be said that the position has improved very considerably over our expectations.

The General Revenue Balance at the 31st March, 1958, was £5.3 million, as compared with a revised estimate prepared in March of £4.42 millions—an improvement of some £880,000. It may seem strange to hon. Members that an estimate prepared so late in the year can be so far out, but the discrepancy is readily explained by the facts that the Region's share of the Federal revenues was £580,000 more than had been anticipated from the figures supplied by the Federal Government, and that an extra quarter's revenue from Produce Purchase Tax was received from the Marketing Board during the financial year.

You will be pleased to hear that (although it is, of course, too early to speak yet with confidence of such large revenue sectors as the Income Tax) there is at present no indication that the revenue for the current year will fall appreciably below the sums contained in the Approved Estimates. Indeed, the Federal Government expects that our share of its revenues will be some £200,000 greater than the original estimate, and it has in addition given a most generous grant of £120,000 to assist in the extension of the Port Harcourt Water Supply; the new Purchase Tax on Auto Gas Oil has proved to be remarkably successful, and it is already safe to predict that the estimate of £42,000 from this source will be exceeded by £100,000.

To turn now to the year's expenditure prospects, there are some savings not actually reflected in the Draft Supplementary Estimates,

but they are referred to in the accompanying Memorandum (page E 125 of the printed volume) and hon. Members will not wish me to comment upon them now. The same considerations apply to the individual items of supplementary expenditure proposed, and here the comments in the Memorandum will doubtless be amplified by my Colleagues when they are speaking to the Heads of expenditure for which they are responsible. I should, however, like to draw the particular attention of hon. Members to the very comprehensive note on the Government's policy of the integration of Departments into Ministries: this note appears at the front of the Draft Supplementary Estimates and explains much that might otherwise be unintelligible in the Estimates themselves.

There is one further technical point about the Bill: you will observe that it contains two Schedules, and not as in the past, one, and all future Appropriation Bills will be in this form. The reason for this is, again, constitutional: expenditure from the various special Funds and Accounts, which was formerly authorised by Resolution of this House, must now be covered by a Law, and we have thought it simplest to do this by means of a new Clause (Number 3) and a Second Schedule to the Appropriation Bill.

I think that hon. Members will agree that the request incorporated in this Bill for additional expenditure of £700,215 is not unreasonable, in view of the facts that this sum includes the funds to meet the cost of the Resumed Constitutional Conference, and that it represents the increase required over what was admittedly a very stringent budget. I commend it to the House.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

The Minister of Local Government (Chief A. N. Onyiuke): Sir, I beg to second.

Question proposed.

And under Standing Order 67, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed on Friday, 12th December, 1958.

(2) The Purchase Tax on Produce (Amendment) Bill

Order for Second reading read.

The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke): Mr Speaker, I rise to move the Second Reading of a Bill to amend the Purchase Tax on Produce Law, 1954.

Hon. Members will recall that the original Bill passed through this House and became Law on the 31st of December, 1954. It imposed a Purchase Tax on palm produce, cocoa and benniseed purchased by the Eastern Region Marketing Board or its agents for export. This has been a most successful tax from our point of view, and it has brought us revenue amounting to £1.04 million in the 1955-56 financial year, £1.09 million in 1956-57 and £1.24 million in 1957-58, of which 99 per cent results from the tax on palm produce.

When the main Law was enacted, none of the produce handled by the Board was purchased for processing in Nigeria. It was all purchased for export, and the full effect of section 5, subsection (1), which makes it clear that *only* produce purchased for export is taxable, was not appreciated. But, the times have changed and, even in the relatively short period since the Tax was introduced, there has been a considerable expansion of Nigerian industries, some of which use, on a large scale, produce on which, if it were exported, Purchase Tax would be payable. The main sector of this Region's produce that is so affected is, of course, palm oil, large quantities of which are used in such industries as the manufacture of soap. The soap industry is not confined to this Region alone, but hon. Members will be aware that three large firms are at present engaged in this activity at Aba.

While we shall, of course, all welcome the establishment of these industries and do our best to encourage them, hon. Members will, I think, agree that it would be unwise for us to agree to forego any very large proportion of our Produce Purchase Tax merely by virtue of an oversight in the original Law imposing it. To permit the exemption of this locally purchased produce from the tax would indeed involve us in a very considerable sacrifice, since it is estimated that, at present when the industries are in their infancy, the tax payable on the produce that they use would be in the region of £50,000 per annum; and this amount would, of course, increase by

leaps and bounds as the industries get into their full stride.

The present Bill is a very simple one, and merely seeks to amend section 5, subsection (1) of the main Law so that taxable produce purchased by the Marketing Board shall be subject to the Produce Purchase Tax whether it is intended for export or for resale to local industries in Nigeria for mechanised processing. I commend the Bill to the House and trust that the explanation that I have given will make it acceptable to hon. Members.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

The Minister of Local Government (Chief A. N. Onyiuke): Sir, I beg to second.

Question proposed.

Mr Ikoku: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I do not really intend to engage in a debate. I just like to have an explanation from the hon. Minister of Finance. I thought, Sir, that the idea behind our encouraging industries locally is to reduce prices of some of those imported articles. I am afraid, Sir, that if we impose the same order of tax on produce used locally, e.g., in the manufacture of soap, it will be difficult. I think, Sir, that we would be giving the local manufacturer an opportunity to argue that they need not sell their products at a lower price than products coming in from overseas. I am well aware of the fact that tax on produce is not the only tax which these people may be called upon to pay. For example, they may be called upon to pay excise tax on their finished products. I do not know exactly what the position is and it is for this cause that I would like the hon. Minister of Finance to give this House a little bit more of his explanation. The point, Sir, is that if we in the Eastern Region embark on the policy of imposing tax on palm oil used for the manufacture of soap locally, and if the Federal Government decides to impose an excise tax on the finished products, how will the price of locally manufactured soap compare with the price of the imported goods? We really believe that the main idea behind local industries is to reduce prices of those articles and thereby reduce the cost of living and increase the standard of living in this Region.

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

19 [Purchase Tax on Produce (Amdt.) 10 DECEMBER 1958 [Purchase Tax on Produce (Amdt.) 20
Bill: 2R] Bill: Com. and 3R; Oaths and
Affirmations (Amdt.) Bill: 2R]

Dr Imoke: The only explanation I have to give in reply to the hon. Leader of the Opposition is that the question of this tax will be dealt with by the Marketing Board who will take into account all the questions he has raised to make sure that the manufacturers in this country do not suffer very seriously.

Mr O. Arikpo (Obubra Division): I regret to say that the Minister has not, in fact, addressed himself to the question. The question, Mr Speaker, is: what would be the rate of tax? Would it be the same as tax on produce for export, or would it receive preferential treatment? The Minister suggests that the Marketing Board would look into it. Are we to understand that it is the Marketing Board that fixes the tax on the policy of taxation or the Government? Perhaps the Minister will address himself to that and inform the House on taxation generally. I do not think anybody can impose this thing, but what we want to get really is the effect it will have on the prices of locally produced goods. If in fact it is going to increase the prices of locally produced goods, then we say that it is inequitable and detrimental to industrial development. That is all we are saying. Can the Minister explain?

Dr Imoke: Mr Deputy Speaker, the taxes are fixed in consultation with the Marketing Board, and as I explained before, this will have to be done by the Government and it will not weigh very badly against manufacturers.

Mr E. O. Eyo (Uyo Division): Mr Deputy Speaker, I think at the last Budget Session I did raise the question of the incidence of this purchase tax. In 1954 when the Government imposed, or introduced legislation to impose this tax it did give the undertaking, that the incidence of tax would not be passed on to the producers. Now, the position at the moment is that the Marketing Board in determining the producer prices for palm oil and palm kernels, takes into account the purchase tax that it pays eventually to the Government; so that if the price of palm oil per ton were to be £54 and the Marketing Board decides on a purchase tax of £4, the producer ultimately gets £50. We like the Government to make us understand why it has not lived to this undertaking of 1954, namely, that the incidence of this purchase tax will not be borne by the producer.

Mr E. U. Eronini (Owerri Division): Mr Deputy Speaker, the only point I would

like to raise is that the Minister should consider the issue carefully, as he said that there are other places where soap is manufactured. It is common in this country that if we can buy any commodity cheaper from other Regions, almost everybody will go there and buy it. Then the soap manufactured here will not get the ready market because if the tax which is levied is the same as the purchase tax levied on export palm oil it may lead to a high price on soap manufactured in the Eastern Region. We know that it is easy nowadays to go to Lagos with lorries carrying soap. If there is a difference of about a pound, a trader will come out here and sell it and make a pound difference and then we will be having more soap from the Western Region and from the Capital of Nigeria, coming up to the Eastern Region and then our soap here will be at a higher price. We would like that there should be a difference between the excise duty and tax levied on export of oil and tax levied for oil to be used for industrial purposes within the Region.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a Second time.

Bill immediately considered in Committee.

(In the Committee)

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

(Mr Deputy Speaker resumed the Chair)

Bill reported without amendment, read the Third time and passed.

(3) **The Oaths and Affirmations (Amendment) Bill**

Order for Second reading read.

The Attorney-General (Mr M. O. Ajegbo): Mr Deputy Speaker, this is a non-controversial Bill. It is simply a technical amendment. Formerly, the hon. Premier was charged with responsibility for the Administration of Justice. This is no longer so. The amendment replaces the words "the Premier of the Region", where they occur, with the words "the Minister".

Sir, I beg to move.

The Minister of Local Government (Chief A. N. Onyiuke): Sir, I beg to second.

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a Second time.

Bill immediately considered in Committee.

(In the Committee)

Clauses 1-3 agreed to.

(Mr Deputy Speaker resumed the Chair)

Bill reported without amendment, read the Third time and passed.

(4) The Eastern Region Agricultural (Amendment) Bill

Order for Second reading read.

The Minister of Agriculture (Mr P. O. Nwoga): Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to move the Second reading of the Bill for a Law to amend the Eastern Region Agricultural Law, 1955. This is an extremely simple Bill which has been necessitated only by the changes in our civil service which have taken place. When the Regional Agricultural Law was passed, the Secretary of the Economic Planning Commission was made a member of the Board of Agriculture. The post of the Secretary to the Economic Planning Commission no longer exists and the responsibility for the Economic Planning is now in the hands of the Ministry of Finance. This Bill, therefore, seeks to regularise the position so that the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Finance or his representative should be a member of the Board of Agriculture in place of the defunct post of Secretary to the Economic Planning Commission.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I beg to move.

The Minister of Local Government (Chief A. N. Onyiuke): Sir, I beg to second.

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a Second time.

Bill immediately considered in Committee.

(In the Committee)

Clauses 1 to 2 agreed to.

(Mr Deputy Speaker resumed the Chair)

Bill reported without amendment, read the Third time and passed.

(5) The Publications (Amendment) Bill

Order for Second reading read.

The Minister of Information (Mr B. C. Okwu): Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to move the Second reading of the Bill for a law to amend the Publications Law, 1955.

By the terms of section 3 of the Publications Law, it is required that the publisher of every book published in the Eastern Region should send, free of charge, four copies of the book to the Registrar of Publications and two copies to the University College, Ibadan.

It is now felt that this courtesy should be extended to the Eastern Regional Library Board, the University College of Nigeria and the University College, Ghana. I am sure that all Members will agree that this is a desirable measure and that they will be able to give whole-hearted support to this amending Bill.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I beg to move.

The Minister of Local Government (Chief A. N. Onyiuke): Mr Deputy Speaker, I beg to second.

Question proposed.

Mr Ikoku: Mr Deputy Speaker, as the hon. Minister of Information has pointed out, the whole idea behind this Bill is to extend this privilege enjoyed by the University College, Ibadan, to the University College of Ghana and, of course, our own local University—the University of Nigeria.

I am in support of the idea that free copies should be made available to the University College, Ghana but we on this side of the House cannot understand the principle behind this proposition. What is the principle behind this proposition that three copies should be sent to University College, Ghana? If it is a question of sending copies to sister countries in West Africa, then Mr Deputy Speaker, why is Fourah Bay College, Sierra Leone omitted. Afterwards, we are aware of the fact that Fourah Bay College, Sierra Leone, and the former Achimota College, Gold Coast, were the leading institutions of higher learning in West Africa until we got the University College, Ibadan. If we are going to be courteous to Ghana, I do not see any reason why we should not be courteous to Sierra Leone. If on the other hand the principle is not that of sisterhood but that we should send copies to the Members of the Commonwealth, then I am sure that this will be a very long way because Commonwealth Universities in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Britain, India, Pakistan and Ceylon will all

[MR IKOKU]

have to come in. So I take it, Sir, that the principle behind the Government's proposition is that the sister countries in West Africa should at least belong to one fraternity for literary purposes and therefore we strongly suggest that the Government should consider that this courtesy be extended to Fourah Bay College.

Mr Okwu: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I wish to assure the Leader of the Opposition that it was not intentional to slight the Fourah Bay College and that his suggestion is well taken by the Government. At the Committee Stage he may like to move an amendment and I can assure him that the Government will accept it.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a Second time.

Bill immediately considered in Committee.

(In the Committee)

Cause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2.

Mr E. O. Eyo: Mr Chairman, Sir, I beg to move that in line 9, after the word "Ghana", to insert the words "Fourah Bay College, Sierra Leone". Now, Sir, I will like to know how many Members of this House know the service that the Fourah Bay College is rendering to Nigeria as a whole and to the Eastern Region in particular.

Sir, on our way back from the London Constitutional Conference we had the honour of visiting the Fourah Bay College. When I say "we" I mean all the Delegates from Nigeria and their Advisers. We had the honour of addressing the students. What will interest you, Sir, is that there is a large number of Nigerian students there—they number up to 120 at least.

An hon. Member: No. 130.

Mr E. O. Eyo: Yes, at least there are 120 or 130 of them this year reading at the Fourah Bay College, and the President of the Nigerian Union there happens to be an Easterner from Nsukka. Now, Sir, the complaint made to us was that there are about a thousand applications to that University and the University has only a few places for the students, whereas the record of examination results is very good. We are happy that the Government has no opposition to this amendment.

Sir, I beg to move.

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Clause 2 as amended agreed to.

(Mr Deputy Speaker resumed the Chair)

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

(6) The Eastern Region Development Corporation (Amendment) Bill

Order for Second reading read.

The Minister of Agriculture, temporarily holding the Portfolio of Production (Mr P. O. Nwoga): Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to move the Second reading of a Bill entitled "A Law to amend the Eastern Regional Development Corporation Law of 1954".

This is an extremely simple Bill and as hon. Members will have seen from the Objects and Reasons as published with the Bill, it is intended that the number of meetings that the Corporation can hold in any one year will be limited to four unless the prior approval of the Minister has been obtained in writing. It also enables the Minister responsible for the E.R.D.C. to give it directions without the necessity for prior consultation with the Corporation.

The first amendment needs no explanation from me. In the past some Corporations, and I do not necessarily mean the Development Corporation, have met at very frequent intervals when it has not been entirely necessary to do so. This leads to some unnecessary expense and it is therefore felt that if the number of meetings were limited by statute to four a year, the Corporation will still be able to carry out its functions adequately.

The second amendment, that giving the Minister power to give the Corporation directions without prior consultation, is naturally contingent on the first amendment because as the Law stands, if the Minister responsible wishes the Corporation to carry out a certain function he must consult them and should the Corporation not agree to carry out that function the matter would have to be referred back to the Minister stating the objections and be once more referred to the Corporation. This leads to inevitable delay and there may

well be occasions when it is necessary to instruct the Corporation to carry out a specific direction as a matter of urgency.

Both these amendments will of course enable the Minister responsible to maintain an effective control over the affairs of the Corporation.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I beg to move.

The Minister of Local Government (Chief A. N. Onyiuke): Sir, I beg to second.

Question proposed.

Mr Ikoku: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is difficult to agree entirely with Government as to the second object of this Amendment Bill. The first object, Sir, is that the Corporation should not hold more than four meetings in a year and whenever they want to hold any meeting they should get the approval of the Minister; we agree.

The second object is what we find difficult to agree with—to enable the Minister responsible to give direction without the necessity for prior consultation with the Corporation. You will remember, Sir, that several months ago, the problem of the control of Public Corporations came up in this House. We took a very clear stand on the matter. We insisted and we still insist that these Corporations should not regard themselves as above the Minister and in a position to do just as they like; that the Minister should be in a position to exercise complete control over the affairs of the Corporations. At that time, I warned that it was dangerous to go too far, in converting Corporations into Departments of Government and actually running the Corporations as part of the Civil Service. I think, Sir, that this second objective is an attempt to go a little bit too far. There must be a provision, Sir, that a Corporation cannot go about its affairs as it likes without the sanction and approval of the Minister. To put it the other way, and say that the Minister should give direction without any prior consultation with the Corporation is, I think, going too far. The Corporations are statutory bodies and the Minister has a right to give general direction to any Corporation; but I think wisdom dictates that there should be consultation. The Minister should be in a position to get the point of view of the Corporation and to make his own point of view known

to the Corporation before a final ruling is given by the Minister. We agree entirely that where there is a difference between the Corporation's views and the views of the Minister, it is the latter's—the views of the Minister—which must prevail; but what we insist, Sir, is that there should be a system of exchange of views before the ruling is made. If the Minister could not consult the Corporation, you know what it is—that is that the administration is becoming increasingly difficult for the man at the head, who is most anxious for an easy way out. No Minister should like to give a directive without consultation with the Corporation. So that the argument that the Minister will consult, even if he did not wish to do so, strikes me as rather unacceptable. I still maintain that the wisest course of action is to tie the Minister down to having consultations with his Corporation, the Chairman and the members of the Board and where they are disagreeable, the Minister's views should prevail.

Mr E. O. Eyo: The Leader of the Opposition has pointed out the danger involved in the proposed amendment. It is regretted that we have to debate this aspect of the amendment because it involves the most important and the largest of the Public Corporations in the Eastern Region. At the moment, Sir, we know who the Chairman of the E.R.D.C. is. I think he is a person in whom Government has implicit confidence and who was chosen by the Government; but are the Board Members there as the Directors of the E.R.D.C.? Are they, on their own, to employ executive staff? So, that is asking too much to ask the House to agree that the Minister, whoever the Minister may be, in charge of the E.R.D.C., should be in a position to give directions to the E.R.D.C. without the necessity of consulting the Board. We are not saying that he should act on the approval of the Board. That would be sheer nonsense. Are we going to convert the E.R.D.C. into a Department of Government?

After all, Sir, the Minister is only advised by his Permanent Secretary, who happens to be a civil servant. But, Sir, in the E.R.D.C., you have men who are not civil servants. For instance, we have the General Manager. The new General Manager has been recruited from the U.A.C. He must have been somebody with twenty-five to thirty years of managerial

[MR E. O. EYO]

experience. He will have his own ideas about how certain things should be done. The Chairman, who is an eminent business man, will also have certain ideas about how certain things should be done. The Chartered Accountant and all the other members of the Board are there to advise the Board; so that it will be to the best interest of both the Chairman and the E.R.D.C. if the Minister gives his direction in consultation with the management of the E.R.D.C. I hope my point is clear and that the Government has seen the danger in allowing the Minister to give direction without the necessity to consult. Afterwards, what does "to consult" mean? It is to tell the Chairman what should be done and hear from him what his views are. He may be advised. He may not see eye to eye with the Minister. The purpose of consultation is to enable the Minister to take advantage of the point of view of the other side. It will be dangerous for us to allow the Minister to issue directions to the E.R.D.C. without first of all consulting.

Mr Nwoga: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, we cannot afford to blow hot and cold in this hon. House. I do remember that the Leader of Opposition was the very man who stood up on the floor of this House when we discussed Corporations and he did make this point.

Mr E. O. Eyo: What does that mean?

Mr Nwoga: It can mean anything. What I want to point out is that this is not the first amendment of this kind. We have also passed such amendment in connection with other Corporations; and as it was, if there is any Corporation in which such amendment should be incorporated, we shall do so. (*App-lause*). You cannot tell me that the Minister will not know when he will consult. Nobody is perfect. If it is necessary for him to consult the members of the Board, nothing will stop him from doing so. We have to stop this unnecessary waste of time. If a Member or Members will first go to consult people before any appointment is made, perhaps to pay £20 or £30, it will be wrong to expect the Minister to go and call upon anybody. And that is the way we intend to use the power under this amendment.

Mr A. J. Ekpe (Opobo Division): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, it appears to me that what escaped the notice of the Minister is that he does not know where the line is between a Government Department and a Public Corporation. Public Corporations must be in a position to take risks and make snap-shot decisions. The object of this amendment, Sir, is to put a public Corporation exactly on the same footing as a Government Department, and when that happens the essence of public Corporation is completely lost and in fact the business aspect is also lost. I wish, Sir, that the Minister should recast this amendment. It is impossible for the Minister to issue directives to the Corporation without consulting the experts. As it is put down here, nothing stops the Minister from exercising his power. The Minister should give a measure of freedom so that it can operate as a business venture.

Mr Ajegbo: Mr Deputy Speaker, I think there is a little bit of inconsistency in the approach of the Opposition. We made amendments to Laws establishing various Corporations not long ago—and if I may refresh your memory—you will find in section 7 of the Eastern Region Library Board (Amendment) Law, 1955, exactly the words Members of the Opposition are quarrelling with now. The same applies to section 7 of the Cinema Corporation of Nigeria (Amendment) Law, 1958. You will find that the same amendment was made to the Tourist Corporation Law. I do not see why we should treat the Eastern Region Development Corporation differently from others. That would be inconsistent.

Mr O. Arikpo (Obubra Division): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Attorney-General has missed the whole point of the Opposition considerably. The Eastern Region Development Corporation is not on all fours with the Tourist Corporation, the Library Board or the Sports Commission. The E.R.D.C. is the life-blood of the economic development of this Region, and therefore the point of the Opposition is that because of the special economic importance it cannot be treated as a Government Department. It should be above all political considerations, because the Corporation is dealing with matters which are well above politics and therefore it is in essence

everything on commercial lines. Now, this does not always agree with political considerations and all we are saying is that on the whole the Minister should not be free to give directions in all cases in matters dealing with it. You should be prepared to support an amendment which makes it clear that the Minister need not consult the Board in certain matters. The law should make it obligatory for the Minister to consult, as has been pointed out, the expert advice of the accumulated experience of the people on the Board. That is all we are asking for, as there are a number of matters in which consultation is unnecessary; and if the amendment would provide, on lines suggested, that in certain matters the Minister need not consult the Board, it will solve the difficulty.

It is possible to strike a balance between allowing so much freedom to the Corporation and not harming its activities so much by Ministerial directions and if the Minister at the Committee stage can remake this amendment, it would be perfectly acceptable.

Dr W. N. Onubogu (Onitsha Division): I only want to add a little point because the Attorney-General has said that after all, there is no reason why this should be treated as a special case. I feel that this is the most important Corporation because this Government has spent plenty of money on it. We must realise that a free hand should not be given to the Minister where he can give directions anywhere even in the Ball-room and/or in the Tennis Court. (*Laughter*). It is not at all the same thing with small corporations. As a matter of fact, I regard other Corporations as Party Corporations. These Corporations would wind up at any time but the E.R.D.C. is a very important one. We cannot allow the Minister to give directions anyhow. He must start from consultation to enable the many... (*Interruption*). After all, there is a trial balance for the members of Corporation.

Mr Okwu: Point of Order! The speaker has an eagle feather on his cap. He is not a Chief. (*Laughter*).

Dr Onubogu: Mr Deputy Speaker, this shows you how Ministers take their work seriously and that is why all of them are laughing. You can say what you like. You know what that means in Ibo land.

I am saying that the affairs of this most important Corporation should not be mishandled. It does not matter whether other Corporations should be wound up at any time. (*Interruptions*). We are not going to allow you to give directions anyhow you like.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Town Planning (Chief S. E. Onukogu): Mr Deputy Speaker, in supporting the Motion I like to point out that my Friends in the Opposition party who are opposing the Motion do not seem to realise what is meant by the Head of the Department or the Head of a Corporation. I see no reason why a Minister—a responsible Minister—who is in charge of a Corporation or of a Department should not be given the latitude to use his discretion. (*Hear! Hear!*). I think the time has come when the people opposing the Motion will not always waste the time of this House for the purpose of... (*Interruption*). The last speaker before me had been a Minister in this Government and he had a good latitude to use his discretion.

The Minister of Information (Mr B. C. Okwu): Mr Deputy Speaker, I wish to make a few points. In the first place, it does appear to me that Members of the Opposition are confused in their thinking because they have not been able to prove to this House that the same principles were not followed when the previous amendments passed through this House. It will be remembered that the speech of the Leader of Opposition which was quoted has not been denied. I am saying, Sir, that what we are concerned with at the moment are the principles underlying the amendment. These principles were acceptable to the Opposition at the last meeting and today arguments have been advanced that the E.R.D.C. is such an important Corporation that it should be treated differently. I may humbly say, Sir, that this line of thinking is most illogical. I am submitting, too, Sir, that the mere fact that provision is made does not necessarily imply that the provision will always be used. (*Interruption*). I promise that if only you can be attentive I will prove my points. I am saying, Sir, that this provision should not give alarm to the Members of the Opposition. It is reasonable to provide such a power for the Minister to use when the need arises; after all, it will be the responsibility of the Minister

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

31

[E.R.D.C. (Amdt.) Bill:

10 DECEMBER 1958

Second Reading]

32

[MR OKWU]

to ensure that the Corporation operates successfully or achieves the purpose for which it was established. It is the responsibility of the Minister to answer for the activities of the Corporation. I am saying that it will be most unthinkable to suggest that the hands of the Minister should be crippled. I am saying, Sir, that if such a provision passes through the House it can only be used when the need for it arises. In other words, there may be minor issues which may not be necessary for consultation to take place. There may be occasions, when in the interest of the Corporation and the Region that the Minister has got to use his power as required by this provision. I am saying that the Government wears the shoes and knows where the shoes pinch it.

The fact that the E.R.D.C. has more than £6 million in its purse makes it necessary for the person who takes the responsibility to be equipped to ensure that the E.R.D.C. does not . . . (*Interruption*).

Finally, I wish to reiterate the saying that "example is the best teacher". When the hon. Dr Onubogu spoke and propounded his beautiful views of how busy a Minister ought to be, I can only call the attention of the House to the fact that this Gentleman was once a Minister. If the standard he himself set then is the criterion to judge between what he is saying now and what he was at the time he was a Minister, I am submitting, Sir, that we have nothing to learn from him, or from the Gentlemen of the Opposition who have elected to teach us. We will run this Region for the period we have been elected to be in Office and I should say that we have a duty to succeed.

Mr S. T. Akpan (Eket Division): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, it appears to me that the Government has something to hide in this matter. I do not know why the Minister cannot tell us the exact position.

Hon. Members: A rolling stone.

Mr Akpan: Yes, I rolled away from a Party of traitors.

Now, Sir, I think the Minister has failed in forcing his opinion against the expert advice of the managers of the Corporation,

and when this has been experienced, he comes to ask the House to grant him absolute power to run the Corporation. Sir, we are not prepared to support this totalitarian request. It is said that this power has been given to other Ministers. That is right. But, Sir, I would like to ask why this amendment was not introduced at that time too. They thought they could carry on the work without necessarily asking for power. Now, probably for political reasons, they want to subject the General Manager and the Chairman of the E.R.D.C. to their whims and caprices. This, we are not prepared to support.

Sir, we are strongly opposed to this grant of power. If they knew very well that the decision of the Minister was final, they should provide in the Law that "after consultation" (whatever may be the case), the decision of the Minister should be final. We would accept that, Sir. But to have the whole of this clause deleted "After consultation with the Corporation", we are not prepared to support.

Mr M. E. Ogon (Ikom Division): Mr Deputy Speaker, I do not think there is anything controversial in such a simple Bill of this kind. There has been a lot of fun and we have enjoyed it. Sir, I only want to make a few simple points. It is a pity that this amendment had not come earlier on. If it had come in about four years ago, perhaps some of us who have had cause to regret over the activities of the E.R.D.C. would not have had it. I think it is very necessary that Ministers who are virtually accountable to the people of this Region, should be given sufficient powers to control the affairs of this Region. I want to say, Sir, that I support Public Corporations in principle. The Eastern Region has benefited immensely by having Public Corporations. But it is just that we have been so democratic that Ministers cannot control the people. Sir, I am asking all hon. Members and Ministers to support this amendment. Even in the United Kingdom—if you study the trend in the United Kingdom—you will see that the Government Party has the power to nationalise industries. And now we are trying to work a system whereby a Minister should have powers to control the Corporation.

Mr Ikoku: Is it the same power as you have in this Bill?

Mr Ogon: Yes, the same power. Fun aside, it is not true that the people who work in the E.R.D.C. are better experts than the experts in the Ministries. Honestly, a Government adviser is a better expert than that of any Public Corporation. I am very sure of that. In any event, we should rely on the Minister for this power. But what power are you granting the Minister? Is it the power to stop people from coming to Enugu unnecessarily? Is that what you are talking about?

I want to say, Sir, that we give the Minister authority to exercise the powers vested in him by this House, and the Minister should exercise these powers to the best interest of the Region.

Mr M. N. Onwuma (Aba Division): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, this attitude of running with the hare and hunting with the fox at the same time has got to be stopped. During the last session, in one of the most brilliant speeches of the Leader of the Opposition, it was decided that the amendment now coming on was necessary for all Corporations. Now, the Leader of Opposition says that it is not necessary. It is impossible to understand his line of argument. If the Minister gives a direction which is not acceptable to the House surely the Leader of Opposition and his henchmen can bring an amendment to this House. If Mr E. O. Eyo, for example, were made a Minister and placed in charge of a Corporation it will be his duty to see that the Corporation functioned properly. The points made by the Leader of the Opposition are, therefore, irrelevant.

Mr A. G. Umoh (Enyong Division): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is a pity that the Government has always found it difficult to accept good advice from the Opposition. The hon. Attorney-General has stated that since other Corporations were allowed this privilege of being controlled by Ministers then it should be passed to all Corporations. In other words if one Minister was sacked then all the Ministers should be sacked. The hon. Minister of Commerce has argued that it is the aim of Government to tighten the control of all Corporations without exception. We must have an exception and the exception is what we are asking here.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, if you would allow me I would like to refer hon. Members to the type of responsibility placed on Ministers. A certain Parliamentary Secretary one Sunday morning went to his home town and got installed as a Chief by his friends. He came back and reported to his Minister that he had been made a Chief and requested that he should be recognised.

Mr Nwodo: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, Point of Order: section 25 (2) of the Standing Orders says "A Member must confine his observations to the subject under discussion and may not introduce matter irrelevant thereto". What is being debated is the Eastern Region Development Corporation (Amendment) Bill, 1958, and not Recognition of Chiefs Law. So the hon. Member should confine his speech to the subject.

Mr Deputy Speaker: It is sometimes necessary for a Member, in order to make his points clear, to refer to another matter, and I think that is what the hon. Member is trying to do.

Mr Umoh: Thank you, Sir.

The Minister said "Alright, I will look into the whole matter". In spite of vehement protest from the clan from which the Parliamentary Secretary hails, the said Minister announced that the Parliamentary Secretary had been recognised as a Chief. This is the sort of responsibility exercised by Ministers. I consider it wrong for the Minister to impose a Chief on a whole clan against the wishes of the people of the clan. I hope that the new powers now sought by the Acting Minister of Production will not be used as arbitrarily as in the case of the above Minister and his Parliamentary Secretary.

The Premier: I am sorry that it has become necessary for this debate to run on. It is good that we should do that because it reflects credit on the alertness of the Opposition and also of the Government Party. I would like to say, Mr Deputy Speaker, that the main reason why the amendment was made in the first instance, at the last meeting of this House was because my worthy Friend, the Leader of the Opposition, made a very strong criticism of these Statutory Bodies and called upon Government to tighten the control of these Statutory Bodies.

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

35 [E.R.D.C. (Amdt.) Bill: 2R] 10 DECEMBER 1958 [E.R.D.C. (Amdt.) Bill: Com.] 36

[THE PREMIER]

But in order to disabuse the minds of the Opposition and one or two independents who are here, I would like to assure them that there is no intention whatsoever on the part of the Government to arm Ministers with dictatorial powers. We only tried to carry out your wishes. You felt that these Corporations should be run efficiently and found out that there are certain lapses in the present laws, but unless these lapses are rectified, it would be very difficult for any average Minister to tighten control over these Statutory Bodies.

May I refer, for example, to that relevant section of law No. 12 of the Eastern Region 1954 and with your permission, Mr Deputy Speaker, may I read:—

“Section 14 (1):

“The Minister may, after consultation with the Corporation, give to the Corporation directions of a general or specific character as to the exercise and performance by the Corporation of any of its functions in relation to matters appearing to him to concern the public interest and the Corporation shall give effect to such directions”.

We have had experiences of such a nature and we therefore feel, Mr Speaker, that the whole debate should centre around the principle of Ministerial responsibility. If the Ministers will come to this House and be responsible for the affairs of Statutory Bodies, and that is in accordance with Standing Orders 11 and 12, because the Ministers may be asked questions and they come here and give answers, no Minister will be justified to come here and say: “Well, there has been some mistakes, but I did consult the Corporation before so acting”. I am sure the Opposition will be amongst the first to blame and even insist that such a Minister be removed on the ground that he is inefficient. That being the case, it is necessary that we should so frame our laws and so leave no Corporation in doubt as to the powers of Ministers. Therefore, if we expect Ministers to come here and assume responsibility for Statutory Bodies, I think it is fair, other things being equal and I am submitting that other things are equal, that Ministers should be allowed to give directions of a general or specific character to enable Corporations to carry out such directions and then if such Corporations act wrongly, the Ministers shall

come here and face the music; and it will be fair. But it will be most unfair to insert in the law that the Minister must first of all consult the Corporation before giving directions. It is quite obvious that if the Corporation is not consulted in the detailed directions, it will show no force to such directions. I therefore feel that, in order to tighten the control which the Opposition Members are asking for, and in order to enable the Ministers feel that they come here to defend any Statutory Bodies and stand or fall strictly on such merit, this amendment is necessary and very imperative in fact. And in view of the fact that this House has already established a precedent, it shows that you agree with the principle that we should tighten control of Statutory Bodies, irrespective of the fact whether the control be £1,000 or £6 million. Statutory Bodies in principle are the same and this same principle has enabled us to enact these laws.

For the above reasons, I am afraid that the Government Bench will not be able to accommodate our hon. Friends on the Opposition on this occasion, because we feel we have created a precedent and we feel that Ministers should stand or fall strictly on merit and the law should make it possible for them to know what they are responsible for. (*Hear! Hear!*).

Mr Deputy Speaker: Are the Members of the Opposition opposing this?

Mr E. O. Eyo: We are not opposing the Second Reading, but we shall come to it later on.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a Second time.

Bill immediately considered in Committee.

(In the Committee)

Clauses 1 to 3 agreed to.

Clause 4.

Question proposed that Clause 4 stand part of the Bill.

Question put. The Committee divided.

Ayes 55. Noes 19.

Division No. 1

Ayes

1.10 p.m.

Mr W. Abengowe
Mr O. U. Afiah
Chief G. N. Agbasiere
Mr D. S. A. Agim
Mr D. E. Akilo
Mr H. U. Akpabio
Mr D. O. Aligwekwe
Mr S. N. Alo
Mr P. U. Amaefunah
Mr J. W. E. Anaba
Mr R. O. Anoke
Dr N. Azikiwe
Mr E. Chidolue
Mr A. O. Chikwendu
Mr E. A. Chime
Mr E. Emole
Mr U. Enyi
Mr E. U. Eronini
Mr J. O. Ihekwoaba
Dr S. E. Imoke
Mr J. M. Ito
Mr R. O. Iwuagwu
Mr S. E. K. Iwueke
Mr S. O. Masi
Mr D. A. Nnaji
Mr D. O. Nnamani
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
Mr K. J. N. Okpokam
Mr B. C. Okwu
Chief S. E. Onukogu
Mr P. A. Onwe
Mr N. O. Onwudiwe
Mr M. N. Onwuma
Chief A. N. Onyiuke
Rev. M. D. Opara
Mr E. W. Udonkim
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 J. E. Eyo

Noes

Mr S. O. Achara
Mr J. A. Agba
Mr S. T. Akpan
Mr S. J. Amachree
Mr O. Arikpo
Mr H. U. E. Edelduok
Rev. O. Efiang, C.B.E.
Mr J. A. Etuhube
Mr M. U. Etuk
Mr E. O. Eyo

Mr S. G. Ikoku
Mr E. Ita
Mr O. O. Ita
Mr O. B. Nalelo
Dr W. N. Onubogu
Mr A. G. Umoh
Mr M. N. Yowika

Tellers for the Noes:

Chief I. I. Morphy
Mr A. J. Ekpe

Clause 4 agreed to.

(Mr Deputy Speaker resumed the Chair)

Bill reported without amendment, read the Third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved: That this House do now adjourn. *Adjourned accordingly at twenty minutes past one o'clock p.m.*
(The Minister of Commerce, Mr J. U. Nwodo).

APPENDIX
WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS
Answers to Questions received during Adjournment
(24th May-9th December, 1958)

Local Purchase Order Books

2. **Mr W. Abengowe** asked the Minister of Finance, how many Local Purchase Order Books were reported lost within the last twelve months in the Eastern Region; how much revenue of this Region was involved in the loss of these books; what are the factors responsible for the frequent loss of Local Purchase Order Books in the Region, and what efforts are being made to curb this menace.

The Minister of Finance: I am very happy to say that, contrary to the hon. Member's understanding, there is not a frequent loss of Local Purchase Order Books in this Region. Not a single book has been lost in the last twelve months. The hon. Member may know that a large number of these books is used each year. Each book contains fifty sets of forms. The rules regarding their custody are so strictly adhered to that only eighteen forms were lost over the last twelve months. These losses always took place after the form had been removed from the book. Whether any were stolen, I cannot say, but the vigilance of issuing officers and firms resulted in no loss to Government.

Clerical Assistants

13. **Mr R. O. Ukuta, M.B.E.** asked the Premier, what points of the Scale Clerical Assistants with the following educational qualifications enter the Service: Standard VI, Secondary Classes 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5; are these points of entry progressive by one step according to educational qualifications and if not, why; will Government consider absorbing into the standard Clerical Grade after one year's service, and subject to good work and conduct, Clerical Assistants who have successfully completed a Secondary School course, but who have failed to obtain the Cambridge School Certificate.

The Premier: The minimum educational qualification for appointment to the grade of Clerical Assistant is Middle IV. The scale of salary is F 1, 2, 3 which ranges from £114 to £276.

In exceptional cases candidates with lower qualification may be appointed provided they are holders of at least Middle II certificate and (a) are otherwise exceptionally qualified, or (b) are already serving in subordinate posts and are particularly suitable for promotion to the grade of Clerical Assistant. Such under-qualified candidates are engaged on an unestablished monthly-paid range of £96, £102, £108. They may be promoted to the establishment on £114 in Scale F 1 without necessarily completing three years if they prove themselves fit. Thus the candidate with a Class III secondary qualification would be engaged initially on the same unestablished monthly rate as the candidate with a Class II secondary qualification. It is possible that the better qualified candidate would prove himself fit for the established grade sooner than the less qualified candidate.

Candidates with qualifications higher than Middle IV but who are not qualified for the Standard Clerical Grade of 3rd Class Clerk are employed on £114, the minimum of Clerical Assistants Scale.

All Clerical Assistants, no matter what their educational background, may, after they have served for three years and been confirmed, attend a course at the Clerical Training School, on successful completion of which they may be absorbed into the Standard Clerical Grade which has a minimum salary of £150. In accordance with a recent Government decision, Clerical Assistants aged thirty years or more are eligible for conversion to the Standard Clerical Grade if they pass the combined confirmation/promotion test normally taken by Third-class Clerks. They are required to have reached a salary of at least £165 as Clerical Assistants.

Grants-in-Aid

44. **Mr G. C. Okeya** asked the Minister of education, the amount of Grants-in-Aid that was paid on salaries, allowances, maintenance and buildings for the period 1954-58 to:— Government Schools and Colleges, Roman

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

	1954			1953-54			1955		1954-55				1956			1955-56			1957			
	Salaries and Arrears	Expat. and Resp. Allowances	Running Expenses	A.L.C.	Grant Paid	Building Grant	Salaries and Arrears	Expat. and Resp. Allowances	Running Expenses	A.L.C.	Grant Paid	Building Grant	Salaries and Arrears	Expat. and Resp. Allowances	Running Expenses	A.L.C.	Grant Paid	Building Grant	Salaries and Arrears	Expat. and Resp. Allowances	Running Expenses	A.L.C.
..	44,886	17,485	10,592	17,565	55,368	8,775	62,981	19,534	11,492	17,130	76,877	9,000	68,418	20,316	15,151	21,852	82,034	300	78,132	25,688	13,771	23,518
..	53,131	9,803	17,081	19,224	60,554	14,100	65,297	11,065	18,430	18,726	80,431	22,600	72,956	10,621	23,605	22,431	84,751	15,000	84,218	18,032	22,910	25,536
s, etc.	47,241	1,375	6,450	22,325	32,741	21,850	71,507	2,713	—	18,300	56,099	17,500	80,871	3,416	10,500	31,500	63,276	11,300	96,247	5,299	12,075	36,225
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15,000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

F

F

F

TEACHER-TRAINING COLLEGES

	1954			1953-54			1955		1954-55				1956			1955-56			1957			
	Salaries and Arrears	Expat. and Resp. Allowances	Running Expenses	A.L.C.	Grant Paid	Building Grant	Salaries and Arrears	Expat. and Resp. Allowances	Running Expenses	A.L.C.	Grant Paid	Building Grant	Salaries and Arrears	Expat. and Resp. Allowances	Running Expenses	A.L.C.	Grant Paid	Building Grant	Salaries and Arrears	Expat. and Resp. Allowances	Running Expenses	A.L.C.
..	39,562	17,628	—	—	—	9,500	57,522	10,119	—	—	—	16,000	75,690	23,699	—	—	—	28,500	98,905	32,258	—	—
..	31,185	8,936	—	—	—	11,500	46,534	9,119	—	—	—	24,000	58,316	12,315	—	—	—	44,800	82,844	16,297	—	—
..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	48,000	5,317	328	—	—	—	6,000	14,025	1,180	—	—

Catholic Mission Schools and Colleges, Protestant Mission Schools and Colleges, Private Voluntary Agency Schools and Colleges, and Local Authorities Schools and Colleges.

The Minister of Education: The information required by the hon. Member is as follows:—

GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOLS					GOVERNMENT TEACHER-TRAINING COLLEGES			
Year	Salaries	Other Running Exp.	Buildings	Total	Salaries	Other Running Exp.	Buildings	Total
1956-57... ..	£46,402	£48,961	£—	£95,363	£27,360	£20,670	£5,000	£53,030
1957-58... ..	50,054	52,650	5,200	107,904	30,402	22,590	—	52,992
Total... ..	96,456	101,611	5,200	203,267	57,762	43,260	5,000	106,022

Senior Staff Quarters

73. **Mr M. N. Onwuma** asked the Premier, whether the Government is not tacitly encouraging discrimination against Africans by the issue of Establishment Circular No. 38/156 of the 8th April, 1957, to the effect that non-expatriates employed after the 1st September, 1956, are not entitled to quarters.

The Premier: The circular to which the hon. Member refers was issued in accordance with the rules governing the allocation of Government quarters in Enugu at the time. The rules have since been amended, however, and the circular referred to has been withdrawn and replaced with another circular which sets out the new rules. These make it clear that non-expatriates, whether employed after 1st September, 1956 or not, will be allocated quarters as and when they are available, strictly on the basis of seniority.

Insect Pests

74. **Mr S. O. Achara** asked the Minister of Agriculture, what steps have been taken to combat insect pests in most Divisions of the Eastern Region.

The Minister of Agriculture: There are fortunately in this Region very few major insect pests. Yam Beetle appears at present to be the worst of our insect pests and trials are in progress to find a cheap and safe preventive. Similarly, progress has also been made against capsid and borers on Cocoa.

Progress has been slow due to lack of qualified Agricultural Entomologist but nevertheless the few staff of the Department of Agriculture are available in most Divisions to take samples of pest and to advise on treatments arrived at by the Federal Agricultural Department. Insecticides are, however, usually expensive and their general application requires full justification.

Compensation to U.P.E. Agitation Victims

81. **Mr N. L. P. Apreala** asked the Minister of Finance whether Government will consider paying compensation to innocent people, especially Local Government workers, whose houses were destroyed and properties looted.

The Minister of Finance: No compensation will be paid by Government as a result of the recent riots, but any person who suffered damages during the riots may seek redress in a Court of Law.

Board of Internal Revenue—Staff Salaries

82. **Mr R. O. Ukuta, M.B.E.** asked the Minister of Finance, how much is paid out in each Division by way of staff salaries and other charges by the Board of Internal Revenue in each calendar year since its inception.

The Minister of Finance: As Government accounts are kept by the fiscal year, 1st April to 31st March, I trust that the hon. Member will allow me to give the figures he asked for as they appear on record during the financial years, 1956-57 (when the Board of Internal Revenue was established) and 1957-58.

The total expenditure of the Board in each Division or District during the two financial years are as given in the schedule below.

Division	1956-57			1957-58		
	£	s	d	£	s	d
Aba ...	10,886	4	4	19,448	8	6
Abak ...	3,585	10	3	7,529	16	11
Abakaliki ...	7,972	10	11	7,971	11	3
Afikpo ...	2,907	17	3	7,679	10	11
Ahoada ...	4,167	0	0	5,070	6	3
Arochuku District	1,279	12	10	2,014	18	10
Awgu ...	3,479	0	0	4,420	15	4
Awka ...	1,647	8	2	3,024	9	3
Bende (Umuahia-Ibeku) ...	1,347	18	6	4,394	7	11
Brass ...	638	16	9	1,922	7	6
Calabar ...	3,498	9	2	9,798	9	10
Degema ...	1,037	0	6	2,371	1	10
Eket ...	1,932	15	3	6,097	11	11
Enugu District ...	2,273	19	2	2,995	14	3
Ikom ...	1,804	5	4	2,121	2	10
Ikot Ekpene ...	6,591	2	7	5,675	1	5
Itu ...	2,183	14	8	2,352	12	5
Nsukka ...	8,599	14	10	7,724	18	4
Obubra ...	1,569	15	9	2,415	13	6
Obudu District ...	2,460	0	0	2,628	16	4
Ogoja ...	3,119	17	6	4,571	14	8
Ogoni ...	3,217	11	8	7,190	12	2
Okigwi ...	5,617	7	1	9,003	14	3
Onitsha ...	13,144	17	6	12,691	13	1

Division	1956-57			1957-58		
	£	s	d	£	s	d
Opoobo ...	2,101	1	6	3,130	14	11
Orlu ...	5,000	0	0	4,578	6	8
Owerri ...	3,660	0	0	7,404	16	10
Port Harcourt ...	4,576	8	5	10,174	11	5
Udi ...	1,832	5	8	7,434	10	5
Uyo ...	6,995	0	0	9,028	11	3

Students Vacation Work and Tax

85. **Mr M. N. Onwuma** asked the Minister of Finance, whether he will exempt from taxation the earnings of students from the University College, Ibadan, and the Colleges of Technology, obtained from taking on temporary work of not more than three consecutive calendar months' duration when on vacation, in order to conform with the practice in more civilised countries.

The Minister of Finance: Students who are receiving education for training as teachers, priests, pastors or evangelists, whose incomes do not exceed £35 per annum, have already been exempted from the payment of tax. I do not consider it desirable to extend this exemption at present, but will undertake to bear in mind the point raised in the questions when the time comes to review the provisions of the Finance Law.

Farmers

91. **Mr H. U. Akpabio** asked the Minister of Agriculture how many farmers have been trained by the Department to-date; how much was granted to each to start a farm; where are they settled, and what is the total acreage involved.

The Minister of Agriculture: The answer to this question requires some clarification. The training of farmers in the Eastern Region is the work of the Agricultural Department but normally the advances or loans made to farmers for the expansion of their farms come from the Eastern Region Development Corporation which is a public corporation.

It is impossible to state the number of farmers who have been trained by the Agricultural Department in this Region as all Expansion Work staff of the Department stationed in all Divisions of the Region act as instructors to farmers. Their work is normally carried out by discussion and by demonstration and

sometimes by organised exhibitions and agricultural shows. In addition, Provincial Farms and Demonstration Farm Centres of the Department which exist in most provinces and Divisions serve as Training Centres for farmers.

In respect of loans made to farmers in this Region, a total of £188,300 has been made.

Lastly, no settlement scheme for farmers has been undertaken in this Region as there is no need to do so. The latter part of the question does not, therefore, arise.

Naturalised Citizens

92. **Mr H. U. Akpabio** asked the Minister of Internal Affairs, how many naturalised citizens have taken up residence in the Eastern Region; what were their countries of origin and what are their occupations.

The Minister of Internal Affairs: The hon. Member should realise that "Naturalisation" is a subject on the exclusive Federal list. In view of this, the Federal Government has been approached with a request to supply the information required but it has replied that no record is kept of the movements of naturalised citizens. I regret I am unable to furnish the hon. Member with any information on the subject.

Care of the Sick and Homeless

93. **Mr H. U. Akpabio** asked the Minister of Welfare, what arrangements have been made to provide for the sick and homeless people roaming the streets of the principal towns in the Eastern Region.

The Minister of Welfare: In this Region there are Government Hospitals, five Joint Hospitals and Hospitals operated by Voluntary Agencies the purpose of which is to care for the sick. The care of homeless in this Region does not constitute a major social problem and is traditionally the world over a field of activity for voluntary, charitable organisations and Local Government Bodies rather than the Central Government.

Tourist Centres

95. **Mr G. C. Okeya** asked the Minister of Commerce, what towns or centres in the Region are envisaged as Tourist Centres, and when will the scheme be launched and finalised.

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

47

[Written Answers]

10 DECEMBER 1958

[Written Answers]

48

The Minister of Commerce: The Chairman of the Tourist Corporation informs me that the following towns are listed for consideration for Catering Rest Houses (the order is alphabetical and not an indication of proposed priority):

Abak, Afikpo, Ahoada, Awgu, Bori, Degema, Eket, Ikot Ekpene, Obubra, Ogoja, Okigwi, Opobo, Orlu, Owerri, Umuahia-Ibeku, Uyo.

The Corporation has under consideration the development of Amusement Centres at the following places:

Abonnema, Agulu, Akassa, Azumini, Atani, Creek Town, Ediba, Egwanga, Ezeagu, Itu, Oguta, Okrika, Oron.

These schemes will be launched as soon as sufficient funds are available to the Corporation.

I refer also to my answer to Question No. 76 wherein I referred to the Tourist Corporation's plan to establish Health Resorts at Nsukka and Obudu.

Rural Water Scheme—Ahoada Division

126. **Mr J. O. Okeh** asked the Minister of Works, whether it is a fact that he has imposed a levy of 50 per cent contribution on the

local communities in the Ahoada Division before the implementation of the Rural Water Scheme; if so, whether he would not reconsider this measure in view of the increase in taxes and rates.

The Minister of Works: Government has recently waived local contributions in respect of Water Points (Wells and Spring Improvements), but not for pumped and piped supplies which should be half the cost of installation or £1,750, whichever is less.

Elele and Omoku in the Ahoada Division are among those places for which pumped and piped supplies have been approved.

London Constitutional Conference

147. **Mr S. O. Achara** asked the Premier, the cost to the Eastern Region of the last Constitutional Conference held in London; what was paid in respect of each delegate; how many of the delegates participated at the Conference Hall.

The Premier: The total cost to the Regional Government of the London Constitutional Conference of 1957 was £31,692. The other information sought by the hon. Member is as follows:—

SCHEDULE OF ALLOWANCES DRAWN BY DELEGATES TO THE LONDON CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE

Nos.	Names of Delegates	Subs./Allces. paid in Nigeria			Subs./Allces. paid in U.K.			Allces. during voyage Nigeria-London-Nigeria			Mileage Allowance			Total		
		£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
1.	Dr the Hon. N. Azikiwe ..	—			346	10	0	54	12	0	40	0	0	441	2	0
2.	Dr the Hon. M. I. Okpara ..	73	10	0	199	10	0	54	12	0	—			327	12	0
3.	Dr the Hon. S. E. Imoke ..	73	10	0	199	10	0	54	12	0	—			327	12	0
4.	Dr S. D. Onabamiro ..	2	2	0	210	0	0	4	4	0	4	15	0	221	1	0
5.	Hon. R. A. Njoku ..	—			236	5	0	2	2	0	—			238	7	0
6.	Hon. Kola Balogun ..	—			199	10	0	29	8	0	—			228	18	0
7.	Dr E. Udo Udoma ..	4	4	0	273	0	0	54	12	0	110	2	6	441	18	6
8.	Hon. J. H. E. Nwuke ..	79	16	0	147	0	0	29	8	0	13	2	8	269	6	8
9.	Hon. S. G. Ikoku ..	73	10	0	136	10	0	29	8	0	44	9	0	283	17	0
10.	Hon. S. J. Amachree ..	79	16	0	136	10	0	29	8	0	78	12	0	324	6	0
11.	Hon. O. Arikpo ..	81	18	0	136	10	0	29	8	0	95	8	6	343	4	6
12.	Hon. E. O. Eyo ..	81	18	0	136	10	0	29	8	0	67	11	0	315	7	0
13.	Mr Ade Fashanu ..	73	10	0	168	0	0	2	2	0	25	0	0	268	12	0
14.	Mrs M. U. Ekpo ..	77	14	0	147	0	0	29	8	0	70	5	0	324	7	0
15.	Dr O. Ikejiani ..	73	10	0	183	15	0	4	4	0	53	16	0	315	5	0
16.	Dr C. Obi ..	79	16	0	220	10	0	29	8	0	54	13	0	384	7	0
17.	Chief Nyong Essien ..	73	10	0	157	10	0	29	8	0	27	17	0	288	5	0
18.	Mr H. Biriye ..	75	12	0	157	10	0	29	8	0	19	15	0	282	5	0
19.	Prince Eket E. Inyang Udo	77	14	0	147	0	0	29	8	0	87	18	0	342	0	0
Sub-total ..		£ 1,008 0 0			3,612 0 0			554 8 0			793 4 8			5,967 12 8		

Nos.	Names of Delegates	Subs./Allices. paid in Nigeria			Subs./Allices. paid in U.K.			Allices. /during voyage Nigeria- London-Nigeria			Mileage Allowance			Total		
		£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
	<i>Brought forward</i>	1,008	0	0	3,612	0	0	554	8	0	793	4	8	5,967	12	8
20.	Mr D. Ngwube	29	8	0	111	6	0	—	—	—	*188	2	1	328	16	1
21.	Lt.-Col. E. C. Alderton	—	—	—	122	16	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	122	16	1
22.	Mr E. G. Stumpenhuson- Payne	—	—	—	121	3	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	121	3	7
23.	Mr J. O. Udoji	12	0	0	119	14	0	—	—	—	—	—	—	131	14	0
24.	Mr D. Ibekwe	6	15	0	138	12	0	—	—	—	15	16	8	161	3	8
25.	Miss M. Lycett	—	—	—	128	2	0	—	—	—	—	—	—	128	2	0
	Grand Total	£1,056	3	0	4,353	13	8	554	8	0	997	3	5	6,961	8	1

* Reimbursement to E.N.I.S. in respect of Press Officer.

Provision for Widows, Paupers and Orphans

164. **Mr G. I. Oko, M.B.E.** asked the Minister of Welfare, what proposals has Government for providing funds for the maintenance of widows, paupers and orphans in the Region.

The Minister of Welfare: No provisions are made for the maintenance in institutions of widows, paupers and orphans by the Government of this Region or so far as I am aware, by any other Government of the Federation. In the first place, I do not believe that this is yet a serious social problem in this Region. Family ties and a sense of family responsibility are still very strong and it is still the general practice for such unfortunates to be looked after by relatives. In the second place, this subject is universally recognised as the field of charitable organisations and Local Government Bodies rather than of the Central Government. Finally, certain facilities do already exist. Thus, at all hospitals there is provision for the free treatment of paupers and, although Government does not operate orphanages, many Voluntary Agencies do in fact look after abandoned and motherless children.

Tax Defaulters

165. **Mr O. B. Nalelo** asked the Minister of Finance, whether he is aware of the fact that the increase in tax defaulters is caused by the Tax Assessment Committee in some Divisions who assess the people far above their income; what steps does he propose to take in order to stop this.

The Minister of Finance: There is no reason to suppose that tax defaulting is caused by over-assessment since the known number of

tax defaulters in any particular area sometimes includes even persons who were correctly assessed. I do agree, however, that there are cases of over-assessment of tax-payers but such cases, as far as I am aware, have been due to *bona fide* error which is immediately corrected if the tax-payer makes due objection in the proper manner. I am not aware of any case of deliberate over-assessment.

I can assure the hon. Member that Tax Assessment Authorities will ensure that these errors are eliminated or reduced by being more careful; but whether the assessment is deliberate or due to genuine error, the answer does not lie in the tax-payer defaulting but in availing himself of the legal remedies.

Accounting Officers

166. **Mr H. U. Akpabio** asked the Premier, how many expatriate officers are attached to Government Accounting Departments on secondment from the Crown Agents Office, London, or other Governments; what are their qualifications and what special duties have they been engaged on from 1st October, 1954, and in which Departments; can such duties not now be performed by Nigerians; what is the total expenditure borne by this Government in each case in emoluments, allowances, pensions, passages, etc., in view of the great need for economy and Nigerianisation for how long will Government continue to retain such officers.

The Premier: Three officers are employed by this Government on secondment from the office of the Crown Agents for Oversea Governments and Administrations.

[THE PREMIER]

One is in the Accountant-General's Department and two in the Public Works Department.

Two of these officers hold executive rank in the office of the Crown Agents, admission to which is by a difficult open competitive examination. One is an Associate Member of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries and has completed a degree course in economics and public administration.

All these officers have been employed on normal accounting duties, but have been particularly concerned with accounting for the very large expenditure from Colonial Development and Welfare Funds. Having had experience in the office of the Crown Agents, these officers are particularly well qualified to deal with the detailed returns concerning Colonial Development and Welfare Funds which are required by Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. The officer in the Accountant-General's Department has also been responsible for the Crown Agents' Adjustment Section.

Nigerians are being trained with a view to obtaining qualifications to fit them for appointments such as these.

The salaries of the officers concerned are £1,410, £1,100, and £1,020 per annum inclusive of Inducement Addition. No contract addition or gratuity is payable, but the Government is committed to a pension contribution equal to 22½ per cent of the salary which the officers would have received had they continued to serve in the office of the Crown Agents. It is not possible to give an exact figure, but the cost is in the neighbourhood of £250 per annum for each officer. They also receive normal allowance benefiting officers of their grade; the largest item being Motor Basic Allowance which averages £150 per annum per officer. In addition the return passages for each officer and his wife cost Government about £450 per annum. It can be said, therefore, that the cost of these officers to Government is in the neighbourhood of £2,000 each.

These officers have been recruited for one tour at a time and will be replaced by suitably qualified Nigerian officers as they become available.

Accounting Officers

167. **Mr H. U. Akpabio** asked the Premier, how many junior officers have received training in accountancy in local higher institutions or in the United Kingdom from "1st October, 1954; are such officers trained at the expense of Government performing duties in the senior grades of the service for which they were trained; if not, why.

The Premier: There are three ways of training junior officers for senior posts. Firstly there is what may be called "on the job" training. By this method junior officers of apparent ability are assigned to duties giving them the widest possible experience and their progress is carefully watched. If their ability is proved and the experience gained and the knowledge acquired is turned to good advantage, then they may be recommended for promotion to senior grades. This method is perhaps obsolescent, but since 1954 eight officers have thus been promoted to the rank of Accountant in the Accountant-General's Department. One officer, promoted in the same way, has reached super-scale rank.

Secondly there is the method of "In-service training" by which suitable junior officers are sent as part of their duties on courses of instruction at recognised institutions, both in Nigeria and overseas, or on training attachments. Since 1954, six officers have completed the nine-months accountancy course at the Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology and of these four have been appointed Assistant Auditors. One officer has completed a two-year accountancy course in the United Kingdom and has been promoted Assistant Auditor. Two others have carried out secondments for eighteen months to the Office of the Crown Agents for Overseas Governments and Administrations for training in general accountancy duties. Five more officers are now engaged on the three-year accountancy course at the Nigerian College. One is attached to the Head Office of the Overseas Audit Department in London.

Thirdly, there is the Government's scholarship scheme. Two officers of the Audit Department are now studying on scholarships for full accountancy qualifications. In addition sixteen other scholars are studying accountancy in Universities, Institutions, or under Articles to firms in the United Kingdom.

Accounting Officers

168. **Mr H. U. Akpabio** asked the Premier, in view of the present need for trained and experienced Nigerian Accountants, will the Premier state what steps he has taken to train junior officers in the Treasury and Audit Departments, in order to fit them for higher responsibilities in the senior grade of the service.

The Premier: The hon. Member is referred to the answer to question No. 167.

Colonial Development and Welfare Fund

169. **Mr G. I. Oko, M.B.E.** asked the Minister of Finance, what projects were completed in each Division of the Eastern Region of Nigeria under the Ten Years Colonial Development and Welfare Scheme from the date of the application of the Scheme to 31st December, 1954.

The Minister of Finance: It is not easy to answer the question direct or by

reference to specific Divisions. In the first place some of the projects, e.g., in Agriculture, were of a regional nature which could not be ascribed to any single Division; again there were some projects, e.g., in connection with Fisheries, which, during the ten-year programme, belonged to a Department of the Central Government and no information is therefore available. Thirdly, not all the funds provided under the scheme went in for constructional projects; some projects took the form of expansion of staffs. Fourthly it should be remembered that some projects, e.g., Forest developments, are continuous and cannot be "completed". Again some projects, e.g., in education, consisted of building grants towards building costs of Teacher-Training Colleges and Secondary Schools. Finally since accounts are kept for the fiscal year, 1st April to 31st March, to give the situation as at 31st December, 1954 involves some estimation.

Subject to the above observations the position of the Ten-Year C.D. and W. Scheme at 31st December, 1954, in the Eastern Region is as follows:

A.—Agriculture

Area	Projects	Position at 31st December, 1954
Umuahia	1. The Regional School of Agriculture ...	Main buildings completed and equipped.
	2. Regional Central Research Station ...	Offices and Laboratories completed and equipped.
Abakaliki Abak Nkwelle Adani Umuahia	3. Agricultural Machinery ...	Regional workshop completed and equipped. Mobile workshop completed and equipped. Tractors and implements purchased and tested.
	4. Liming and Manuring ...	Experiments and demonstrations of the use of artificial fertilisers laid down in all divisions of the Region except sparsely populated areas.
	5. Rice Extensions and Demonstration Swamp Reclamation	Extension work carried out in all suitable areas of the Region.
	6. Buildings: Unallocated ...	The building of staff quarters to cater for the increased establishment work was partially completed by 31st December, 1954.

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

55

[Written Answers]

10 DECEMBER 1958

[Written Answers]

56

B.—Education: (These buildings were financed partly or wholly from C.D. & W. Funds).

<i>Area</i>	<i>Projects</i>	<i>Position at 31st December, 1954</i>
Aba	... St. Joseph's W.T.C. (R.C.M.) ...	—
Abak	... Holy Family College (R.C.M.) ... St. Mary's T.T.C. (R.C.M.), Ediene ...	— —
Afikpo	... Government Secondary School ... Macgregor College (C.S.M.) ...	— —
Ahoada	... Anglican T.T.C., Diobu ...	—
Awka	... Anglican T.T.C., Awka ...	—
Calabar	... Hope Waddell, Training Institute (C.S.M.)	—
Degema	... Okrika Grammar School (Anglican) ...	—
Eket	... Oron Boys' High School (Methodist) ...	—
Enugu	... Women's Training College (Government)... Queen's Secondary School (Government) College of the Immaculate Conception (R.C.M.) Holy Rosary Training College (R.C.M.)	— — — —
Ikot Ekpene	... Ibiaku Girls' Secondary School (United Missions)	—
Ogoja	... St. Thomas's T.T.C. (R.C.M.) ...	—
Onitsha	... Queen of the Holy Rosary Secondary School (Girls) (R.C.M.) Dennis Memorial Grammar School (Angli- can) St. Charles' T.T.C. (R.C.M.) ... St. Monica's W.T.C. (Anglican) ...	— — — —
Orlu	... Bishop Shanahan Secondary School (Boys) (R.C.M.) Bishop Shanahan T.T.C. (R.C.M.) ... Nkwerre Grammar School (Anglican) ...	— — —
Owerri	... Holy Ghost Boys' Secondary School (R.C.M.) Anglican T.T.C., Irete ...	— —
Umuahia- Ibeku and	... Government College ... Holy Ghost T.T.C. ...	— —
Bende	... United Missions W.T.C. ... Methodist Boys' Secondary School, Uzu- akoli. Methodist T.T.C., Uzuakoli ...	— — —
Uyo	... Government Teacher-Training College ... Cornelia Connelly College (Girls) (R.C.M.) Qua Iboe Boys' Secondary School, Etinan	— — —

C.—Medical Services

Area	Projects	Position at 31st December, 1954
Ogoni ...	1. General Hospital (76 beds)	Completed.
Isoba ...	2. Leprosy Settlement (69 beds)	Completed.
Ahoada ...	3. Establishment of Medical Field Unit ...	Completed.
Abakaliki ...	4. General Hospital (56 beds)	Completed.
Ogoja ...	5. General Hospital (52 beds)	Completed.
Arochukwu ...	6. General Hospital (24 beds)	Completed.
Calabar ...	7. Mental Hospital	Completed.
Aba ...	8. School of Hygiene	Completed.
	9. Nurses Preliminary Training School ...	Completed.
Onitsha ...	10. General Hospital (142 Beds)	Completed.

D.—Roads

1. Bansara—Mamfe	Eleven miles completed in Ogoja Division, thirteen in Obudu and forty in Ikom.
2. Calabar—Mamfe	Eighty-seven and half miles completed in Calabar.
3. Tarring Onitsha—Oron	Thirty-three miles completed in Onitsha, fifty-one miles in Owerri, twenty-eight in Aba, thirty-one in Ikot Ekpene, sixteen in Uyo and sixteen in Eket.
4. Enugu—Abakaliki	Twenty-one miles completed in Onitsha Division and thirty in Ogoja.
5. Tarring Port Harcourt—Owerri ...	Forty-three miles completed in Rivers and twenty-four in Owerri.
6. Tarring Aba (Part)—Port Harcourt ...	Thirteen miles completed in Rivers and twenty-seven in Aba.
Oron Ferry New Landing Stage	Completed.
Ahoada ... Sombareiro Bridge	Completed.

Rural Water Supplies

Division	No. of water points provided	Division	No. of water points provided
Calabar	1	Udi	51
Opobo (Ibekwe)	46	Awgu	41
Eket	25	Awka	79
Abak (Annang)	45	Onitsha	66
Enyong (Itu)	10	Nsukka	62
Ikot Ekpene	19	Aba Ngwa	184
Uyo	44	Bende	3
Afikpo	76	Orlu	12
Abakaliki	91	Okigwi	3
Ikom	5	Owerri	142
Obubra	18	Ahoada	126
Ogoja	37	Central Ijaw (Brass) ...	49
Obudu	18	Oil Rivers (Degema) ...	21
		Ogoni	132

Industrial Development

170. **Mr. G. I. Oko, M.B.E.** asked the Minister of Finance, how much of the total revenue of the Region goes to personal emoluments and administration and how much to industrial developments in the townships and in the rural areas.

(a) Year	(b) Total Revenue	(c) Total Recurrent Expenditure	(d) Total Special and Capital Expenditure under the departments of Heavy and Secondary Industries and Ministry of Commerce	(e) Total Special and Capital Expenditure under the remaining Heads of Expenditure in the Estimates and Roads Advance Account
	£	£	£	£
Actual, 1955-56	9,008,070	5,883,933	—	1,012,420
Actual, 1956-57	12,183,936	8,836,773	12,004	1,538,847
Revised Estimates, 1957-58	12,570,377	12,324,444	45,565	1,528,448
Estimates, 1958-59	14,040,150	11,647,420	119,740	2,705,455

Figures under the column for Heavy and Secondary Industries Departments and the Ministry of Commerce include such items as expenditure on the Aba Textile Centre, the Local Produce Shop, Enugu, the Pottery Factory, Grant to Rural Industries (on which £1,000 was spent last year and £1,000 is to be spent this year) share capital in Williams and Williams (Nigeria) Ltd., Development of Glass, or Plastics, Industry and the like.

In studying these figures, hon. Members will bear in mind that expenditure on, for instance, roads and bridges, though not industrial expenditure in a narrow sense of the word, is essential to the development of trade and industry in the Region; it is the first duty of Government to provide such basic services.

The figures in this table also exclude any sums made available for industrial development by the Eastern Region Finance Corporation and the Eastern Region Development Corporation, since the hon. Member in his Question referred specifically to the Regional revenues, and the funds of these Corporations do not form part of the Regional Revenues. If the hon. Member seeks further information about the activities of these Corporations, he may like to address a Question to my hon. Friend the Minister of Production.

The Minister of Finance: The following figures set out, for each year since 1955-56, the total revenue of the Region, the recurrent expenditure, the special and capital expenditure under the Ministry of Commerce and the Departments concerned with industry, and the other special and capital expenditure of the Region:—

Finally I would draw attention to the fact that the item "recurrent expenditure" is by no means exclusively spent on "Administration and Personal Emoluments". As the House knows, a very large share of our recurrent expenditure was devoted to Education during the last two years, and the recurrent expenditure also includes the cost of the Medical Services which do so much to relieve the sufferings of the people of this Region, and includes many other smaller items of general benefit.

Boards and Corporations

173. **Mr. G. I. Oko, M.B.E.** asked the Premier, how many Boards and Corporations are there in the Eastern Region, who are the Members and what qualifies them for the position; from what divisions are the members drawn; what are their salaries and allowances and who is responsible for deciding them.

The Premier: There are eight Boards and Corporations operating in the Eastern Region. In addition the Printing Corporation has been suspended and the Pharmaceutical Corporation is being wound up. The Minister concerned decides the rates of salaries and allowances subject to the approval of Executive Council. The following are the particulars of membership, salaries and/or allowances:—

(1) Eastern Nigeria Information Service Corporation (within portfolio of Minister of Information)

Names of members	Qualification	Division	Salary	Basic allowance	Transport and subsistence allowances
1. A. K. Disu (Chairman)	Journalist	Lagos	£ 1,500	£ 16 s 10	1st class transport accommodation. Also the allowances set out below. 1s per mile for personal car; £3 3s a day subsistence in Nigeria and £5 5s abroad. All rates when on business of Corporation.
2. F. U. Anyiam	Publicity and advertising experience	Orlu	—	—	
3. Eniang Essicn	Publicity experience	Calabar	—	—	
4. G. F. George-Hart	Publicity experience	Opobo	—	—	

(2) Eastern Region Library Board (within Portfolio of Minister of Information)

1. D. C. L. Anderson (Chairman)	E.R. Director, British Council	England	—	—	1s per mile; £3 3s per day subsistence when on business of Board.
2. C. O. Chiedozie	Schoolmaster	Udi	—	—	1s per mile; £3 3s per day subsistence when on business of Board.
3. Rev. Father B. Kelly	Supervisor R.C.M. Schools, Enugu.	Eire	—	—	1s per mile; £3 3s per day subsistence when on business of Board.
4. T. Udoffa	—	Abak	—	—	
5. S. B. Atualomah	—	Bende	—	—	
6. T. K. Utchay	Proprietor of Schools	Enyong	—	—	

(3) Eastern Region Development Corporation

1. L. P. Ojukwu (Chairman)	No special qualification laid down.	Onitsha	1,500	—	£3 3s subsistence allowance per diem plus 1s per mile for own car when on business of Board.
2. Mrs A. C. Nwapa (Deputy Chairman)	No special qualification laid down.	Owerri	600	—	
3. A. D. Jumbo	No special qualification laid down.	Degema	400	—	
4. J. N. Wachukwu	No special qualification laid down.	Aba	400	—	1s per mile for own cars when on business of Board. The £400 is Director's Consolidated Fees.
5. Dr G. C. Mbanugo	No special qualification laid down.	Onitsha	400	—	
6. O. Achibong	No special qualification laid down.	Calabar	400	—	
7. E. A. Agim	No special qualification laid down.	Ogoja/Obudu	400	—	
8. Permanent Secretary Ministry of Finance	No special qualification laid down.				Civil servants on duty rates when on business of Board.
9. Permanent Secretary Ministry of Production	No special qualification laid down.				
10. Director of Agriculture	No special qualification laid down.				

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

63

[Written Answers]

10 DECEMBER 1958

[Written Answers]

64

(4) Eastern Regional Marketing Board

Names of members	Qualification	Division	Salary	Basic allowance	Transport and subsistence allowances
1. L. P. Ojukwu (Chairman)	Unspecified ..	Onitsha ..	£ 3,000	£ —	Non-Civil Servants: 1s per mile for own cars; 1st class transport allowance £5 5s per day subsistence allowance; Civil Servants at duty rates, when on business of Board.
2. Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance.	Unspecified ..	—	—	—	
3. Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture.	Unspecified ..	—	—	—	
4. Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Commerce.	Unspecified ..	—	—	—	
5. N. B. Wokomo-Horsfall.	Unspecified ..	Degema ..	—	—	
6. J. C. Anyansi ..	Unspecified ..	Onitsha ..	—	—	
7. Prince Eket Inyang-Udo	Unspecified ..	Eket ..	—	—	
8. C. C. N. Akomas ..	Unspecified ..	Degema ..	—	—	
9. C. Oputa ..	Unspecified ..	Owerri ..	—	—	

(3) and (4) within Portfolio of Minister of Agriculture

(5) Eastern Regional Sports Commission (within Portfolio of Minister of Welfare)

1. D. C. Erinne (Chairman)		Onitsha ..	—	—	£3 3s subsistence allowance per day; 1s per mile for own cars or 1st class transport allowance. Refund of hotel bill when on business of Commission.
2. Rev. Father E. J. Fitzgibbon		Eire ..	—	—	
3. A. I. Osakwe ..		Onitsha ..	—	—	
4. E. E. Efem ..		Afikpo ..	—	—	
5. O. B. Adekola ..		Ibadan ..	—	—	

(6) Eastern Region Cinema Corporation

1. Dr J. B. C. Okala (Chairman)		Onitsha ..	1,500*	—	£3 3s subsistence allowance per day; 1s per mile for own cars; when on business of Corporation.
2. N. N. Mbile ..		Kumba ..	—	—	
3. O. N. Egesi ..		Bende ..	—	—	
4. J. A. Otutubuike ..	No special qualification.	Bende ..	—	—	
5. J. O. Nwanolue ..	No special qualification.	Onitsha ..	—	—	
6. H. T. Amabeoku ..	No special qualification.	Degema ..	—	—	

(7) Tourist Corporation

1. P. G. Warmate (Chairman)	(Removed) no special qualification.	Degema ..	600*	—	As in No. (6) above.
2. R. N. Charley ..	(Removed) no special qualification.	Kumba ..	—	—	
3. Miss M. I. Ededem	(Removed) no special qualification.	Calabar ..	—	—	
4. J. C. Agbalaka ..	(Removed) no special qualification.	Onitsha ..	—	—	
5. N. L. P. Apreala ..	(Removed) no special qualification.	Brass ..	—	—	
6. O. E. Okon ..	(Removed) no special qualification.	Uyo ..	—	—	

Note: *The salaries of the Chairmen of the Cinema Corporation and the Tourist Corporation are under review.

(6) and (7) within Portfolio of Minister of Commerce

Names of member	Qualification	Division	Salary	Basic allowance	Transport and subsistence allowances
			£	£	

(8) Scholarship Board (within Portfolio of Minister of Education)

1. C. C. Iketuonye (Chairman)	Principal of School	Onitsha ..	—	—	} 1s per mile; £3 3s per day subsistence when on business of Board.
2. A. E. Bassey ..	Barrister	Ikot Ekpene	—	—	
3. Dr V. G. Ene ..	Medical Practitioner	Degema ..	—	—	
4. D. O. Omeoga ..	Teacher	Bende ..	—	—	
5. John Odey ..	Teacher	Ogoja ..	—	—	

The Printing Corporation (suspended)

1. A. Fashanu ..	Unspecified	Lagos ..	—	—
2. D. I. Umodu ..	Unspecified	Ahoada ..	—	—
3. E. O. Okon ..	Unspecified	Abak ..	—	—
4. R. A. Umo ..	Unspecified	Ikot Ekpene	—	—
5. J. G. Cookey ..	Unspecified	Opobo ..	—	—

The Pharmaceutical Corporation (being wound up)

1. Dr O. Ikejiani ..	Unspecified	Awka ..	—	—
2. A. A. Akpan ..	Unspecified	Ikot Ekpene	—	—
3. E. N. Oba ..	Unspecified	Asaba ..	—	—
4. H. I. Onyekaba ..	Unspecified	Okigwi ..	—	—
5. Dr A. N. Obonna ..	Unspecified	Owerri ..	—	—
6. I. U. Eke ..	Unspecified	Bende ..	—	—
7. M. E. Iweh ..	Unspecified	Aba ..	—	—
8. O. O. Nweke ..	Unspecified	Abakaliki ..	—	—

Tax Payment by married and unmarried persons

196. Mr O. B. Nalelo asked the Minister of Finance, why single people have to pay more tax than married people; is he aware that it is customary in some Divisions like Ogoni for young men to marry as soon as they can afford to do so, which means that unmarried men in these Divisions have very little money and are not in a position to pay heavier rates of tax than married men.

The Minister of Finance: Single men pay more tax than married men because the Finance Law, 1956 is based upon the assumption that it costs a single man less to live than a married man. It may be true that in some Divisions the fact that a man can afford to get married proves that he has more income than a single man, but it is not certain that this is true throughout the Region.

Tax Payment by Apprentices

197. Mr O. B. Nalelo asked the Minister of Finance, why apprentices should be asked to pay tax when they have no source of income and in this respect fall into the same category as scholars.

The Minister of Finance: It is not a fact that apprentices have no source of income. It has been ascertained from enquiries made in the case of apprentices in certain trades that they make money by delivering completed articles to purchasers and by other casual work, and that they may be allowed one day a week on which to work for their own profit.

The hon. Member's comparison of apprentices with scholars is not clear, but perhaps he has in mind the exemption of students who are in regular attendance at a recognised or approved educational institution and whose annual income is less than £36 which is granted under E.R.L.N. No. 49 of 1956 paragraph (C). It is extremely difficult to subject apprentices to the same clear principles of regular attendance at a recognised or approved institution. Accordingly, it has not been possible to extend a similar exemption to them.

The Government, however, is considering an investigation by the Ministry of Welfare to ascertain whether some apprentices in some institutions may be exempted.

Secondary School for Obubra Division

205. **Mr W. E. Anaba** asked the Minister of Education whether, in view of the geographical position of Obubra which makes Secondary Schools outside the division inaccessible to school leavers, he will consider the advisability of building a Secondary School at Ugep for Obubra Division.

The Minister of Education: Yes, Sir. It is now up to the people of Obubra Division to put up programmes of the proposed Secondary School in their Division. If programmes are received showing that all the requirements of our Education Law are fulfilled, Government will certainly consider sympathetically the application for the establishment of a Secondary School in Obubra Division.

Voluntary Agency Teachers

206. **Mr G. C. Okeya** asked the Minister of Education, what are the conditions for promotion of suitable Voluntary Agency teachers to the extended scale grade; how many have been so promoted since 1955.

The Minister of Education: The conditions for promotion of suitable Voluntary Agency teachers to the extended grade scale have remained the same as those laid down in Table I of the Education Ordinance, 1952. They are to the effect that a teacher who is selected to hold and is holding a post of special responsibility approved by the Ministry of Education in secondary education, teacher training or the supervision and administration of primary education may be appointed to the extended scale.

There have been forty promotions since 1955.

Water Supplies

209. **Mr N. O. Onwudiwe** asked the Minister of Works, whether he is aware that the people of Nsu have contributed their own quota towards the cost of the proposed mechanical installation for water supply at Nsu; if so, what are the reasons for the considerable delay in implementing the scheme and how soon will the work be put in hand.

The Minister of Works: I am aware that the people of Nsu have so far made a deposit of £816 towards the cost of their water supply. They will in due course have to make this up to £1,750. At the present time the conditions

laid down by the Secretary of State provide that expenditure from C.D. and W. funds shall not exceed 10s per head of population. The total population of Nsu is 14,223 and therefore the expenditure from C.D. and W. funds may not exceed £7,111. This, together with the £1,750 to be deposited by Nsu, only amounts to £8,861. Since the estimated cost of the Nsu water supply is £21,000, a further £12,139 must be found from another source.

The Secretary of State has, however, been asked to waive the limit of 10s per head in respect of pumped and piped supplies. If his sanction is given, the additional £12,139 will be found from C.D. and W. funds.

Thereafter commencement of the work will depend on the availability of staff which Government is doing all it can to recruit.

New Hospital at Mbano

210. **Mr N. O. Onwudiwe** asked the Minister of Health, whether he is aware that the construction of the new Hospital at Mbano, estimated to take one year to complete, has been in progress for two years; if so, what are the reasons for the delay and what action does the Minister propose to take to expedite the completion and opening of the Hospital.

The Minister of Health: The Mbano Rural Hospital project dates back to about April, 1956, when a grant of £10,000 was first earmarked for it by my Ministry. I am not aware that it was ever estimated that this project would take one year to complete and it is very unlikely that a project of this nature could be completed in that time. Nor would I agree, as the hon. Member's question seems to imply, that work on the project has been unreasonably slow. In any case, responsibility for building the Hospital is vested in the Mbano District Council, whose property, on completion, the Hospital will become, and not in my Ministry. Nevertheless, the Ministry has given, and will continue to give, every assistance possible towards the speedy completion of this project. By November, 1956, a site had been selected and approved, plans drawn up and tenders issued for buildings. By February, 1957, the Ministry had completed arrangements for the installation of a borehole water supply which had been completed by

July, by which time construction had begun on the Hospital buildings. By the end of 1957, out of an initial building programme to the value of £22,530, some £15,000s' worth of buildings had been completed, this being in addition to money spent by the Ministry on the installation of a water supply. Accordingly, in February, 1958, a grant of £7,741, representing a 50 per cent share of the building work done to date and the balance of the original grant of £10,000 promised, was paid to the Council. In May, I attended a most impressive ceremony to lay the foundation stone of the Hospital and I was most favourably impressed with the quality and quantity of work which had been done. In recognition of this achievement, my Ministry has now earmarked a further grant of £4,000 towards this project and every effort is being made by my Ministry to expedite completion of this project, which I myself am as eager to see as the hon. Member.

Tourist Corporation

211. **Mr E. U. Eronini** asked the Premier whether, following the challenging statement by the Minister of Commerce on the one hand and the separate statements by Members of the Tourist Corporation and the ex-Chairman of the Corporation, Mr P. G. Warmate, on the other hand, he would not consider it advisable to appoint a three-man Committee to investigate the affairs of the Tourist Corporation and report to this House.

The Premier: No, Sir, I do not think a Committee to investigate the affairs of the Tourist Corporation is necessary or desirable at this stage. Government has already had a report from a reputable firm of Chartered Accountants on its affairs, and the Auditors are expected to produce a report shortly. It is hoped to have the accounts of the Tourist Corporation for the year 1957-58—up to 31st March, 1958—together with the Annual Report ready for presentation to the House of Assembly at its next meeting. Members will then be able to learn the true state of affairs of the Corporation.

Telecommunications

213. **Mr G. C. Okeya** asked the Minister of Transport; how soon will telecommunications be available at Oguta and Ihialla Post Offices.

The Minister of Works: Since telecommunications fall within the portfolio of the Minister of Works, the question has been passed to me to answer.

It is hoped that an Exchange and Call Office will be opened at Ihialla by the end of this year. A service for telegrams would open at the same time, but connection of telephone subscribers may follow later. An aerial survey has been planned as a large scale survey map of the area is not yet available.

There has been a telecommunication service at Oguta for some years and a telephone call office service is planned for early next year following the completion of and link up with the Ihialla Scheme.

Road Tarring

214. **Mr S. N. Alo** asked the Minister of Transport, when will the Abakaliki Water Works Road—a distance of one mile only—be tarred.

The Minister of Transport: At present serious attention is being paid to most important roads where traffic is very heavy, e.g.—

- (a) Abakaliki-Afikpo costing £97,587 for surfacing and extending culverts, etc, to 37½ miles of the road.
- (b) Reconstruction and sealing (2 coats) of Enugu-Abakaliki Road, Miles 21-27 at a cost of £20,000. In addition £5,000 of rehabilitation work on 27-34 is nearing completion.
- (c) Planning to tar Abakaliki-Yahe Road has well advanced.

Already Abakaliki Division's benefit in the Road Programme is about £142,000.

However as funds become available minor roads like Abakaliki Water Works Road will be considered for tarring.

Abakaliki Sports Stadium

216. **Mr S. N. Alo** asked the Minister of Welfare, what proposals he has for improving or building a wall round Abakaliki Sports Stadium—Johnson Ground.

The Minister of Welfare: The Sports Commission requested me to approve a contract to wall the Abakaliki Stadium last financial year. I refused to approve the contract because there was insufficient provision in the Commission's Estimates. In its 1958-59 Estimates recently submitted to me, the Commission has made the necessary provision and I have approved the contract.

EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 11th December, 1958

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

PRAYERS

(Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

PAPER

Presented

Report of the Accountant-General with Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March, 1958. (*The Minister of Finance*).

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Tarring of Uyo-Etinan-Ekparaqua Road

122. Mr M. U. Etuk asked the Minister of Transport, if the arrangement for tarring the twenty-eight miles of the Uyo-Etinan-Ekparaqua Road are now completed; if not, will he consider making a grant to tar the immediate approaches to the Etinan-Ekpenekpa Bridge, as was done in the case of the Abak Bridge; is the Minister aware that when the Minister of Local Government visited Ekpenekpa Council last year the approaches to the Bridge were then impassable.

The Minister of Transport: Uyo-Etinan-Ekparaqua Road is not in the current year's Estimates for tarring, nor is the road listed at present in Appendix "Y". However, consideration will be given to tarring the immediate approaches to the Etinan-Ekpenekpa Bridge when the allocation of funds for Road Development for next financial year is decided upon. Other important bridges in the Region which have had approaches would also be considered.

Loans

146. Mr J. M. Ito asked the Minister of Production the number of applications for loans received from Ikot Ekpenekpa Division; the number granted, the names of persons or societies to whom the loans were made and the amount of each loan.

The Minister of Agriculture temporarily holding Portfolio of Production: Eleven applications were received for loans from Ikot-Ekpenekpa Division two of which were approved, six still under investigation and three were rejected because the applicants did not

comply with the conditions laid down by the Corporation. The following two persons were granted loans:—

Mr J. U. Ikie—£1,250 for Cocoa Plantation.

Mr S. U. Ukut—£750 for Palm Plantation and Rice Mill.

Ozubulu/Atani New Road

156. Mr E. Chidolue asked the Minister of Transport, what work has been done on the construction of the Ozubulu/Atani New Road, estimated to cost £30,000 and for which £15,000 was provided at page E. 107, Sub-head 70 of the 1957-58 Approved Estimates; is the Minister aware that the Atani people have no outlet to the District Headquarters at Nnewi, except through Onitsha, which is fifteen miles longer by the River Niger; will the Minister explain the cause of the delay; has provision been made in 1958-59 Estimates for the immediate construction of this important road.

The Minister of Transport: Yes, Sir, I fully realise the importance of the people of Atani of having a road connection with Nnewi as this will also open up this area for further agricultural development. The reasons for the delay are, firstly, that the provision for this project approved by the Secretary of State is insufficient to build this new road, so before making a start on the project I wish to be assured that the alternative road from Atani to Onitsha which could be constructed within the provision provided was not a better solution. I accordingly visited the two roads myself in October with the Provincial Engineer, Onitsha, and after a meeting with the people of Ozubulu it was agreed that the towns people would carry out the earthwork on the road whilst my Ministry would utilise the £30,000 for bridging this road. The hon. Member will be pleased to know that work has now started.

Eastern Nigerian Information Service

175. Mr S. O. Achara asked the Minister of Information, to furnish in a tabular form the salaries and allowances paid to members of the E.N.I.S. Corporation since its establishment; how much is left out of the grant and/or loan made originally to this Corporation.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Information (Mr S. O. Masi):

I am directed to answer as follows:—

The salaries and allowances paid to members of the Eastern Nigeria Information Service Corporation since its establishment to 31st March, 1958 are as tabulated below:—

Name	Date Appointed	Salary			Transport allowance			Subsistence allowance			Total		
		£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
A. K. Disu (Chairman)...	18-8-55	3,407	5	2	986	11	0	352	16	0	4,746	12	2
F. U. Anyiam	18-8-55	686	5	10	174	13	0	66	3	0	927	1	10
D. A. Nnaji	18-8-55	511	5	10	99	1	0	44	2	0	654	8	10
Resigned 27-9-57													
G. F. George-Hart ...	25-9-57	180	0	0	23	8	0	12	12	0	216	0	0
W. Abengowe	18-8-55	586	5	10	65	2	0	40	19	0	692	6	10
Resigned 26-11-57													
E. Essien	18-8-55	686	5	10	84	18	0	50	8	0	821	11	10

The balance remaining from the grant made to the Eastern Nigeria Information Service Corporation as at 1st April, 1958, was £80,559 15s 1d.

Loans to Farmers

181. **Mr G. I. Oko, M.B.E.** asked the Minister of Production, whether he will consider giving loans to peasant farmers in the Region in order to improve the quality of crops such as yams, cassava, beans, etc.

The Minister of Agriculture temporarily holding the Portfolio of Production: The hon. Member is no doubt aware that Government as such does not give loans direct to peasant farmers. Any loans that are given are distributed through the medium of the Eastern Region Development Corporation. It is therefore outside my competence to do as the hon. Member asks. I would point out, however, that the improvement of the quality of crops such as yams, cassava and beans is a matter in which my Colleague the hon. Minister of Agriculture is very much interested and the technical officers of his Ministry are very much concerned in improving the quality of the crops mentioned. Advice and help on this subject is always available to all farmers through the medium of the field officers of the Ministry of Agriculture.

Mr Arikpo: Will the hon. Minister be good enough to tell the House what his Colleague the Minister of Agriculture is doing about the matter?

The Minister of Agriculture temporarily holding the Portfolio of Production: If the

hon. Member will examine the Policy paper on Agriculture I think he will get the information he requires.

Teachers—Retirement

207. **Mr G. C. Okeya** asked the Minister of Education, how many teachers have retired on pension from Government Schools and Voluntary Agencies since 1954; what steps are being taken to see that teachers who are overdue to retire, do so.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Education (Mr L. O. Uzoigwe):

I am directed to answer as follows:—

Twenty-five Voluntary Agency teachers have retired from service since 1st October, 1954 whilst eight Government School teachers retired during the same period. Teachers due to retire but who wish to continue in service may obtain the Minister of Education's permission to continue for a named number of years, each case considered on its merits.

Reports of Parliamentary Committees

212. **Mr E. U. Eronini** asked the Premier, whether, in view of the fact that Reports of Parliamentary Committees set up by him or Executive Council are invariably presented to the Premier and Executive Council in the first instance for discussion and decision, he would not consider it advisable in future not to appoint Members of Executive Council to Parliamentary Committees, as the presence of such Members

[MR E. U. ERONINI]
in the Executive Council when the Reports are discussed is unfair and prejudicial to all concerned.

The Premier: The hon. Member's suggestion is noted. I will bear this factor in mind.

Tarring of Obolo-Eha-Amufu Road

229. **Mr R. O. Ukuta, M.B.E.**, asked the Minister of Transport, what is holding up the tarring of a portion of the Obolo-Eha-Amufu Road.

The Minister of Transport: I regret to inform my hon. Friend that owing to the inability of the contractors to carry out the terms of the contract on this road they were expelled, and owing to financial stringency the project was then transferred to Appendix "Y" for reconsideration when funds again became available. The question of reconstructing work on this project will be considered along with others in the Nsukka Division when the road and bridge construction programme for 1959-60 is reviewed in the light of capital funds available.

Mr Ukuta, M.B.E.: Is the Minister aware of the importance of this road which is only the road leading to the Railway Station?

The Minister of Transport: I am aware.

Local Government Staff and Politics

230. **Mr J. W. E. Anaba** asked the Minister of Local Government, what disciplinary action should be taken against members of the Local Government Council staff who take part in politics.

The Minister of Local Government: Local Government Staff are prohibited by the Eastern Region Local Government Staff Regulations 1956 from engaging in political activities. Any member of the staff of a Local Government Council who engages in political activities is guilty of misconduct. The penalty for misconduct can be dismissal from the Council's service or some lesser punishment according to the extent of the misconduct. This would be for the Council to decide having first considered representations from the

member of the staff concerned. There is of course nothing to prevent a member of the staff from voting at any election. That is not regarded as engaging in political activities.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

(1) Education Grants-in-Aid

The Minister of Education (Mr G. E. Okeke): Mr Speaker, hon. Members will already have seen in the Press that this Government has decided to make big financial reliefs for Education in the 1959 School Year. I shall now endeavour to explain a little more fully than we have done in the Press Releases just what the Government proposes to do in 1959.

The first major relief, and it is the one with the biggest news value, is the freeing of Standard One from school fees. Members know that Infants I and II have been kept fee-free throughout 1958, but in 1959 this is to be extended to Standard I. Thus all the children who entered Infants I at the out-set of the U.P.E. Scheme will continue to enjoy free education during next year as well. A child who started schooling in January 1957 had free education in Infants I that year. He had free education in Infants II during the current year. And now next year, he will have free education in Standard I. The cost to Government of freeing Standard I is just over £½ million.

I must seriously warn that this does not imply that this child will continue to have free education from year to year. Future reliefs will, as this Government has previously stated, depend on the fortunes of our finances.

Now let me turn to reliefs for the other primary school classes. This year the A.L.C. for Standard II has been £2; next year it will be £1 10s. The A.L.C. for Standards III and IV has been £4 during the current year; next year it will be £3 10s. The cost to Government of these particular reliefs is about £160,000.

Before leaving primary education, I would like to mention a relief we have given to the Voluntary Agencies. That is the raising of the administrative grants for primary schools from 5s to 10s for each approved teacher.

This is higher than it has ever been before in this Region and will cost about £11,000 a year.

It would have been wrong to have given all the reliefs to primary education. Both secondary education and teacher training have their claims. The A.L.C. for secondary schools was raised in 1958 to £16 per class of twenty-five. We are cutting it in 1959 to £12 per class of twenty-five.

We have made a further concession in the case of Higher School Certificate Classes. These classes are frequently smaller than twenty-five pupils and so we are reducing the A.L.C. to £12 times twenty per class in place of £16 times twenty-five per class. The cost of this relief is about £45,000 a year.

At the present time there are forty-eight secondary schools in this Region that are grant-aided by Government. Another eight have reached a standard that merits adding them to the assisted list. This we are going to do with effect from next month. The cost is £25,000 in a year.

Finally we have the concessions for teacher training colleges. At the moment the capita-tion grant is £13 per student plus £2 book grant. We are raising it to £18 per student plus £2 book grant. This increase of £5 per student will cost the Government £50,000 during the year. I am glad to be able to say that ten teacher training colleges will be added to the assisted list as from next month, at a cost of about £24,000 a year. The total cost to Government of all these reliefs is estimated at £836,000 in 1959.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity of stating that Government cannot permit, during the forthcoming School Year, any sideways expansion of primary schools. That is to say, if a primary school is at present double stream in Infants I, it must remain double stream in 1959 in Infants I. New classes can be added at the top but they cannot be added at the bottom.

There is one last concession that I would like to mention. Teachers who hold the United Kingdom Ministry of Education Certificate or equivalent will have an initial entry point of £306, instead of £270, rising to £660

per annum. Those of them who are in this grade will be eligible, after some years of satisfactory service, for appointment as Education Officer. The upgrading will be effective from 1st April, 1959.

The 1958 School Year has been a very difficult one for the teachers, for Voluntary Agencies, for the parents of school children, and for officials of the Education Department. I think, however, that after the crisis at the beginning of this year, things have settled down remarkably well. Many school managers and others with whom I have talked, have expressed astonishment that we have managed as well as we have. In parts of the former Ogoja Province, in particular, where education rating schemes are in force, I am aware that all is by no means well, but viewing the Region as a whole, things are not as bad as they might have been; and for this, I would like, on behalf of Government, to thank all Voluntary Agencies, School Managers and School Teachers, and Members of the Board of Education, for the splendid way they have coped with the acutely difficult problems of the past twelve months. The concessions now announced by the Government will, it is hoped, make 1959 a brighter year for them all.

(2) Eastern Region Local Government (Elections) Amendment Regulations 1958, and their Implications for Future Local Government Elections

The Minister of Local Government (Chief A. N. Onyiuke): Mr Deputy Speaker, hon. Members may have seen the Local Government (Elections) (Amendment) Regulations which were published in the *Regional Gazette* today, Thursday, 11th December. I feel it is necessary to say something about these amending regulations and what they aim to achieve so that there may be no misunderstanding of Government's motives.

Hon. Members are aware that registration for the elections to the House of Representatives will begin early in January. The whole of that month will be taken up with registration. In February the Preliminary List will be typed and published. March is set aside for the lodging of claims and objections and these claims and objections will be heard and disposed of in April. The final register will be

[CHIEF ONYIUKÉ]

available on 1st May although not in its printed form.

It is the policy of the Government that there should be a single Electoral Roll for all types of elections in the Region. The Federal Register, shortly to be compiled, will offer an Electoral Roll that is capable of use in any election and the Government considers that it is logical and desirable that the Federal Register should become the Local Government Register for future Local Government elections.

In order that the Federal Register may be valid for Local Government elections the electors for Local Government elections must have the same qualifications as the electors for the Federal elections. The voting qualification for the Federal elections is a residential one. The voting qualification for Local Government elections must therefore be a residential one too and must be exactly the same as the Federal qualification. Unless the two qualifications are the same we cannot use the Federal Register for Local Government elections. Hitherto, Local Government electors have had a choice. Either they could register where they were living or they could register where they were born or their fathers were born. This birth qualification has now been eliminated. Henceforth a person will register and vote in the ward in which his residence is situated. The elimination of the birth qualification was necessary if we wished to use the Federal Register for Local Government elections. Its elimination will also remove the problem of double registration which in certain areas caused considerable difficulties. In short, therefore, these amending regulations confer on a person who is a registered voter for the Federal elections the right to vote at a Local Government election for the ward in which he or she lives; they also make the Federal Register the Local Government Register.

There are now certain important implications which must be brought to the notice of hon. Members. I have already mentioned that the Federal Register will not be available for use until 1st May. On the other hand there are a number of Local Government elections due to be held by 1st April in Divisions where the tenure of office of the existing

councillors is due to expire on 31st March. The Divisions affected are Abakaliki, Ogoja, Degema, Brass, Calabar and Ogoni. Unfortunately the time for holding these elections coincides with the time of the preparation of the Federal Register and the lodging of claims and objections. In dealing with this problem the Government was faced with three alternatives:—

(a) Firstly, we could have arranged for the Local Government elections to go ahead independently of the Federal preparations according to the old Local Government Elections regulations concerning qualifications and registration. This would have meant two separate registrations going on at the same time, each registration governed by different voting qualifications. It is not difficult for hon. Members to imagine what would happen under such circumstances. There would be complete confusion in the minds of the electorate; there would not be sufficient supervisory staff to run two registrations simultaneously; voters who made claims and objections to the Local Government Register would not be bothered to make them over again for the Federal Register or vice versa and the situation would be such that the Federal Electoral Commission might well raise objections that the accuracy of the Federal Register was being compromised.

(b) Secondly, there was the possibility of using a duplicate copy of the Federal Preliminary List in the areas concerned. At the end of the period of registration this duplicate copy would be used as the Local Government Preliminary List and the former Local Government Election Regulations regarding claims and objections and finalising the Register applied to it.

Similar difficulties would arise as in the case of a separate registration. Local Government elections would be held during the very period of the lodging and hearing of claims and objections to the Federal List. The people would be confused; administratively it would be an almost impossible task with the staff available and it would invite objections from the Federal Electoral Commission.

(c) Thirdly, there was the use of the Federal Register itself as the Local Government Register. This as I have said has been

the aim of the Government for some time. The advantages would be great and obvious. There would be a single act of registration for both elections, there would only be one set of claims and objections, there would be no question of interfering with the Federal arrangements, there would be no confusion in the minds of the electorate. An extra registration receipt for use in the Local Government elections would be all that was necessary and this would be necessary whatever alternative was chosen. The difficulty lay in the dates of the elections and the date on which the Federal Register would become available. The elections are due to be held not later than 1st April, the Register will not be available until 1st May. The only way to resolve this conflict is to postpone the Local Government elections until May when the Federal Register will be available. To postpone the elections for two months means the extension of the tenure of office of the Councillors of the Councils concerned for two months also. New Councils would have to begin their lives on 1st June instead of on 1st April. There is no other way round the difficulty.

The Government has adopted the third alternative as the best one, considering all the circumstances involved. The object of this statement is to show hon. Members why this decision was reached and to dispel any misunderstanding and speculation, particularly as it involves the somewhat disagreeable device of extending the lives of certain Councils. I wish to make it perfectly clear that there are no political considerations involved and that this decision has been dictated only by the mechanics of elections. We have to have these Local Government elections. We have to have the Federal registration. Unfortunately they coincide. The Government's only concern is that both operations should proceed as smoothly as possible. And if to achieve this object the lives of certain Councils have to be extended for a matter of two months, it is the opinion of the Government that this is the wisest course and in the best interest of the electors in the Council areas concerned.

BILLS PRESENTED

1. Customary Courts

Bill to amend the Customary Courts Law, 1956; presented by Mr R. O. Iwuagwu,

Minister of State charged with responsibility for Customary Courts and the Appointment of Chiefs; read the First time; to be read a Second time Today.

2. Illiterates Protection

Bill to amend the Illiterates Protection Ordinance; presented by Mr J. H. E. Nwuke, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Internal Affairs; read the First time; to be read a Second time Today.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(1) The Eastern Region Local Government (Amendment) Bill

Order for Second reading read.

The Minister of Local Government (Chief A. N. Onyiuke): Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to move the Second reading of a Bill entitled the Eastern Region Local Government Amendment Bill.

Although the Local Government Law is a considerable piece of legislation hon. Members will appreciate that the procedure and practice of Local Government is evolving all the time. Snags arise which were never expected and with ninety-three District Councils and 824 Local Councils operating under the Law I am often faced with situations which cannot be adequately covered by the Law as it is, and amendments are necessary. It is, therefore, for the smoother operation of the Local Government system that this Bill is introduced.

I will proceed formally to discuss this Bill clause by clause:

Clause 2: Under Section 9 (2) of the E.R.L.G. Law I can order an Inquiry if it appears to me that the administration of a Council is inefficient or corrupt. If such an inquiry proves corruption I can, with the approval of the Governor in Council, declare the seats of some or all the Councillors vacant. I cannot, however, penalise either the Councillors or staff responsible for unauthorised or unlawful expenditure and make the persons concerned refund to the Council without delay the amounts which they have without authority or unlawfully spent. The disclosures of an Inquiry which merit surcharge can only be dealt with at a subsequent audit inspection and it may be a very long time before such an audit inspection is carried out. Unless such irregularities can

[CHIEF ONYIUKÉ]

be subject to swift and effective action there will be no deterrent to their continuation. Councillors and their staff who waste public money and condone irregularities must be made to feel the weight of their offence whilst the disclosures are still fresh in everyone's minds. In order to achieve this object, I consider that I should have the power of surcharge after due inquiry into the affairs of a Council and after obtaining the advice of the Director of Audit.

A surcharge being a quasi-judicial act there must be a right of appeal to the High Court and this is provided for.

I might add here, Mr Speaker, that corrupt methods and irresponsibility are infecting far too many Councils in this Region at present. The Law, regulations, Financial Memoranda, directives are either completely disregarded or treated with contempt. This attitude is retarding progress and endangering the whole structure of Local Government. I aim to stop the rot before it sets in too deeply and if my existing powers under Section 9 of the Law are fortified by the power of surcharge, I consider that I shall be able to apply an effective brake to these undesirable tendencies.

Clause 3: Under new Local Government Elections Regulations approved by my Government and published today, the qualifications for voters have been altered. Instead of the dual qualification whereby a person may be registered and vote either in the ward where he lives or in the ward where he or his father was born, there will in future be a single residential qualification, and a person will register and vote in the ward in which he lives. We are bringing the qualifications of voters into line with those laid down for the Federal elections so that the Federal Register of Voters may become the Local Government Register of Voters also. However, in its present form the Law states that the qualifications of a Councillor shall be (*inter alia*) that he is on the register of electors of the Council concerned. With a residential voting qualification this would mean that a person living in, say, Aba could not be a Councillor in his home area, say, Owerri, since he would be on the register of electors for Aba and not on that for his home Council in Owerri. It is considered that "sons abroad" should still be eligible to become

Councillors in their own home areas and hence an amendment to the Law is required, whereby a person can qualify as a Councillor if he is registered in the Region.

Clause 4. At present a Council must notify me of any vacancy occurring in the Council and must arrange a by-election within 60 days of the vacancy occurring. If this period is inadvertently exceeded no election can be held and the seat must remain vacant for the rest of the life of the Council. It is considered that this provision is too restrictive. Moreover owing to the rather more elaborate electoral procedure it is not always possible to hold an election within 60 days. I therefore consider that I should be able to fix the date of an election if the 60 day period has been inadvertently exceeded so that a vacant seat may be filled.

Clause 5. This seeks to assist many Councils who have experienced trouble and difficulty over the operation of the Local Government Tenders Boards Regulations in regard to the supply of drugs and dressings to Local Government dispensaries, Maternity Homes and Rural Health Centres. The Tenders Boards are not in constant session; there are often delays and not infrequently these medical institutions run out of supplies. Moreover, instances have occurred in which a notice calling for tenders for drugs and dressings has elicited no response and the situation is then critical since the Council cannot conclude a contract. In order to help Councils out of this difficulty I have therefore proposed a relaxation of the normal procedure so that Councils may purchase their requirements in lots not exceeding £100 in value from reputable suppliers. Such purchases would be made on Local Purchase Orders and would be subject to the approval of the Medical Officer in charge.

Clause 6. As the Law now stands it is arguable that a Council may of its own initiative write off a surcharge provided the conditions of the proviso to Section 119 (1) of the Law are adhered to. This would be contrary to the intention of the Law since the Minister is the final arbiter as the propriety of any item of expenditure and together with the High Court has final powers of decision in surcharge matters. It is therefore necessary

to make it clear that any write-off of a debt due to a Council as a result of surcharge upheld by or accepted by the Minister can only be made on the authority of the Minister.

Clause 7. It has been ruled by the Law Officers that a surcharge may only be made after the accounts of the financial year have been audited in accordance with the provisions of Section 173 of the Law. This is in practice most unsatisfactory as there are many cases where the full facts with regard to any particular item of account cannot be ascertained during audit inspection, and the best course for the Director of Audit to pursue is to disallow the item pending consultation with my Ministry or other further enquiry. When it has been established that a surcharge would be in order the Director of Audit is, in present circumstances, bound to wait until the next audit of the particular Council concerned before taking any further action, which is undesirable in every way. It is vital that the procedure of surcharge should be as effective and as swift as may be in its action, and it is therefore considered necessary that the Director of Audit should have the power to convert a disallowance into a surcharge at any time after due enquiry has shown that a surcharge is in order.

Clause 8. This amendment, Mr Speaker, is a very technical one and I hope hon. Members will have patience whilst I try to explain what it is all about.

At present the auditors make adjustments in the accounts of the year under audit in respect of all errors noted and all disallowances and surcharges made. Where the audit is, as it is at present, in arrears, this practice frequently means that the accounts of two or more completed years have to be corrected, each one individually. When the draft reports of the auditors are examined by the Director of Audit before being finally approved, occasions arise when the contentions of the officer in the field are not upheld in the Audit headquarters and further corrections to the accounts have to be made. This may entail further visits to a remote Council to explain and obtain the adjustments now required and the partial reversal of adjustments already made,

in the accounts of more than one year, which leads to the production of yet more annual financial statements and, doubtless, complete confusion in the mind of the unfortunate Treasurer concerned.

The practice of making adjustments in the accounts of the actual year under audit stems from United Kingdom practice where Her Majesty's Treasury recoup the expenditure on the District Audit Service by means of a Stamp Duty assessed on the net income and expenditure of each Council. In order to arrive at the correct duty payable all disallowed expenditure and surcharges must be removed from the account of the year under examination. This procedure has no parallel in this Region and there appears to be little point in continuing a practice which really serves no useful purpose at all, and which entirely entails much unproductive work and travelling, much confusion in the minds of Treasurers, delay in the certification of accounts and additional work in my Ministry.

It should be borne in mind that an audit examination of the accounts of a District Council is not a detailed one. If every transaction of every District Council in the Region were subject to a detailed audit examination the Audit Department would need two or three times its existing staff. In the circumstances, therefore, the allowance of the accounts of a Council cannot in the nature of things be an unqualified assurance that the accounts are absolutely correct; it is merely an assurance that the Director, has applied a test examination of a nature which experience has shown to be adequate for the categories of transactions examined. If therefore the Director cannot give an absolute guarantee that he has found all the errors in the account of a District Council, the case for the correction of such errors as have come to light in the account of a year before certification is much weakened.

After careful consideration the conclusion has been reached that it would be preferable from every point of view to adopt the following procedure in certifying Local Government accounts:—

1. The Director of Audit's certification of the accounts of a Council to state that he has

[CHIEF ONYIUKÉ]

examined them and that they are correct, subject to his report and any disallowances and surcharges necessary.

2. His report to detail all adjustments necessary and to set out clearly the effect that these adjustments would, if made in the accounts of the year, have had on the Working Balance account and the various expenditure and revenue items.

3. Actual adjustment of all errors, disallowances and surcharges to be made only in the accounts of the current year.

4. Where the accounts of two completed years are being examined at one audit, all adjustments noted as necessary as a result of the examination of the first year to be noted in the report for the second year also, so that the full effect of all adjustments needed is set out in the report for the later year.

The proposed amendment would make this much more satisfactory procedure possible.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

The Minister of Transport (Mr P. O. Ururuka): Sir, I beg to second.

Question proposed.

Mr S. G. Ikoku (Enyong Division): Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to compliment the Minister of Local Government for the effort made in tightening up the matters particularly financial, as regards the affairs of our Local Government Councils. Sir, you will agree that this Legislature is voting considerable sums of money annually for these councils. If my memory serves me right, I think vote in the neighbourhood of a million pounds every year is spent by way of grants to Local Government. In addition to that, we are voting something in the Region of £100,000 every year to be used in grant of loans to Local Government Councils. To spend £100,000 annually by our Local Government is not a matter to be treated lightly and I think this House owes it as a duty to the Region to see that her money is managed as efficiently as humanly possible. For this reason, Sir, we on this Side very much thank the Minister of Local Government for this Bill.

Sections 6 and 8 deal with final accounts and the audit thereof and we agree with the

Minister in that. We would not, however, like to give the impression that all Local Councils are corrupt. They are not and I am glad the Minister has not given that impression. Two factors are responsible for the mismanagement of our funds at the Local Government level: there is corruption, no doubt about it, a good deal of relapsing due to financial administration and I think this is where we have put all our power to raise the standard of efficiency. Sections 6, 7 and 8 will not only enable the auditors to go through these accounts and surcharge who is to be surcharged, but also going further, in Section 8 (iii) (a) the auditor is a sort of teacher in financial administration; for example, he has to observe all the items of accounts and when necessary, make any recommendations in adjustment of the accounts. This is a very important weapon in the hands of the auditor to educate the various councils on how to be good at financial administration.

There is a section or two on which we would like, however, to sound a note of caution. Section 5 is aimed at breaking the bottle-neck as regards the supply of medical stores and it is intended in the Bill that Councils could get these drugs from private supplies to wait approval of the Medical Officer of the area. I think, as it stands, that it is a good thing but this is to be watched. I sound this note of caution because there are many quack doctors manufacturing these drugs. A good example is the famous M & B. There are many imitations of this M & B in the country and it is very dangerous for anybody to purchase M & B from somebody who is not an accredited practitioner. I need to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to that because they could quite easily use this new channel which has been created for them to supply ineffective and, sometimes, dangerous drugs to Local Councils.

The hon. Minister has done his best to meet this bottle-neck, but I think it is equally necessary that he should keep a very watchful eye and not allow these quack doctors to exploit this new channel.

Section 2, of the Bill sets out to give any person who is surcharged by the Auditor a right of appeal to the High Court if the amount of the surcharge is above £200. Once somebody has been surcharged by an Auditor,

I think it is a polite way of telling him that his integrity is questioned. It does not matter the amount involved—whether this be £200 or £1—his integrity has been challenged. The Minister should be kind enough to allow anybody who agrees to a surcharge irrespective of the amount to appeal lest they will go to the towns and say the whole thing is useless and will continue to mislead the public. I suggest, therefore, that they deposit the amount of the surcharge before they can appeal. If they are acquitted by the High Court, they can have their money back. If you allow them to appeal, anybody can keep on making a chain of appeals and will then go to tell people that the Auditor is a quack one: he could not do the accounts properly.

With these, I once more thank the Minister of Local Government for his foresight and we hope that the new machinery will be tightened up and sound financial administration ushered in.

Mr Speaker, I beg to support.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a Second time.

Bill immediately considered in Committee.

(In the Committee)

Clause 1.

The Minister of Local Government (Chief A. N. Onyiuke): Mr Chairman, in the citation of this Bill, I beg to move the inclusion of the expression "No. 2" after the word "Amendment" in brackets. The Eastern Region Local Government Law has already been amended this year. The Amendment is—"The Eastern Region Law No. 10 of 1958". The present amendment is, therefore, a second amendment and must be shown as such. The citation should read—"The Eastern Region Local Government (Amendment) No. 2 Law, 1958".

Mr Chairman, I beg to move.

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Clause 1 as amended agreed to.

Clause 2.

Mr E. O. Eyo (Uyo Division): Mr Chairman, I wonder whether we should postpone this clause to allow Government to consider a draft amendment. The first amendment, Sir, is in respect of sub-clause 7, lines two and three. We are proposing to leave out the words "where such surcharge is for an amount exceeding £200". If that is agreed then we propose to come at the end to propose a proviso that the aggrieved person shall deposit the sum surcharged in court pending the determination of the appeal.

Question proposed.

Chief Onyiuke: I have no objection.

Question put and agreed to.

Mr E. O. Eyo: Mr Chairman, I beg to move that at the end of the clause the full stop be left out and a semicolon and the words "provided that the amount surcharged is deposited in Court by the aggrieved person pending the determination of the appeal" be inserted.

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Clause 2 as amended agreed to.

Clauses 3-8 agreed to.

(Mr Deputy Speaker resumed the Chair)

Bill reported with Amendments; as amended, read the Third time and passed.

(2) The Goldsmiths Bill

Order for Second reading read.

The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke): Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to move that a Bill entitled "A Bill for a Law to control and regulate the licensing of Goldsmiths in the Eastern Region, and for matters connected therewith" be read a Second time.

The licensing of Goldsmiths is a Regional responsibility that has so far been carried out in accordance with the provisions of the old Goldsmiths Ordinance, Chapter 81 of the Laws of Nigeria (1948 edition). During the last eighteen months it has proved difficult for the Government to carry out these responsibilities, owing to a serious defect in the Ordinance which has arisen from the present

[DR IMOKE]

constitutional situation. Powers to issue licences under the Ordinance rest with Residents, who may delegate these powers to District Officers; but there are, of course, no Residents in this Region and it is therefore necessary either to amend the Ordinance or to pass a Regional Law replacing it. After careful consideration, and taking into account the fact that this is, as I have already said, a Regional responsibility, it has been decided that the latter of these two alternatives would be more acceptable. The replacement of the Ordinance by Regional legislation is made the more desirable, in the view of this Government, by the fact that the conditions under which the trade of Goldsmith is operated in the various Regions differ very considerably, and it may well be that other Regions would wish to exercise a different degree of control than would the Government of Eastern Region, where the Goldsmith's trade is not plied on a large scale.

The Bill now before the House, follows the old Ordinance very closely indeed and there are only two substantial differences.

Firstly, the Bill provides that the authority for the issue of licences shall in future be the Minister of Finance, who may delegate his powers to the Administrative Officers in charge of Divisions. I am sure that hon. Members will agree that this change is self-explanatory and requires no comment from me.

Secondly the Bill provides that the fees for the issue of the various licences shall be laid down in the Regulations to be issued by the Minister of Finance, and these fees are therefore not set out in the body of the Bill itself. The reason for this is purely one of administrative convenience, since the proposed arrangement makes it unnecessary to amend the substantive Law when a change (possibly of a minor nature) in the fees is required. I intend to issue Regulations setting out the scale of fees as soon as possible after the Bill receives the approval of the House. I am sorry that I cannot at the present time state precisely what fees are intended: the reason for this is one outside my control. In pursuit of our Party's policy of one Nigeria it is my object, before fixing the licence fees under the new Bill to ensure that as far as possible

there is uniformity with other Regions principally effected. To this end we have embarked on negotiations with other Governments and unfortunately these are not yet concluded. At present, therefore, I am not in a position to make a statement on fees.

Otherwise there is no change from the provisions of the old Ordinance. The Bill is therefore of a simple and straightforward nature and I am sure that hon. Members will appreciate the need for it.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I beg to move.

The Minister of Local Government (Chief A. N. Onyiuke): Sir, I beg to second.

Question proposed.

Mr Ikoku: Mr Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister of Finance has anticipated one of the points I wish to raise on section 4 (6) of this Bill—the failure of the Bill to prescribe the exact fees which are to be charged. I think such a thing is important. The Minister knows he must consult the others concerned in order to arrive at some uniformity but surely, Sir, this consultation should have been done before this Bill was brought to the House. Some sort of agreement should be reached between our Government and the Governments of other Regions of the Federation before this House should be called upon to pass this Bill into law. We think that the law governing the trade of Goldsmith should be quite in time and it is important that we should insist on this provision because, afterwards, gold is not something we can traffic with. Not only the house wives have a lot of quarrel with Goldsmiths as regards the preparation and washing of gold and the rest of it but gold is a very important factor in international currency in the balance of payment and so there should not be any laxity in the law as regards the trade of Goldsmith. So I am not very much impressed that the Minister was unable to give the House something more complete regarding the fees. I hope by the time we finish this debate he will be in a position to tell us something a little bit more concrete.

Turning to section 6, Sir, the revenue collected by way of fees will now accrue to the Licensing Authority by whom these fees

are collected and received. I think this is a very good idea but when the Administrative Officer is the Licensing Authority, who receives this money? Is it the Regional Government? Is it the District Council within which the Administrative Officer is resident? When a Local Government Council is the Licensing Authority it is clear to whom the money is going but when the Licensing Authority is an Administrative Officer we don't know exactly where the money is going and I will strongly suggest that all amount collected by way of fees should go to the Local Council concerned. In fact, in other Regions other licensing too has been shifted on to Local Council to swell their revenue; for example, in the licensing of motor vehicles.

I strongly feel to suggest that wherever the Minister finds it necessary, all the fees so collected should accrue to the Local Government concerned.

Section 9 subsection (5) is one we find difficult to accept. A very good Bill has been presented to the House and the whole idea is to regulate the trade of the goldsmith, but here in section 9, subsection (5) you will find that some goldsmiths are being exempted from all these regulations. It is obvious that a goldsmith who is out to make mischief will plead illiteracy and I am suggesting, Sir, that whether the goldsmith is illiterate or not, he must comply with the provisions of this Law.

Sitting suspended at 11.30 a.m.

Sitting resumed at 12 noon.

Mr Ikoku: Mr Speaker, before we broke off I was defending our case against the exemption of the illiterate goldsmith from the provisions of this Law. Section 9 subsection (5) in fact reads as follows:—

“Where a licensing authority is satisfied that a licensed goldsmith is illiterate and that the earnings of such goldsmith do not permit him to engage a literate employee he may by order exempt such goldsmith from all or any of the provisions of this section. . .”

As I said, this is a good day and it just tells us exactly where we are—*vis-a-vis* the goldsmith's right of a good day destroyed by this

section, which exempts an illiterate goldsmith from all the provisions of the Law. We would humbly submit that if a goldsmith is so illiterate and so poor that he cannot abide by the provisions of this order, he should get out of the trade and go and find something else to do. But some of these people merely pretend to be illiterate. All goldsmiths know the weight of their gold. They know which is two ounces; they know which is 1s gold and 2s gold, so they should be compelled to keep these records. If they are not prepared to do so, they should quit the trade.

Turning to section 11 (1), we agree entirely that the appropriate officers should have the right to enter any premises where a goldsmith is doing his business and inspect the premises. But, Sir, we are a bit disturbed by the phrase “without a warrant,” that is, that these officers are allowed to enter the premises and remove whatever they would like to remove without warrants. This is a very supreme power granted to the officers. If a District Officer or an officer representing a District Council or a Local Government Council is satisfied or has any information which tends to suggest that something illegal is being done by a particular goldsmith, he should have the right to go and search the premises. But that right should be covered by a warrant. It is about time, Sir, that we tried to protect the individual in this country. Much as we recognise the authority of an official we are insisting that an official should exercise his authority in accordance with the Law, because knowing our people as we do, nothing stops an officer of a Local Government Council from going into the premises of a goldsmith under the pretext that he is an officer and that he comes to see how things are going on. We insist that the Government should kindly reconsider that phrase. Give the people the right to inspect the place, but it should be by a warrant.

Section 15 (d) lays it down that “the Minister may make regulation for prescribing penalties for offences against any regulation made hereunder”. I do not think it is right that the Minister by himself should prescribe penalties for offences. I think the Legislature of a Region should exercise that right and whatever the penalty the Minister would like to impose, I think, should be incorporated into the Law and be passed by this House.

[MR IKOKU]

On the whole the Bill is quite a good one and we support it, but we hope Government shall give due consideration to our points.

Dr Imoke: Mr Speaker, I should like to answer some of the points made by the hon. Leader of the Opposition. First of all he talked about the question of fees as prescribed by the Law. Of course, I anticipated he would make this remark, but I explained the circumstances of the case in moving the Second reading of the Bill. We have started negotiations with the Western Region Government which, as you all know, ply much more heavily in this trade than we do since January of this year; unfortunately, we have not received sufficient co-operation from them. That is why the fees have not been prescribed. But we hope that in a few weeks time, we may hear from them; if not, then we can go ahead to prescribe these fees.

In making his second point, he asked who was going to receive the money collected from the goldsmiths. He suggested that the Local Government bodies should receive the money.

I should like to point out to him that in the past it is the Regional Government that received the money since the collection was being done by Administrative Officers; if it were done by the Local Government Councils then, naturally, they are entitled to receive the money.

He also made a point against the exemption of the illiterate goldsmith from the provisions of this Law. I want to say briefly that this section of the Law is taken from the old Ordinance and there is no change whatsoever.

The last point he made was that the Minister should have no powers to prescribe penalties for offences on the law. The offences we are talking about are not against the law but against the regulations and the Minister rightly has that power to prescribe penalties against regulations that are made by him, and to add to that, it is exactly the same under the old law—section 15 (b) of the old Ordinance is exactly in the same words.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a Second time.

Bill immediately considered in Committee.

(In the Committee)

Clause 1.

The Attorney-General (Mr M. O. Ajegbo): Mr Chairman, I beg to move that the following be inserted at the end of Clause 1: "and shall come into operation on a date to be appointed by the Governor by notice in the *Regional Gazette*".

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Clause 1 as amended agreed to.

Clauses 2 and 3 agreed to.

Clause 4.

Mr E. O. Eyo: Mr Chairman, I would like to say that we are not very happy with this clause 4. The Minister of Finance has just told you, Sir, that where he appoints an Administrative Officer in charge of a Division to be the Licensing Authority the fees collected will accrue to the Government but where a Local Government Council is the Licensing Authority, the fees collected will accrue to the Local Government Council. Sir, I do not think this is very satisfactory. In one area, the Administrative Officer will be the Licensing Authority and in another, the Local Council; and probably in the same Division.

Dr Imoke: Mr Chairman, Sir, I think I am being misquoted. I said that since licensing fees are being collected by Administrative Officers, the revenue should accrue to the Regional Government and that had been so in the past and there was no intention of revising it.

Mr E. O. Eyo: Mr Chairman, I would like to refer to section 6 of the Bill. In clause 4, it should be the Administrative Officer or Local Government Council. If the Minister appoints a Local Government Council as the Licensing Authority, then the fees will accrue to the Local Government Council and not to Government. We are asking, Sir, that either the fees will accrue to Government or the fees go to the Local Government Council. It is unsatisfactory to allow one Officer in one area to collect and perhaps, another, the Local Government Council to collect. Either the Administrative Officer should be the Licensing Authority or if we appoint Local Council, let that be done by the Local Council.

Dr Imoke: Clause 4 definitely states "Administrative Officer in charge of Division or a Local Government Council." The Government will have to take a decision whether it is going to be one or the other. If the Government decides that it will be Administrative Officer, it will apply generally throughout the Region.

Mr E. O. Eyo: I would like the Minister to understand that it is not upon the Government to look into the law as such. My interpretation is that the Minister should appoint Administrative Officer as Licensing Authority or, on the other hand, the Minister should appoint Local Government Council. If the collection is effected by an Administrative Officer, the fees will accrue to the Government and if a Local Council, the fees will accrue to the Local Government Council.

Let me hear from the Attorney-General.

The Premier (Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe): Mr Chairman, in order to remove any doubts Government will amend clause 6 by *deleting* "licensing authority" and then *insert* "Eastern Region".

Clause 4 agreed to.

Clause 5 agreed to

Clause 6.

The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke): I beg to move that in clause 6 the words "licensing authority by whom the said fees are received and collected" be left out and "Eastern Region" be inserted.

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Clause 6 as amended agreed to.

Clause 7.

Mr J. A. Agba (Ogoja Division): Mr Chairman, I would like to know what conditions the Licensing Authority has to refuse to grant, renew or revoke any licence which has been issued or renewed. I am asking this because the law, as it is in paragraph 7, gives the Licensing Authority ample chance of doing quite a lot of damage to those who do not agree with it. If no conditions are laid down under which the Licensing Authority may refuse to grant a licence or to renew a licence, I think we will be doing a lot of injury to some members of the Region. I

have one man in mind, Mr Obioha, who has been refused his licence because he disagreed in his opinion with a certain political leader.

Again, it says any person who is aggrieved by such refusal may appeal to the High Court. This is a way of covering up. You cannot suggest for one moment that a person who has just started a business, has got enough money to make case. If the person had sufficient money to appeal to the High Court, I think it would be quite easy, but here is somebody just starting a business, he got his licence last year, the licence has expired; he has not collected enough money to go to the High Court, how do you expect such a man to have recourse to the High Court for justice to be done. It is fair that Government should lay down the conditions under which the Licensing Authority may refuse to grant or renew a licence.

The Attorney-General (Mr M. O. Ajegbo): A Licensing Authority may refuse to grant licence or to renew a licence if a goldsmith indulges in fraudulent practices. This is one instance in which a Licensing Authority can so act. If the goldsmith feels that he has been unjustly treated he can petition against the act of the Licensing Authority or go to Court.

Mr O. Arikpo (Obubra Division): Mr Chairman, the point is that the hon. Member has not answered the question. The objection is not against the Licensing Authority's powers to withdraw a licence. The point is that the law should prescribe the conditions under which a licence may be withdrawn. What the Attorney-General has said is what we all accept. Any goldsmith who does not comply with the provisions of the law may have his licence withdrawn. All that the hon. Member has said is to make the law quite clear. If an amendment were made it is better to make it clear that there must be some reasonable grounds such as the Attorney-General has suggested—that those who do not observe the provisions of this law will have their licences withdrawn.

Mr Ajegbo: Mr Chairman, as the hon. Minister of Finance has said, this is a reproduction of the old Law and you will find under section 6 of the Goldsmiths Ordinance the very same words. If the Law had worked very well in the past I do not see why we should disturb it.

Clause 7 agreed to.

Clause 8 agreed to.

Clause 9.

Mr E. O. Eyo: Mr Chairman, Sir, I would like to raise an objection to section 5 of this clause and I hope the Minister will not tell us that this restriction has been taken from the old law. That does not sound a very strong argument. Our objection is, why should an illiterate goldsmith be exempted from the provisions of this law. Our view is that there should be no preferential treatment. A goldsmith is a goldsmith; it does not matter whether he is literate or illiterate. We may even go further to amend the law against Moneylenders, and Licensed Buying Agents. We have to go the whole length to find out whether a Moneylender or a Licensed Buying Agent is illiterate. Even though this is said to have been lifted, we are saying that these illiterate goldsmiths do not enjoy the right the Government is going to accord them.

Mr Arikpo: Mr Chairman, may I add, Sir, that there is also the fact that one has to consider that this Ordinance was first commenced a very long time ago when the standard of literacy was very low, and therefore what applied then cannot apply now. Secondly, there is the fact that this law, in fact, creates an additional defence for a person who is charged with tort; the fact that he is ignorant or illiterate is another way of saying that he is free and here we are again contravening the general rule that ignorance is not certainly a defence, and I strongly suggest that the whole of the subsection be omitted from the law for these two reasons. One is that the standard of education generally is now much higher and most goldsmiths have some education, but if we leave it as it is, it is open to a goldsmith to go to Court and there plead illiteracy and he will be set free although he contravened all these provisions. I therefore strongly appeal to the Attorney-General and the Minister of Finance to consider omitting or deleting the whole of this subsection of clause 9.

The Premier: Mr Chairman, as regards the information required by the learned Member for Obubra, I will say that the

Illiterates Protection Ordinance was enacted in 1944, about fourteen years ago. I agree with him that the standard of education is higher now but I will not say that it is high enough to enable Government to escape its responsibility to illiterates. We say this because illiterates form an overwhelming part of our population. If we say that by 1944 there were, say, 90 per cent of the population being illiterates, I think we can say today that they are just under 90. As a matter of fact, the latest figure shows that we are only 10 per cent literate. In 1944 we were just about 5 per cent literate and we feel, therefore, that we should give protection to illiterate goldsmiths until such a time as the standard of education would have risen so that our standard of illiteracy will have been depressed. Therefore, in the public interest, it is essential that we should retain this particular sub-clause. There are so many goldsmiths who are illiterate and some of them are very old indeed. It may take them ten to twenty years before they die off—we don't pray that they die—during which we feel that they are entitled to have a living. I think the Government is bound to give protection to them and, therefore, make it possible for them to earn an honest living.

Clause 9 agreed to.

Clause 10 agreed to.

Clause 11.

Mr E. O. Eyo: Sir, our view is that we must get a protection for these men who will be ransacked every now and then by these Officers. If any Officer is so sure of what he is going to find, he should have a warrant.

Mr Ajegbo: Mr Chairman, I think we can satisfy hon. Members of the Opposition by deleting the words "any administrative officer, officer of the Mines Department or" in the clause. I beg to move that those words be deleted.

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Mr E. O. Eyo: We are not objecting to any Administrative Officer or any Mines

Officer doing it. What we are saying is that the Officer should do it with a warrant. We are suggesting that the words "without a warrant" in line three should be deleted.

Question proposed.

Mr Ajegbo: I think this would cause a lot of trouble. If there is a lot of smuggling of gold, it is very important that where there is an information that somebody has smuggled gold, a police officer should have power to make a search. He should have the power to search without warrant or it would not be worth while.

Mr Ikoku: I am sorry, Sir, we cannot accept such an explanation. If there is some smuggling of gold going on and there is information that goldsmith "X" is in possession of smuggled gold (for that matter no other person would be with him), it is the duty of the Officer concerned to go and get the Magistrate or a District Officer to sign a warrant, and all that is required is that the inspecting Officer should be discrete enough not to let the news to leak out before he conducts his search, but he should do it with a warrant.

I think, Sir, that we have reached a stage of development in this country when our citizens should be afforded the respect which is usual in democratic countries. There was a time when our country was absolutely a Colonial country and some of these things were to exist. We are not going to stand them any more and by all means somebody should be punished when he is guilty but he should be punished according to law.

Mr Arikpo: Mr Chairman, that is not my view. This is one of the cases where the Police comes in. It is really very true that the time-factor here is not such as to make it necessary to act without a warrant. We are not opposed to an Administrative Officer, or a Mines Officer making the search, provided they are armed with authority of a Magistrate to search. All that we need to do is to delete the words "without a warrant", and then have the power to search. But before they search they will get a warrant.

Mr Ikoku: May I make a suggestion, Mr Chairman, that if, for example (I do not know if I am right, but I think I do follow the trend of thought of the hon. Attorney-General) somebody may be in possession of gold and he is on the move, and if you go to get a warrant he may escape. In that case it is not a question of getting a warrant to search. It is a question of detaining him there and then. The Police officer has the right to make arrest without warrant, but it is not the same thing as to search without warrant. If you have information that gold is in one's pocket but you cannot search him, make use of your right to detain him, arrest him and then get a warrant to search him.

The Chairman: May I know if the hon. Minister of Finance has any amendment in mind?

Mr Arikpo: I do not think we are saying the same thing. What we are saying is that whether the Police or the Mines Department or the Administrative Department, no person should have the authority of law to search the premises of any other person without a warrant. All we want here and now is that the words in line three "without a warrant" be deleted, and I believe the cases which the hon. Attorney-General has in mind do not arise. The case where time is an important factor is where a person is suspected of being in possession of gold and he could be arrested by the police on suspicion. If a member of the public reports to the Police and if the person is seen carrying stolen gold any one can arrest him. All we are saying is that the cases the Minister has in mind do not arise; those are cases where the Police can suspect and arrest without a warrant—the case of a man in possession of smuggled gold. Therefore all we want amended is the deletion of the words "without a warrant."

We agree that the Police has the power under the law to arrest any one who commits a felony or is suspected of committing a felony, but that is not the point I am arguing.

Mr Ajegbo: We have narrowed down the personnel and have taken away the words "any Administrative Officer, Officer of the Mines Department". I am afraid we shall stick to the rest of the clause.

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

103

[Goldsmiths Bill—

11 DECEMBER 1958

Committee]

104

Question put.

Committee divided.

Ayes 20. Noes 57.

Division No. 2

12.55 p.m.

Ayes

Mr S. O. Achara
Mr J. A. Agba
Mr S. T. Akpan
Mr S. J. Amachree
Mr O. Arikpo
Mr H. U. E. Edelduok
Rev. O. Efiang, C.B.E.
Mr J. A. Etuhube
Mr M. U. Etuk

Mr E. O. Eyo
Mr S. G. Ikoku
Mr E. Ita
Mr O. O. Ita
Mr O. B. Nalelo
Dr W. N. Onubogu
Mr V. K. Onyeri
Mr A. G. Umoh
Mr M. N. Yowika

Tellers for the Aye :

Chief I. I. Morphy
Mr A. J. Ekpe

Noes

Mr W. Abengowe
Mr O. U. Afiah
Chief G. N. Agbasiere
Mr D. S. A. Agim
Mr D. E. Akilo
Mr H. U. Akpabio
Mr D. O. Aligwekwe
Mr S. N. Alo
Mr P. U. Amaefunah
Mr J. W. E. Anaba
Mr R. O. Anoke
Mr M. C. Awgu
Dr N. Azikiwe
Mr E. Chidolue
Mr A. O. Chikwendu
Mr E. A. Chime
Mr E. Emole
Mr U. Enyi
Mr E. U. Eronini
Mr J. O. Ihekwoaba
Mr I. U. Imeh
Dr S. E. Imoke
Mr J. M. Ito
Mr R. O. Iwuagwu
Mr S. E. K. Iwueke
Mr S. O. Masi
Mr D. A. Nnaji
Mr D. O. Nnamani

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
Mr K. J. N. Okpokam
Mr B. C. Okwu
Chief S. E. Onukogu
Mr P. A. Onwe
Mr N. O. Onwudiwe
Mr M. N. Onwuma
Chief A. N. Onyiuke
Rev. M. D. Opara
Mr E. W. Udonkim
Mr 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 J. E. Eyo

Clause 11 as amended agreed to.

Clauses 12 to 16 agreed to.

Schedule agreed to.

(Mr Deputy Speaker resumed the Chair)

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

(3) The Customary Courts (Amendment) Bill

Order for Second reading read.

The Minister of State charged with the responsibility for Customary Courts and the Appointment and Recognition of Chiefs (Mr R. O. Iwuagwu): Mr Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill for a law to amend the Customary Courts Law, 1958, be read a Second time.

Mr E. O. Eyo: On point of Order. May I draw your attention, Sir, to Standing Orders 40 and 43. This Bill was only handed to us this morning and I want to know whether it is Government's intention to take all the stages today.

Mr Deputy Speaker: I understand that this Bill was passed back to the Minister in charge some three days ago and that a few amendments were made and it was merely replaced yesterday. According to our Standing Order it is only one day's notice we are supposed to have before the Bill comes up. I do not know how far this is correct.

Mr Arikpo: If you look at the Order Paper for the day, the Bill was presented today; this is the Second reading and the former draft Bill was withdrawn with some paragraphs renewed and the new Bill substituted and by our Standing Order we ought to give one day's notice after the presentation. The Bill was presented today.

Mr Deputy Speaker: Mr Eyo, is there anything wrong in presenting the Bill in any particular day?

Mr E. O. Eyo: I wish to draw your attention to Standing Order 43.

Mr Deputy Speaker: Standing Order 43 provides that with the general consent of the House all the stages of a Bill may be taken on the same day. If we have the consent of the House I think we can go on.

Mr E. O. Eyo: We are not so much opposed to the taking of all the three stages of the Bill but we are relying on the Standing Order in that no notice has been given. We are quite prepared to take it tomorrow.

The Premier: It is not our intention to hush on the Opposition Members or to split the House. I am submitting that a day's notice was given yesterday and apart from that, Mr Speaker, the two Bills for the Customary Courts have been published in the *Gazette* and what the present Bill wishes to do is to consolidate the two amending Bills into one amending Bill so that there is no difference whatsoever between the previous two amending Bills and the present consolidating amending Bill. We are therefore submitting that we have satisfied the requirements of the Standing Order.

Mr Ikoku: Mr Deputy Speaker, the argument, Sir, is not that we have not had enough time with the old Bill. I think Members of the Opposition agree. If the Government wants us to debate the old Bill we are ready to do it right now. I do not know whether the Standing Order will permit them to do that. In any case, I think the Minister of Justice is anxious to dispense justice in this matter. I think we better settle this matter in a friendly atmosphere. Forget our Standing Order.

Mr Deputy Speaker, if you will, kindly accommodate us and adjourn the debate?

Mr Deputy Speaker: Debate on the Second reading is adjourned until tomorrow.

(4) The Illiterates Protection Ordinance (Amendment) Bill

Order for Second reading read.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Mr J. H. E. Nwuke): Mr Deputy Speaker, I am directed

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

107 [Illiterates Ordinance (Amendment) 11 DECEMBER 1958 [Illiterates Ord. (Amdt.) Bill: 108
Bill: 2R] Com. and 3R; Standing Order 66]

[MR NWUKE]

to move the Second reading of the Illiterates Protection (Amendment) Bill.

Sir, the Objects and Reasons explain the need for this measure. The charges petition writers can legally make were laid down in 1920. There have been many ups and downs in world prices since then but no one will, I think, deny that the price of paper and the cost of labour is higher today than it was thirty-eight years ago. Before having this Bill drafted, local inquiries were made and the new rates shown seem to be reasonable. They are exactly double the old ones. I might add that the Federal Government has recently adopted the rates my Ministry proposed.

The Schedule that this Bill will repeal also contained the following sentence: "Any sum charged or taken away by way of travelling expenses or lodging allowance shall be subject to the approval of an Administrative Officer". It is felt that this provision is redundant in our closely knit Region and it is not therefore repeated.

It is my hope that one day it will be possible to make the Ordinance entirely inoperative in this Region. As our education system develops the number of illiterate people will decrease. But it may be a long time yet. And even where people completely unable to read or write are very few, there are still hundreds whose educational standards are so low that they completely lack any facility in these arts—and so could still need legal protection. To illustrate this, complete illiteracy is practically unknown in Great Britain and is very rare in the United States. Yet both countries found that some of the men conscripted during the last war were to all intents and purposes illiterate. In the United States, it is estimated that there are ten million of these functionally illiterate adults.

With these few words to explain that illiteracy is a world-wide problem, I beg to move.

The Minister of Local Government (Chief A. N. Onyiuke): Sir, I beg to second.

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a Second time.

Bill immediately considered in Committee.

(In the Committee)

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

Schedule agreed to.

(Mr Deputy Speaker resumed the Chair)

Bill reported without amendment, read the Third time and passed.

STANDING ORDER No. 66

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

"That Standing Order No. 66, Appropriation Bill, be amended as follows:—

(1) Para. (1) *delete* and *insert* the following:—

"During the period February to April inclusive in each year there shall be introduced into the House an Appropriation Bill which shall contain the estimated financial requirements for expenditure on revenue account on all the services of the Government of the Eastern Region of Nigeria for the financial year commencing on the 1st day of April of that year. The details of these financial requirements shall be contained in the Estimates which shall be presented at the same time."

(2) Para. (3) line 5—*delete* the words "detailed items" and *insert* "individual Heads".

(3) Para. (9) lines 2 and 3—*delete* the words "or in respect of any sub-head included in that Head or of any item included in the sub-head".

(4) Para. (10) lines 3, 4 and 5—*delete* the words "and debate on each amendment shall be confined to the sub-head or item which is sought to be reduced".

(5) Para. (11) lines 1 and 2—*delete* the words "item, sub-head or".

(6) Para. (13) lines 2 and 3—*delete* the words "sub-head or item". *Delete* the proviso to para. (13).

(7) Para. (14)—*delete* and *renumber* subsequent paragraphs."

This motion seeks to amend the Standing Order governing the procedure in the House on the Annual Appropriation Bill in two ways, the first of which is quite simple. Hon. Members will recall that the Appropriation Bill for the current financial year was presented to the House in April this year; this was,

strictly speaking, contrary to sub-section (1) of Standing Order No. 66, which requires the Annual Appropriation Bill to be submitted *before* the close of the preceding financial year. The first of the amendments which I move—that to subsection (1)—makes it possible for the Government to introduce the Appropriation Bill to the House at any time between the 1st of February and the 30th of April. At present the Government has no intention of making use of this extension of time, although the presentation of an April Budget, as in the United Kingdom, has considerable advantages, especially as regards the preparation of revised estimates of revenue and expenditure for the closing financial year; but it would like to be in a position to delay the presentation of the Budget in this way if it were considered desirable. I hope that hon. Members will agree that the request is not unreasonable.

The amendments proposed to subsections (3), (9), (10), (11), (13) and (14) of the Standing Order are for a completely different reason. Hon. Members are aware from my remarks on the Second reading of the 1958–59 Supplementary Appropriation Bill that the Revised Constitution has made necessary a far-reaching revision of the arrangements for the control and management of our finances; indeed it will be necessary for me to present to the House at its next meeting no less than three Bills dealing only with such revised arrangements. The particular provision in the Constitutional Orders in Council that necessitates these amendments to Standing Order No. 66 is Section 154B (2), which reads as follows:—

“The proposals for all expenditure contained in the estimates (other than statutory expenditure) shall be submitted to the vote of the House of Assembly by means of an Appropriation Bill, which shall contain estimates under appropriate heads for the several services required.”

A careful study of this section leads to the conclusion that, so far as its formal action is concerned, this House is entitled to deal only with the Appropriation Bill and with the *Heads* of expenditure set out in its Schedules: in other words, it is now the Bill alone, and not the accompanying detailed Estimates also, that is submitted to a vote of the House, and in consequence, any motions to amend, and any other formal action connected with

the Bill must refer only to Heads, and not to sub-heads or items, of the Draft Estimates.

This is all that the proposed amendments to the Standing Order seek to do, and I would hasten to assure the House that there is no intention whatever of preventing *discussion* of the details of the Estimates. The Government has often had in the past, and hopes to have in the future, the most valuable assistance from hon. Members on such details, and to prevent discussion of them would be to deprive the Government of a very useful source of advice. I repeat that it is only the *formal* action on the Appropriation Bill which is to be amended, to bring it into line with the provisions of the revised Constitution.

As hon. Members are aware, this Motion will, as soon as it has been seconded, automatically stand adjourned and be referred, under Standing Order No. 55 (2), for the consideration of the Standing Orders Committee. I am moving it now so that the Committee will have ample time to consider it and to report to the House at the very beginning of the Budget Session in March, 1959; if the Committee has approved my proposals, it should then be possible to amend the Standing Order before we reach the Committee Stage of the 1959–60 Appropriation Bill. I hope that, when it meets to consider this Motion, the Committee will invite me and my advisers to give evidence, more fully than is possible, in a speech before a busy House, as to the reasons and the necessity for the proposed amendments.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

The Minister of Local Government (Chief A. N. Onyiuke): Sir, I beg to second.

And pursuant to Standing Order 55 (2) the Motion stood referred to the Standing Orders Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

The Minister of Commerce (Mr J. U. Nwodo): Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until tomorrow at 10 a.m.

The Minister of Local Government (Chief A. N. Onyiuke): Sir, I beg to second.

Question proposed.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATES

(1) Compensation for Damages during U.P.E. Disturbances

Mr Ikoku: Mr Speaker, I would like to raise a matter which is quite simple, but which has far reaching implications. My appeal here, Sir, is to get the Government to reconsider their stand on the matter. As a result of the rather regrettable riots of February, this year, some persons did suffer material damage and I am quoting a specific case. Two members of the staff of the Southern Ijaw District Council had a good deal of their property destroyed by these riots. Some time in August they wrote the Government praying it to make some compensation for the loss they suffered, but the attitude of the Government seems to be a complete opposition.

Government policy seems to be that no compensation should be paid by Government to anybody on account of damage suffered during the U.P.E. disturbances; that anyone who suffers damages is at liberty to institute court proceedings against the persons responsible. I am quoting from a letter written by the Government in reply to the two complainants. I wonder, Sir, how easy it will be for somebody who has suffered damage to take those responsible—the rioters—to court. This is a very impossible situation particularly when the Government has not agreed to take the rioters to court. If the Government had taken them to court, in the area concerned, and they have been proved guilty of this criminal offence, then the aggrieved persons could hide under the court verdict to seek redress from the people found guilty. I am merely bringing this matter up in the hope that Government will reconsider it because after all it is not giving enough encouragement to our workers and staff generally when it is known that when they stand firm in the discharge of their duties and suffer a material loss, Government is not prepared to do anything to give them redress.

The Premier: Mr Speaker, I have listened with interest to the points made by my hon. Friend, the Leader of the Opposition. Government carefully considered the question of compensation for damages done during the disturbances in connection with the U.P.E. This House has since passed the Riots Damages

Law, 1958, as hon. Members will be aware. It was made effective from the 15th May, 1958, but that Law is not retroactive and does not, therefore, apply to the riots in question. I am surprised that the Leader of the Opposition should not have raised this point more effectively at the time of the passing of that Law, and that he should want to reopen this question now. The spirit and intention of that law is to make the populace of the area concerned responsible through their Local Government Council for compensation for damage done by them. Government considers this important, that it should be brought home to Local Government Councils that they have the responsibility for maintaining law and order laid upon them by the Local Government Law.

After careful considerations, Government decided that it could not and should not pay compensations to anybody as a result of the disturbances last February. Any person, however, who suffered damages during these disturbances is free to seek redress in a Court of Law. That was the policy announced by the Government last May and Government has no intention of changing the policy now.

(2) Highway Robbers

Mr D. E. Akilo (Udi Division): Mr Speaker, Sir, I am to convey the message received from my constituency in connection with highway robbers along the two roads from the ninth mile corner, one leading to Owa and the other leading to Eke. One after the other, I take that of Owa. Every year, especially when the Christmas is near, people are subjected to inhuman and indecent acts on the very spot called Ugwu Agba Hill. About this time last year, a group of women from Owa were returning from the Township of Enugu when they were abused at that very spot, and all their articles were taken away from them including money. Not quite a week after this incident a young man was returning from Enugu Township on his bicycle and at the same spot he was attacked by highway robbers, and in an attempt to save himself and his bicycle, they seized him, beat him down, got him cut with machet all over his body and his bicycle was taken away from him. The man was rushed to the General Hospital, Enugu, by a kind person.

On the other road leading to Eke, the same kind of act is being committed year in year out. It was on this very road that a Headmistress of the Catholic Girl School, Eke, was attacked and all her property deprived of her. Teachers outside the Division refuse to go to this town on transfer. Sir, this kind of act, which is taking place on these roads, is very shameful on our own Division. You know, Sir, life is very important and protection is essential. As such, I would like the Minister in charge of Works to convey my feelings to the Federal Government to instal a telephone service which will make it easy to report this kind of act to Police whenever it is committed (*Laughter*). It is also essential to re-introduce the Police Control Post at the 9th Mile.

(3) Outbreak of Fire in Onitsha

Mr E. Chidolue (Onitsha Division): I wish to raise a matter of vital importance. There was a terrible outbreak of fire last week at Onitsha and I would like to read the text of a telegram addressed to the Minister of Welfare and copied to all hon. Members for Onitsha Division. Mr Speaker, with your permission, I read:

"We regret report to you terrible fire destroyed completely 11 Bida Road Onitsha damaged properties and trading goods valued about fifty thousand pounds x Irrecoverable loss very grievous x No money for trading or feeding families x Life miserable x We pray you visit site and send us special grant or loan to save dying families x"

I raise this point not only emphasising the need for relief for these unfortunate people but to mention that lives and properties are not safe at Onitsha. Right down along the streets, on the surface and underground, there are petrol dumps—here and there—and if great care is not taken, greater damage will result. In 1954, I raised the question of Fire Brigade at Onitsha and Members shouted "Federal Subject"; but I still believe that this Government is an Agent of Federal Government and should be able to do something. I need to say that even the Onitsha Market which is so famous is not safe and a lot of money has been spent on it and the Onitsha Urban District Council is refunding £35,000 annually.

Hon. Members: Insure it!

Mr Chidolue: The market is insured and the properties can be insured but any lives lost cannot be recovered.

I am appealing, Mr Speaker, that you consider these unfortunate people. They are not the cause. A small shop-boy was the cause of the incident and honest people who had nothing to do with the incident are now to suffer. I am appealing to the Minister of Welfare to see what can be done.

Question put and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at twelve minutes to two o'clock p.m.

WRITTEN ANSWER TO QUESTION

Thursday, 11 December, 1958

121. **Mr P. A. Onwe** asked the Minister of Transport, what is the reason for delay in tarring the Amike-Effium Road, for which provision was made as far back as 1955.

The Minister of Transport: Amike-Effium Road is one of the roads listed in the

Appendix "Y" of the Estimates without financial provision at the present time. It is my intention to give priority consideration to all the roads under this Appendix in the forthcoming Capital Budget.

EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Friday, 12th December, 1958

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

PRAYERS

(Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

PAPERS

Presented:

- (1) The Report of the Director of Audit on the Accounts of the Government of the Eastern Region of Nigeria for the year ended the 31st March, 1958. (*The Minister of Finance*).
- (2) The Report of the Director of Audit on the Accounts of the Eastern Region Scholarship Fund for the year ended the 31st March, 1957. (*The Minister of Education*).

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

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Provincial Administration

The Premier (Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe): Mr Speaker, I am glad to make a statement on the progress we are making with the Provincial organisation of this Region. As hon. Members are aware, Government policy was set out in broad terms in the White Paper entitled *Self-Government in the Eastern Region* which was laid on the Table of the House on 18th November, 1957 as Sessional Paper No. 2. This was followed by another White Paper entitled *The Administrative Organisation of the Eastern Region*, which was Eastern Region Official Document No. 3 of 1958.

This matter has now been further advanced by the discussions which took place at the Resumed Constitutional Conference. The position we have reached is set out in paragraph 55 of the Report which, with the permission of Mr Speaker, I will 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. 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.”

Mr Speaker, it is proposed to set up nine Provinces. I will name them in alphabetical order to make it clear that none is superior to any other:—

- (1) *Abá-Bende Province*, consisting of Aba and Bende Divisions, the latter increased by the Aro-Ibo District, with the Headquarters at Umuahia.
- (2) *Ahoada Province*, consisting of Ahoada Division, Port Harcourt and Ogoni Divisions, with the Headquarters at Port Harcourt.
- (3) *Annang Province*, consisting of Abak and Ikot Ekpene Divisions, the former plus the Annang area of Opobo Division and the latter minus the Eastern Ibibio-Ikono Council area. The Headquarters will be at Abak.
- (4) *Calabar Province*, consisting of Calabar, Eket and Uyo Divisions, Opobo Division less the Annang Area, and Enyong Division plus the Eastern Ibibio Ikono area less the Aro-Ibo District. The Headquarters will be at Calabar.
- (5) *Enugu Province*, consisting of Udi, Nsukka and Awgu Divisions, with the Headquarters at Enugu. I call it Enugu Province because that seems to be the most convenient name in one word to describe this Province, and Enugu exists as a town in each of these three Divisions, namely, Enugu in Udi Division, Enugu in Awgu Division, and Enugu-Ezike in Nsukka Division.
- (6) *Ogoja Province*, consisting of Abakaliki, Afikpo, Ogoja, Ikom and Obubra Divisions and Obudu District. The Headquarters will be at Abakaliki.

[THE PREMIER]

- (7) *Onitsha Province*, consisting of Onitsha and Awka Divisions, with the Headquarters at Onitsha.
- (8) *Owerri Province*, consisting of Owerri, Orlu and Okigwi Divisions, with the Headquarters at Owerri.
- (9) *Rivers Province*, consisting of Brass and Degema Divisions with the Headquarters at Degema.

In one or two cases there may have to be further enquiries before the boundaries are finally settled. The Government, for example, is examining the question of whether the Annangs in Opobo Division would prefer to stay in Opobo rather than join their brothers in Abak Division as part of Annang Province; and Government will be guided by the wishes of the majority of the people. In the matter of the Provincial Headquarters also, there may be a case for making the Headquarters at Uyo and Yenagoa, rather than at Calabar and Degema, respectively, and it will be for the Provincial Assemblies of the two Provinces when they are set up to make recommendations if they desire any change.

The Provincial Assemblies will consist of the Members of the House of Assembly and of the House of Chiefs from the area of the Province as *ex officio* members. The other Members will be elected on the basis of one representative for every 20,000 of the population. This will be done by District Councils electing from among their own members a representative on the basis of one to every 20,000 of the population. I propose to publish the details in the form of a White Paper at a later date.

The powers and functions of Provincial Assemblies will be as follows:—

- (a) To deliberate and advise Government on any matter affecting the needs of their area, and the wishes of the people of the Province.
- (b) To make representations to Government, through their President, who will be the Provincial Commissioner, on the priorities of allocation of funds for development, both in capital works and in the expansion of existing services, in their area of the Province.

(c) To keep watch that certain basic human rights of freedom, which were approved by the Resumed Constitutional Conference and which will be written into the Nigeria Constitution as Fundamental Rights, are safeguarded, and to make representations to Government in any case where they are endangered.

(d) To appoint representatives who will sit as members of the Provincial Scholarship Board to award a certain number of scholarships which Government now proposes to grant by Provinces. I recognise that there is keen feeling on this subject in the Province, more especially the backward areas, and that one of the main causes of dissatisfaction in some of the minority areas, or educationally less advanced areas, is not so much that they do not get a fair share of development money (the facts disprove this) as that their sons do not get a proportionate share of the scholarships, because the students in the educationally advanced areas can always win by open competition most of the scholarships. Government is re-examining its Scholarship policy with this in mind and will, before the Budget Session in the House, publish a White Paper to put this proposal into effect.

Hon. Members will recall that the Provincial Assemblies are deliberative and advisory in function, (apart from this one function of appointing representatives to take part in the award of scholarships). They are not executive bodies. But they can play a most important part in impressing on Government on the order of priorities for development: for example, whether roads or schools or water supplies should have priority as between different areas in the same Province.

It should be noted that in accordance with paragraph 53 of the Resumed Conference Report, there will be a Calabar Minority Area Council. It is proposed that the membership of the Council should be the same as that of the Calabar Provincial Assembly and that its function and powers should be as laid down in paragraph 52 (c) of the Report, that is:—

“The functions of the proposed Council should be broadly to foster the well-being, cultural advancement and economic and

social development of the Minority area, to bring to the notice of the Eastern Regional Government any discrimination against the area and to exercise such executive powers as might be delegated to it from time to time by the Regional Government”.

It is a subject of a special enquiry by His Excellency in accordance with paragraph 53 of the Report, whether or not the Annang Province would wish to join the Calabar Minority Area.

Further, it will be noted that the Conference accepted the recommendations of the Minorities Commission that there should be a Special Area Board for the Delta area on the coast between Opopo and the mouth of the Benin River. The Niger Delta Development Board will, it is hoped, benefit especially the people of Degema and Brass Divisions. The Provincial Assembly of Rivers Province will be consulted, when the time comes, about representation from the areas affected, on the Niger Delta Development Board.

I turn now to Provincial Commissioners. Government will appoint a Commissioner to each of the nine Provinces. His functions will be to preside over meetings of the Provincial Assembly and to be the representative of the Assembly in making known to Government their wishes on any matter which it is desired to impress on Government. He will be given staff to enable him to do this effectively. The Provincial Commissioner will not have executive powers in the Province. In accordance with the proper procedure in a Parliamentary democracy, executive power must rest solely with the hon. Ministers who compose the Executive Council, who are themselves answerable to this hon. House, and with the officers of the public service, who are responsible for taking the executive action necessary to put into effect the policies laid down by the Ministers. Commissioners will be like Ambassadors in the Provinces; they are the “eyes and ears” of Government in their Provinces. The Provincial Commissioner will live at the Headquarters of the Province, and it will be his job to tour constantly, when the Assembly is not sitting, in order to be in touch with the people.

I will now describe the part to be played by the public service in the Provincial system.

Government will appoint a senior Administrative Officer in each Province to be Provincial Secretary. The functions of the Provincial Secretary will be as follows:—

(a) To act as liaison between the Regional Government and the Local Government Councils within the Province, and to inspect and supervise the work of the Councils;

(b) To supervise the Administrative Officers, who will later be called County Inspectors, in their duties throughout the Province, and where necessary (since many are inexperienced) to train them.

(c) To co-ordinate the activities of all Departments of Government and, as the senior official representative of the Regional Government in the Province, to ensure that the policies of the Government are carried into effect;

(d) To perform certain functions hitherto performed by officers supervising Groups of Divisions, such as Chairmen of the Board of Income Tax Commissioners and other Boards;

(e) To keep the Commissioner fully informed of all the activities of Government in the Province.

We have already started to put this policy into effect. As hon. Members will be aware, some senior Administrative officers have been appointed already to start to perform these functions. They are at present working in the preparatory stage and have written a number of important reports on the administrative adjustments that will be necessary in order to establish the Provincial system.

Going with this policy is a programme of devolution, as described in Chapter V of the White Paper on Self-Government. Devolution will mean in practice closer touch with the Local Government Councils in the Provinces and less centralisation on the Ministry of Local Government and other Ministries in Enugu. It will also mean, subject to the financial capacity of the Government, an expansion of the work of most Ministries in the field. It is hoped that there will be a team of Government officers in each Province representing the different Ministries who, with the Provincial Secretary, will work together and with the Local Government Councils to speed up development in each Province.

[THE PREMIER]

Hon. Members will appreciate that there is a vast mass of detail yet to be fully worked out in order to put these policies into effect. This is now going on and it is the intention of Government to have ready for the House at its Budget meeting, in about three months' time, a Bill for a Provincial Administration Law and by that time to be ready to set up Provincial Assemblies as well as a House of Chiefs. I will make a statement in connection with this later. It is also the intention of Government to introduce a Bill to amend the Local Government Law which will have the effect of turning the present District Councils into County Councils. A schedule to the Law will set out in detail the County Councils and the Local Councils comprising each Province. (Applause).

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(1) The 1958-59 Eastern Region Supplementary Appropriation Bill—Second Reading (First and only allotted day)

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question (10th December)—That the Bill be now read a Second time.

Question again proposed.

Mr S. G. Ikoku (Enyong Division): Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to express the views of the Opposition on the Supplementary Estimates placed before the House. Briefly, I would like to handle just two points. This is, of course, a Supplementary Appropriation Bill and we do not intend to go at length and exhaustively as in the Budget Session. But I would like to assure the Minister of Finance that I would talk on two topics of general interest in the opinion of Members of the Opposition. The first is what I might call the financial state of the Region. The hon. the Minister of Finance in introducing the Supplementary Budget drew attention to the fact that we are going to spend something in the neighbourhood of £631,570. That estimate excludes the sum of £82,465 which comes from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund. I would like to treat this extra expenditure in its relation to the expected revenue of the Region. We have noticed, Sir, that when the hon.

Minister of Finance spoke, he was at pains to point out that there would be an increase on revenue from one or two items, but he was very careful not to give us an overall picture as to the balance between the total expenditure for the current financial year and total estimated revenue for the same period. Naturally, as Members of this House would like to know, how are we going to end this year? Are we going to end with a surplus or with a deficit? Is the Minister trying to appropriate this extra fund by depending entirely on extra revenue raised this year or is he going to dip his hand into the reserves of the Region?

This is one of the matters we would like him to clarify. Cleverly the hon. the Minister of Finance did not want to go into that aspect of the problem. I would like to point out, Sir, that our total revenue for the current financial year should be put briefly as follows, and is dependent entirely on the figures published in the Approved Estimates as well as in the last Supplementary Estimates: Our expected estimated revenue for the financial year is £14,040,150, that is in the Approved Estimates. Now according to paragraph 2 of the Memorandum on the Supplementary Estimates of the Eastern Region for December, 1958, we are expecting an excess revenue accruing from our share of Federal Government taxes of £200,000. In addition we are expecting excess revenue from Auto-Gas Oil—Head 401, sub-head 11—excess revenue of £100,000. In addition to these two items of windfall, because that is what it is, we are expecting £120,000 as grants from the Federal Government towards the extension of Port Harcourt water supply. This gives us a grand total revenue of £14,460,150, and I would like to emphasize, Sir, that this grand total includes a gift from the Federal Government and an unexpected windfall of £200,000—our Statutory Share of Federal Government Revenue and an excess of £100,000 being tax on petrol and diesel oil. The grand total revenue for the current financial year is £14,460,150. Before I leave the revenue aspect to the expenditure, I would like to point out that the hon. the Minister of Finance is not even sure that all projections of revenue would be realised, and I draw attention to his paragraph 2 of the Memorandum on Supplementary Estimates of the Eastern Region for December, 1958.

With your permission, Sir, I quote. He says:

“There is, however, no reason to anticipate any considerable shortfall from the projections set out at page E. 12 of the Approved Estimates”

He is being very cautious here in saying that he does not expect the shortfall to be considerable. He has not made it clear that there will be no shortfall. Assuming that there are no shortfalls whatsoever, that all the projections are realised, and that there is going to be this excess £200,000 from the Federal Government, another £100,000 from tax on oil and this grant of £120,000 from the Federal Government, the total revenue (that is the best possible position for us as regards revenue) will be £14,460,150.

As regards expenditure, the Approved Estimates put our expenditure for the year at £13,847,880, that is already approved, but this House approved an extra expenditure of £80,000 last May. In addition, there has been an extra expenditure of £73,000 by way of Special Warrant. This is shown at Page E. 15 of the Supplementary Estimates. The hon. Minister of Finance is calling upon us to vote an extra expenditure of £631,570. Therefore our total expenditure for the financial year 1958-59 is £14,632,450. Now what is the balance? It is a simple subtraction and what gives us a deficit of £172,300. I repeat these figures slowly to enable the hon. Minister of Finance to jot them down and to reply. He was very clever, Sir, when he spoke. On the revenue side, he was then telling us that £200,000 is coming from the Federal Government—extra money; £100,000 is coming from taxes on petrol or auto-gas—extra money; the financial position is buoyant and he ran away. He refused to draw the attention of the House to the fact that he is over-spending on the current year's financial operation to the tune of £172,300. There is no reference anywhere in his document to the fact that he is going to spend more in the current financial year than he is going to earn.

I overheard the hon. Minister of Education saying that it is a bad arrangement. I hope that when the hon. Minister of Finance will reply the hon. Minister of Education will be

proved right because if he is proved wrong in a simple case of addition and subtraction then he better resigns. (*Laughter*).

It means therefore that the Government is going to draw on our reserves to the tune of £172,300. Of course, they were telling us that as a result of the buoyancy of the finances of the Federal Government we have got a little bit more from the Federal Government than we expected in the last financial year. That is what they are going to say. (*Interruption*) So much for those figures.

The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):
Please, read paragraph 5 of the Memorandum.

Mr Ikoku: I will be anxious to get a reply from the hon. Minister of Finance. He has incidentally drawn my attention to paragraph 5 of the Memorandum. Paragraph 5 of the Memorandum states simply that he has over-estimated expenditure on education by the tune of £ $\frac{1}{2}$ million and that the project of £60,000 in the current financial year, for one reason or the other cannot be executed. Sir, these are what they are referring to as savings. It beats my understanding and imagination that they have put down money for a particular project and for one reason or the other they cannot carry this project out then they regard it as a saving. I cannot understand them at all.

In other words, all that the Government need do in order to come here and give us meagre balance as Budget Surplus, is to abandon Schemes. When they find that they are heading towards a deficit then they come back and tell us that Scheme A, Scheme B, Schemes C and D have been abandoned for one reason or the other, and therefore all told they have Budget Surplus.

I want to say, Sir, that this new technique of supplementary Estimates is a very clever way of concealing the Budget deficit. They came in March, conscious of the fact that they were facing a deficit they froze certain posts in the Civil Service and other Schemes and balanced their budget and as soon as we turned our back, and by means of special warrant, they spent unevenly and they have now come in

[MR IKOKU]

December to introduce a Supplementary Estimate and are very careful not to draw attention to the revenue aspect and not to strike a balance. May I ask the Minister of Finance why he has failed to strike out the balance-sheet as is usual in his presentation of the Estimates? He does not want to get up and tell the House that there is a deficit and he wants, if the Opposition should keep quiet, the whole House to go away thinking that everything is going on smoothly. That is what he wants. May I draw your attention to the fact that in the last financial year, 1957-58, they came here and told us of Budget surplus and the rest of it. We drew attention to the fact that they were heading for a deficit. They said it was impossible. Well, Sir, may I draw attention to the Report of the Accountant-General with Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March, 1958—at page (Roman figure) *iii* top of the page—“Summary” you will find out there is a deficit for the year of £156,725.

The Minister of Production (Dr M. I. Okpara): Was that the deficit you gave?

Mr Ikoku: What did you give? You gave a surplus and it is the secret of it that I am trying to expose. Sir, they come here and by some financial manipulation they tell us they have a Budget surplus; they do not want us to know that they are in fact running on a deficit, then they go away and leave the trouble to the Accountant-General. He is the man who is going to work it out and make it clear that there has been a deficit and then as usual they come here and pray your honourable self to lay certain papers on the Table of the House, believing and hoping against hope that the people will not see these papers. I am sure that if every Member behaves like the Government Back-Benchers nobody will know all these things which the Accountant-General is pointing out.

May I go on to the second point, Sir. This is the very important question of the integration of Departments into Ministries. We thank the hon. the Minister of Finance for giving us the notes on pages E 7 to E 11 of the Supplementary Estimates. We also thank him for making an attempt at integrating Departments into Ministries. I emphasise that it is merely an

attempt because, as far as I can see, there is still a long way to go before real integration takes place. After studying the notes, Sir, we discovered a few anomalies, and we think it is our duty to draw the attention of the Government to these anomalies, in the hope that they will take the earliest opportunity to rectify these anomalies. These anomalies could be divided into two categories: Internal anomalies—that is, anomalies internal to a Ministry; and external anomalies—that is, anomalies between Ministries. Taking the internal anomalies first, I would like to draw attention to three points. In each Ministry, we are going to have a Permanent Secretary at the head. I would like to draw attention to paragraph 1 of the notes, which states clearly what the aim is that:

“... apart from anticipated increase in efficiency and economy in administrative matters, the main effect of this reorganisation is that the Permanent Secretary replaces the Head of Department as” (that is very important) “the chief officer upon whom the Minister relies for the formulation and execution of departmental policies...”

This is very important, so that by this definition which we accept—because that is the only right thing—the Permanent Secretary is the key man; he is the lord of the Civil Service as far as that Ministry is concerned. He is the one to advise the Minister not only in the formulation but also in the execution of departmental policies. Now below the Permanent Secretary you have divisions in each Ministry, and some divisions have offices within them.

Let us take the office of the Premier. There are four divisions: Executive Council Office, Office of the Commissioner in the United Kingdom, Political and General Division and the Civil Service Division. Within the Civil Service Division there are four offices: Establishment Office, Recruitment and Training Branch, Administration Headquarters Office, and Field Administration. Now, every Division has a head and every office within a Division has its own head. I will draw attention to the anomalies. In the case of the Premier's Office, Sir, the Chief Secretary to the Premier who is the Permanent Secretary as far as this

office is concerned, is on a Group 3 salary. Now, taking the Divisional heads, that is, the heads of the Executive Council Office, the Office of the Commissioner in the United Kingdom, the Political and General Division and the Civil Service Division, their salary scales are as follows:—

Head of the Executive Council	...	Group 5
Head of Political and General Division	...	Group 7
and, Head of the Civil Service Division	...	Group 5

I would like to point out, Sir, that these heads of Divisions should be roughly on the same scale of salary. When you start off the man in charge of Executive Council Office with Group 5, and then put the man in the General and Political Division on Group 7, you set up an anomaly which is bound to cause ill-feeling. That is one set of anomaly.

Some of the Ministers are making attempts to speak. I would like them to hold their peace in this matter because in certain respects I surpass them. They do not know what is going on.

An hon. Member: It is arrogance. Are you more intelligent than any of the Ministers?

Mr Ikoku: It is no question of arrogance. If they allow me, I will develop my case on the suggestions made by the Premier, but all of them keep shouting at this matter.

The second aspect of the anomaly is external.

Mr Deputy Speaker: Order! Order! You have only five minutes more.

Mr Ikoku: The external anomalies are as follows:—

The grading and salary scales in certain Ministries for heads of Divisions are out of all relationship to the scales for Heads of Divisions in other Ministries, for example, in the Ministry of Welfare, in the Premier's Office, the Ministry of Agriculture. In some the Head of a Division is put on Group 7, in others he is put on Group 5. In the Ministry of Town Planning, the Head of a Division is only an Assistant Secretary. The Head of the Division of Fisheries in the Ministry of Agriculture is on Scale A.

The Minister of Commerce (Mr J. U. Nwodo): On point of Order, Mr Speaker. Standing Order 66. The Motion for the Second Reading of the Bill has been made and seconded and the question has also been proposed. Therefore, the resumed debate should be confined to the financial and economic state of the Region.

Mr Ikoku: The other illustration is from the Ministry of Town Planning where the Head of the Administration Section is an Assistant Secretary whereas the Heads of Divisions of some other Administrations are in Group 4 or Group 5 as the case may be. The importance of this is that there seems to be an effort to make some Ministries more lucrative than others. Those who are in the less lucrative Ministries are trying to get transfers into the more lucrative Ministries. As a result the Head of a Division in the less favoured Ministry will not like to remain in the Ministry but in a more lucrative one.

Again, in this same office, Sir, you find that the Chief Secretary to the Premier who is on Group 3 is given control of the Field Administration, which is a sub-section of the Civil Service Division. Now, the head of the Civil Service Division is on Group 5—and one of the four Divisions whose heads are on Group 5; all coming under the Chief Secretary to the Premier, who is on Group 3. The Chief Secretary to the Premier is the head of the whole Divisions. How can the head of the Civil Service Division be a sub-head to somebody who is on Group 5?

Now, you put the Chief Secretary to the Premier at the head of Office, on Group 3, but at the same time you make him a head of sub-section of a Division, that is, head of Field Administration and in the performance of duties, at times, comes under the Permanent Secretary Establishment.

Now, Sir, if you go over to two other departments, the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Education, you see another type of anomaly: that anomaly is that the head of Division within the Ministry is on a higher salary or scale than the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry.

In the Ministry of Agriculture, the Permanent Secretary is on Group 5 but the Chief Agricultural Officer, who is head of a Division in that Ministry is on Group 4.

[MR IKOKU]

Then you go again to the Ministry of Education. The Permanent Secretary who is supposed to be the head of that Ministry as regards the formulation and execution of departmental policy and whose personal views should stand and has a right to order in connection with Divisional heads is on Group 5. The Chief Inspector of Education in charge of a Division is on Group 4 in the same Ministry where there is a Permanent Secretary as the Head. Where there is a clash it is the views of the Permanent Secretary which should be supreme. We do not want friction in the Ministries. We want to know who is going to override.

Government Bench: The Permanent Secretary.

Mr Ikoku: Thank you very much. The Permanent Secretary should override. But how can he really override somebody who is superior to him in the Civil Service?

The staff in the less lucrative Ministry will also not like to remain for long in that Ministry. They will like to move on to the more lucrative Ministries, and this will rob the less lucrative Ministries of their experienced staff. An aspiring civil servant should be made to feel sure that he will reach the top level within his Ministry and that he does not need to angle for posts in other Ministries. He will concentrate on his Ministry and climb from the lowest rung to the highest rung of the ladder.

Mr M. E. Ogon (Ikom Division): Mr Speaker, this is not a contentious Bill and I only rise to speak on two points. No matter how the Leader of the Opposition tries to confuse issues, it is very clear that the Government knows what they are doing. Moreover, Members ought to understand that the Government has its policy of integration. Surely, when integrating a department—for instance Education—it is not to be expected that the Chief Inspector of Education should be on a higher salary than the Permanent Secretary who now is the head of the Department. You will not expect that because the Permanent Secretary is head of the Department. The salary of the Chief Inspector should only be made personal to him. The matter is that most of these salaries were personal to the holders before the integration.

Another point, Sir, is this: I do not think that because a Permanent Secretary receives a lower salary, he cannot give instructions. Members will remember that sometime ago, Ministers reduced their salaries; but this does not take away from them their powers of being responsible for their Ministries.

Mr Ikoku: Point of Order, Sir, I would like to be informed where these personal scales are included in the 1958 Estimates.

The Premier: Point of Order, Sir, there is no point of information. (*Hear! Hear!*)

Mr Ogon: Just this simple point which I want to raise before I sit down—You will notice that the Opposition are very disappointed that for the first time the Budget of the Eastern Region is more rosy than ever before. When we came over—you remember the report in the *Daily Times* that the East was on the verge of bankruptcy. I think it is praiseworthy that the position is now quite rosy and the Opposition should be asked to swallow their sputum and hide their faces in shame.

The last point I want to raise; I should thank the Minister for the successful operation of the Tax Policy. It has been praised by experts who are better than my hon. Friends on the opposite side.

In conclusion, it is proper to thank the Federal Government for making a grant for the extension of the Port Harcourt harbour. Perhaps it may be said that the Federal Government is not only for the first time seeing the happy spirit of good relation but also making a sound investment from an economic point of view. As hon. Members will realise, Port Harcourt is now well known as a growing industrial area. I regard this as a far-sighted investment for which we are grateful to the Federal Government.

This is a non-contentious Bill and I am sure my Friends on the other side will give it their unqualified support.

Sir, I beg to support.

Mr E. U. Eronini (Owerri Division): Mr Speaker, I rise to support the Supplementary Appropriation Bill and in doing so, I beg to make some few observations. The point

is, that I must this time congratulate the Ministers for the statements they have made to this House. We have been well treated especially when we think of the statement made by the Minister of Finance on the African Continental Bank and other statements by that Minister. We are also grateful to the Minister of Education for the statement he has made on the progress on our Education for the year 1959 and onwards. The statement by the Minister of Local Government on Federal and Local Council elections—all these give us food for thought; especially the statement made by the hon. Premier this morning. We are well treated, and we have been given something which we can tell our constituents. In fact we have enough to tell them.

I must also shower praises on the Minister of Town Planning for his untiring efforts in trying to see that Town Planning and Planning Authorities are established in most of our districts. I hope he will carry on and will in no distant time establish a Town Planning Authority in Owerri Urban District. It is hoped that one day when the Provincial Assembly starts to operate there will be a Provincial Planning Authority which will co-ordinate the work of the District Planning Authority and will be able to give help to the Regional Planning Department under the command of the Senior Planning Officer that is to be set up. Sir, I have to sound a note of warning to the Ministry of Town Planning. The Ministry should know that in this Region our investment at the moment is on building and land, and should see that its officers do this work without the delay that is characteristic of that department.

In some cases there are assignments that are outstanding for over three to four years, but you will see that there is a need, perhaps, for assignments to be completed in one or two days. The reason for that is not hard to find.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am deeply touched when we think of the Regional revenue. The produce purchase tax has played a great part and it is the place of this Government to see that the primary producers are given a rightful place in the scheme of things so that the Region will be benefited the more. There is a discriminatory attitude towards the

produce coming from certain areas and some bulk oil plants. This is likely to be introduced this year in which case there will be a reduction on the price paid to the primary producers. We do not know why this reduction on price should affect the Eastern Region this year when there is hope that there will be a rise in the world market on palm produce. It is understood, as far as I have read from the papers that there will be a £2 cut from the price paid for special grade oil and in doing that, Sir, one has to consider what is the price paid for special grade oil in the world market; the price is about £78. You are at the moment paying the producer £50; if you reduce it by £2, one wonders what will remain for him.

Another point, Sir, is the increase on transport fares between some of these producing areas. The Railway has made a very big increase on transport rate so that the price of oil at Okigwi will not be £48 but £42 because transporting oil from Okigwi to Afikpo Road and at a very high Railway rate is about £4. You can now imagine what is left for the poor producers.

Another point, Sir, is that either deliberately or unconsciously, the Eastern Marketing Board has agreed to reduce the price paid for bulking oil at Port Harcourt in preference to oil bought at Burutu or Abonnema; they do not seem to be aware of what they have done because almost all African Licensed Buying Agents buy their oil at Port Harcourt.

Those who are bulking at Burutu (and naturally the expatriate firms) will buy oil at a higher price than other Licensed Buying Agents can offer. It means that no qualified licensed buying agent will buy oil in a place like, say, Owerri or Nnewi, because the oil going from Nnewi to Onitsha and thence to Burutu, has small differential and the cost there when it is bulked is more than that in Port Harcourt. The natural thing is that there would be more oil bought at Burutu than in Port Harcourt and there is no African who has sufficient money to buy oil and store it for a period of months or even years before sending it to Burutu. It seems there is a discrimination by helping the expatriate firms to take the monopoly of buying. The same thing, Sir, happens in

[MR ERONINI]

Owerri. As the price of oil at Abonnema is more than that paid at Port Harcourt, it means that it is only the expatriate firms which will buy oil around Owerri and Orlu areas and take it to Oguta, where it would be stored for three months and sent to Abonnema. No African would delay his oil for five days because he has not got the money. Therefore, you are now making a ruling which will stop all African licensed buying agents from buying again because they cannot buy at the same price the expatriate firms can offer. So, I think the Minister of Production who happens to be here today, will take note.

I congratulate the Government, Sir, for establishing the Census Department. The Eastern Region is estimated at eight million. I think we are more than ten million by now. In my own area almost half the people did not come up. With the help of this Department, I think people will understand the benefits which will accrue to them, especially now that Federal elections and Local Government elections are by universal adult suffrage and not the question of taxes.

It is hoped, Sir, that Government will take into consideration the establishment of a Department of Food. It should be attached either to the Ministry of Production or the Ministry of Agriculture or the Ministry of Commerce.

If you think about it that in this country, Sir, especially in the Eastern Region where the productivity is very small as compared with the energy of the people, they would have done more if they were well provided for. When you look into it, we import more food into this country; we import more beer and more whisky as compared with other Regions; we import more sugar, stockfish, flour and almost everything but yet the distribution is bad; the consumption is bad; we spend more money outside than we are producing and when you look into it you will see that we also import from other Regions. More food also comes from the North and West to the East and these people do not import much from us.

An hon. Member: What do we import from the North and West?

Mr Eronini: We import groundnut oil, fish, onions, eggs and almost everything from the North. From the West we also import kola.

It is hoped, Mr Speaker, that when this Department is established, they will be able to organise our distribution of food, growing of food and the preparation of food; and also be able to see that the people are properly fed.

We also thank the Minister of Health for the introduction of free medical treatment to school children (*Cheers from Government Supporters*) and I hope the Minister will see that the children are quickly attended when they leave their schools to the hospitals so that they will not remain there the whole day and waste their time. If it is possible it should be arranged to have some of our Nursing Sisters to treat these children and to allow them to see the Doctors only on special cases. It is no use waiting for the Doctors to do everything. We have intelligent and well-trained Nursing Sisters who can treat these children.

Another point, Sir, is that the Minister has visited Owerri Hospital and has seen for himself that Nurses there have no quarters. I hope he will do all that lies in his power to provide them with living quarters.

With these remarks, I support the Supplementary Appropriation Bill.

Mr Eyo Ita (Calabar Division): Mr Speaker, Sir, my impression of the Supplementary Budget is that the picture given of the financial state of this Region is both incomplete and incorrect. This point has already been emphasised by the Leader of the Opposition, and I feel it deserves all the emphasis at our command.

It is time that this Government stopped bringing to our Parliament sordid story of its financial bankruptcy, knowing well what panic that can create. But let us face facts, and let Government be grateful to hear the true position of things when we point it out in the House. All is certainly not well with the financial state of this Region. Speaking from my experience, I must say that the impact of the financial state on the schools and colleges

of the Region up to the present moment has been a very unhappy one. Things went so bad that after the last Budget Session school proprietors and managers were forced by Government to raise fees nearly 100 per cent to compensate for reduction in grants promised to them. The present budget is attempting to ameliorate the situation but the sorry position still remains.

The position with Local Government Bodies is just as sordid if not worse. Grants promised to the Local Government Bodies were cut down. In consequence, many of them had to curtail their schemes and projects. A number of them that had given scholarships failed to live to their commitments, thus causing embarrassment and frustrations to their youths and their schools and colleges.

In Calabar, the rates and increases in them have become intolerable. The people are groaning under the load of Regional taxes and local rates. In response to this bitterness and frustration the Local Government Council appealed to the Ministry of Local Government for change and redress especially in respect of house and water rates. But no redress has been forthcoming, because of the gloomy financial position. We appreciate the effort which the Government is making to meet the situation, but it is quite clear that all is not well with us. Government would do well to face the facts.

Mr R. O. Ukuta, M.B.E. (Nsukka Division): Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to speak in support of the Supplementary Appropriation Bill. I notice that each time the Leader of the Opposition gets up to speak, he is always throwing the House into a squabble. Really, the present Government very well knows what we inherited from hon. Eyo Ita's Government. Why then should the Opposition raise false alarm each time?

An Opposition Member: We will never raise any more alarm in this House.

Mr Ukuta, M.B.E.: This false alarm is being raised as if the Government is not progressing. In fact, I have to thank the Government, especially the Minister of Education, for his recent announcement on the U.P.E. Scheme. By this announcement the

people in the rural areas are a bit relieved. They hailed this announcement greatly. (*Applause*).

The only thing I have to say is that, we on our part, should work hard. There is a lot of soil for cultivation in the Eastern Region, soil for cotton-growing, for groundnuts and other cash crops. These things could engage our attention better than coming here to quarrel like women in the market.

There is one thing which annoys people in the rural areas and that is that the Ministry of Local Government does not reply to letters in time. I think it is time that a Steering Committee was set up in this House to look into such matters.

Mr Speaker, I beg to support the Supplementary Appropriation Bill.

Mr P. N. Okeke (Onitsha Division): Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Supplementary Appropriation Bill and the Statement on the Financial Policy of the Government. During the last Budget Session in March, some of us had thought that the Government was on the brink of financial collapse. But, today, the figures given by the Minister of Finance have shown the fullest service for this Region. I doff my hat to the architects of this new era.

Mr Speaker, Sir, after going through the Supplementary Appropriation Bill, I had thought the Opposition would for once, support it so that we go and prepare for Christmas. I went through the Memorandum submitted by the Minister of Finance and was highly impressed with the financial position of the Eastern Region compared with what it was in March. I did not expect that we could come back in December to get a picture so rosy as this.

Sitting suspended at 11.30 a.m.

Sitting resumed at 12 noon.

Mr P. N. Okeke: Mr Speaker, Sir, very often in this House the Ministry of Health has been a department for criticism. Some of us have had to study the causes of this and have come to the conclusion that the Minister of Health should try to make investigation into the conditions of service of Doctors under the Ministry of Health.

[MR P. N. OKEKE]

Mr Speaker, Sir, we so very often hear that many of our people prefer Voluntary Agency Hospitals to Government Hospitals where we spend large sums of money every year. One of the causes of this, I notice, is that many of our Doctors are not happy. They are not satisfied with their conditions of service. Take for an example: a man who goes to the U.K. to qualify as a lawyer and when he comes back to start practice he may be made a Magistrate on £1,014. A Doctor after seven years' study in England comes back to be offered a salary of £972. This Doctor may work for ten years without promotion because their promotions depend on vacancies. Without vacancies the Doctors cannot be promoted. But after sometime, the Magistrate may be appointed Chief Magistrate with a salary of £2,040. What I am saying is that one of the main causes of inefficiency in our hospitals is the lack of encouragement to Doctors. There is great dissatisfaction among the Doctors and that is why some of them do not work long in most of the hospitals. I am suggesting that the Minister of Health should look into the matter to see why some young Doctors come back after qualifying but prefer appointment in the Federal Government to that of our Region. I think they have a case to make. I should like to ask that the condition of service of Doctors be examined as it is the cause of inefficiency in our Government hospitals.

Mr Speaker, let me say a few words about the Ministry of Local Government. The Minister tries to do more than he is expected to do. He tries to run the councils from Enugu. I will give example of this—The Minister will remember that last year in Onitsha he wrote from Enugu insisting that a particular individual must be appointed the Market Superintendent of the Council. We made our representations and spoke to him but he would not see with us. On this, the Council took a firm stand on the matter. Last week, I think it was the Izi District Council where he fell off with the members of the Council and the Council concerned definitely refused to obey.

While we agree that the Minister should have effective control of Local Government Councils, it does not necessarily mean that the Minister should interfere directly in the affairs of Local Government Councils; this kills the initiative of these Councils.

Mr Speaker, another point I want to talk about is the pressing problem of water supply in the Region. In Onitsha in 1955 the cost of water supply was estimated by the Ministry of Local Government at £5,000. In 1956 it rose to £10,000. In 1957 a circular came in October increasing the annual contribution of the U.D.C. to £22,000, and this October another circular came and increased this to £26,000 and instructed the Council to levy retrospective water rates. Most of you who have been in Local Government Councils will agree that it is difficult to levy retrospective water rates. It is true that water rates are paid in arrears to the Public Works Department, but this does not alter the position. Onitsha Urban District Council is now facing a dilemma. It is impossible for them to levy a new rate to pay this £26,000 next March. They have already levied a rate to cover £22,000 which came very late in October 1957. I hope that the Minister of Local Government will realise the difficulties which some of these Local Government Councils are facing.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to say a word or two about the Ministry of Education. I want to congratulate this Ministry for what it has been able to do to get over the recent crisis in that Ministry. I think that any right thinking man will pay tribute to the present Minister of Education. He has been able to modify the U.P.E. Scheme and provide Universal Primary Education up to Standard One, and to cut down the Assumed Local Contribution in the Primary, Secondary and Teacher Training institutions. I think this is a marvellous achievement. Also, he has been able to save up to £500,000 by the prudent use of the estimates, and this saving more than counterbalances what we lost in the building of the U.P.E. schools. I think we can go back to our areas with an open mind. In my Division they are going to appreciate it and I think I can go out now to explain to them that it is possible that, although the Minister does not want to commit the Government—he does not want to make a categorical statement—the U.P.E. scheme will be extended to Standard two next year.

I will like to suggest to the Ministry of Education one or two points. I like to say that the idea of not allowing present Voluntary Agencies to expand is not in the best interests

of the Eastern Region, because most of our Local Government Councils have not the necessary funds for expansion. You will notice that most of these schools built in 1956 have not expanded at all because the Local Government Councils have not the money. They started with class I infant and have not made provision for building to take class II next year. Where these provisions have not been made, where are these children going to be accommodated if the Voluntary Agencies who know how to get money from the people are not allowed to take in more children? In Awka Division it is already working hard-ship. What I am saying is that where the Local Government Councils have not the funds to expand and where the Ministry of Education has not sufficient money then the only logical thing is to allow the Voluntary Agencies to take in more children.

Another point, Mr Speaker, is the problem of double streams in Secondary Schools. You will find new Secondary Schools being opened all over the Region and yet the existing Secondary Schools with sufficient accommodation are not allowed to run double streams. The point, Sir, is that it is possible for some of these Voluntary Agencies to get money from the people without any agitation. If you ask people to pay more tax they are not prepared to pay, but the Voluntary Agencies have a way of getting money or free labour from the communities concerned. Where they can provide sufficient accommodation without extra cost to the Government, I think it is just fair that they should be allowed to run double streams.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, I like to say a few words on the subject which is not my field—and that is the Judicial.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I think that Government should review its policy on the appointment of Magistrates in the Region, and I hope that the Attorney-General will take note of the points I am going to raise. It is now common knowledge that capable legal practitioners are not appointed as Magistrates.

An hon. Member: They do not apply.

Mr P. N. Okeke: They do not apply because the salary scale is too low. Something should be done about it so as to get capable men appointed as Magistrates. Another point I would like to recommend to the Attorney-General is the provision of Verbatim Reporters in all Magistrate Courts in the Region.

I have seen a place, Sir, where the Magistrate asked a lawyer concerned to go and take his pen and do the recording himself and some of the lawyers often find it very difficult to go on appeal where the record is inadequate. I think, Sir, it is not impossible for this Region to provide Verbatim Reporters so that full statements made by plaintiffs and defendants are properly recorded. I do not want to take the time of the House. As I have said before, I congratulate the Government for the work done and I think the Government has been prudent in the use of public money and if they continue like that to 1960, I think the financial position of this Region will be rosier than that of any Region in the Federation.

Mr J. O. Ihekwoaba (Orlu Division): Mr Speaker, Sir, may I start by thanking the Government for the recent announcements made by the Ministers in this House. In the first place, the Premier made a Statement in this House and pointed out several things which the Government had done. We, as observers, do appreciate the work and we give him our congratulations.

I have to thank the Premier for the able way in which he has handled this Government and Nigeria as a whole.

Mr A. G. Umoh (Enyong Division): Your licence is secured (*laughter*).

Mr Ihekwoaba: First of all, I want to start with Head 426 which deals with the House of Assembly. At this stage, Sir, I would like to point out that the Clerk of the House has made it a point of duty to see that all the Opposition Members who crossed from the Government side are pushed to this side of our Bench and it makes the spectators to include us as Opposition. (*Laughter*). If nothing is done to remove them from this side, you should not be surprised to see hon.

[MR IHEKWOABA]

Members going into blows. I know the trouble these Opposition Members are causing and I feel that when there is a heated debate you should not be surprised to see Members fighting. I am therefore, appealing to you to see that a chance is made for them in their own camp.

I beg to point out that much is expected of the Ministry of Commerce in the way of helping traders and businessmen. There is no encouragement whatsoever in the way of helping traders and businessmen. The way that things are handled in this Region does not give any encouragement, especially to people who are struggling to live or struggling to build up the country. Most of the Bills passed are not in the interest of businessmen and property owners. Take the question of rent control. The way Government tackles this problem is not to the best interest of landlords.

We want the Minister of Commerce to give loans to big businessmen to help develop the economic resources of the Region.

As regards the announcement by the Minister of Education that the U.P.E. is to be free up to Standard I, this is quite sound as it is better to finish a house gradually than to do the construction in a day. The announcement regarding providing funds to colleges is also very gratifying.

The Minister should endeavour to find ways and means of providing adequate water supply to the Secondary Schools in Orlu. It is noticed that certain Secondary Schools and Colleges in Orlu are without adequate water supply. In my area, especially in the Bishop Shanahan College, the Rev. Father, the Principal of the College, has made several attempts in Enugu to solve the problem of lack of good water supply in the College and also in St. Augustine's College and the Girl's Secondary School.

Another point I would like to talk about is tax assessment. It has been discovered that the method of tax assessment is not properly done in most areas particularly in the townships. May I point out that there are certain clauses

in the policy of assessment which make a worker pay excessive tax. For instance, in a place like Port Harcourt or Onitsha, there may be a worker who is on £800 per annum and who pays tax on this sum. If it happens that this man has a property, say a plot with income at about £600 per annum, he will not be assessed on the value of this property alone but he will be called upon to pay tax on £1,400 instead of £600. It then follows that the man will pay up to £190 being tax on his salary and his landed property. It will be appreciated if the Minister will look into this matter and rectify the situation under which a person pays far more tax than he is required.

I want to deal with Head 451 which is in respect of the Ministry of Production. I do not want to go further with that Ministry because my hon. Friend has made the points I wanted to make; but I want to point out that the Ministry has been tightening the policy of selling oil and palm kernel, thus making business very difficult for small businessmen in this Region.

I want to point out that in the present year, the Marketing Board has sat and fixed the 1959 prices of palm kernels whereas they have gone up in U.K. We thought that there would be some increases in view of that but till now, nothing has been done. I would like the Ministry to do something about it.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to speak on Head 456, Ministry of Town Planning. The public is complaining bitterly about the assignment and leases of plots which the Ministry of Town Planning has delayed for one to two years before they are getting them. I feel that this Ministry has done much but it should still do more. The Minister should visit Port Harcourt and see the condition of Diobu Road and Orlu to see that the road is tarred because of its commercial importance.

Mr O. O. Ita (Eket Division): Mr Speaker, it is always difficult to straighten out matters in this House. If you tell the Government they are wrong, the Government will reply they are right. And if you tell the Government they are right, the Government will retort you are

flattering them. So this time I want to dwell specifically on one aspect of the finances of the Region which I harped on three years ago—that is what we now call the Board of Internal Revenue. At that time I pointed out that it was necessary to create a Department which should be known as Department of Internal Revenue. I did point out at that time that there would be several things which would actually be difficult at the beginning to overcome before that Department works smoothly.

One of the things I anticipated was that some people would try to hide their property in order to escape proper assessment. I did point out, too, that it would be necessary for the Government to employ some Inspectors who will be able to assess property properly. It seems to me that although the Government has tried its best (according to what the Minister of Finance said the other day) to collect a lot of revenue through this Department, there is still a lot to be done to improve the method of assessment. As the last speaker pointed out, there is such a thing like duplication of assessment of revenue. Some time a man to be assessed earns his revenue or income from two sources. He pays tax on one of them and does not on the other, and that one will await the assessment of the Revenue Department. In spite of the fact that he had paid tax on one source of his income, they will still add that source of income to the other and then assess on the total sum. It means actually paying more than double on the income that was not actually assessed at the beginning. And besides, Sir, when the question of assessing some petty traders arises, I do not know by what methods the assessments are done. If you go to the stall of a petty trader today, you find very few articles for sale, and tomorrow you find many articles. It does not mean they are poor throughout the year, but in that case I would suggest that the Board of Internal Revenue should make it a rule that petty traders are visited about four times a year, and then the average of their earnings or sales taken, so that it may get as near as possible the actual income realised by such petty traders.

The time has come when records should be introduced into some of our bookshops so that the actual sales are noted down and this will aid assessment because there is a lot of

trouble everywhere about assessment; sometimes people are assessed, sometimes people are not and it is always really difficult to know who really is right. I think that will help the revenue of the Region to go up. I understand that the revenue of the Region is buoyant and that they have a lot of money for development.

I should like to point out that the time has come for us to go back to the old field which so many people seem to forget. Many of the previous speakers have paid tribute to the Minister of Education in connection with the U.P.E. Scheme. In 1953 there had been some move in connection with education in this sense going on very gradually. Later on, it was decided that what that Scheme actually set out was that the U.P.E. would have started with Infants I, and other departments following gradually so that in 1960, the whole thing would have been through and then we have the U.P.E. But unfortunately, this suggestion was thrown out. Going back to it now is acclaimed to be foresight. I think it will not be out of place to say that we can make something out of it rather than allow anything to obstruct it.

The next thing, Sir, is the Ministry of Town Planning. There seems to be something wrong with that Ministry. What is wrong in the Ministry is that: this Ministry of Town Planning includes the Land Department and the Survey Department. We here, perhaps, do not know what really is wrong. People do not realise the trouble about building, as far as this Department is concerned.

With so many people doing the field work, we get in that Department accumulation of work. In this field work, they bring back what we can connect with surveying and so many other things that we really require for the surveying of the Eastern Region.

In the Drawing Section of this Department which seems to carry so many junior servants, I have not seen a single senior service officer. There is stagnation and the people do not feel that they can progress at that rate. I am to ask the Minister of Town Planning to see to it that that part of the Department is made right so that more efficient people will get in there.

[MR O. O. ITA]

Another thing is a personal note. Since 1953, we have been told that the Eket Road, that is, Oron to Eket, would be given attention. Every year the road remained untarred and there will not be a hope of tarring it even this year.

An hon. Member: COR State will tar it.

Mr O. O. Ita: I hope the Government will not wait until we get our independence. It is so important we should face the road improvement very seriously. It is not a question of Party Politics. Good roads should be opened, so that we may be able to bring our produce to the market.

Dr W. N. Onubogu (Onitsha Division): Mr Speaker, I rise to say a few words in connection with our Finance Law. In Onitsha at present what happens is that people are taxed for the houses where they live from which they receive no rents. I do not know how this is calculated. It is causing a hell of trouble. Also I understand that the same thing is happening in Aba, Calabar and Port Harcourt. Let the Government Bench listen properly. It is one of the things that will cause trouble. A person is asked to pay so much for a room. It is assumed that if you let a room out you will be receiving so much. All that is calculated and the tax is assessed. Mind you, the rates—water rates, general rates, have been paid. I understand that this system operates in the United Kingdom but I am afraid we are too fast. This thing is causing any amount of trouble in my area. A lot of emphasis has already been made on the question of double taxation. I do not want to stress that but I am warning the Government that this will cause another trouble in the Eastern Region.

Mr Speaker, I think that it is a very bold and honourable attempt by the Minister of Education to make what he describes as "big financial concession". In my opinion it is a very small financial concession. I am saying, Mr Speaker, that his announcement and published statement did not go down very well at all. The reduction of 10s from standards II to IV is alright. If the Government knows the psychology of the people they are serving, they should have left that alone and made primary education

free up to standard II. I am, therefore, advising Government to go back and extend free primary education to Standard II.

The hon. Minister of Health announced recently to the whole world that school children and children under the age of 18 will receive free medical treatment. For Heavens sake what has been happening to them all this time? Have they not been receiving free medical treatment? Why should the Government make such a statement to deceive the people? The fact is that people who have been going to the hospitals for free medical treatment have to stay in the hospitals till 6 p.m. and sometimes 7 p.m. and very often go home without receiving any treatment because there are no medicines in these hospitals, and the Doctors are not well paid.

They prefer to go the private hospitals because nothing is being done. This announcement absolutely means nothing.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to associate myself with what hon. P. N. Okeke said about Medical Officers in this Region. It is up to the Ministry of Health to reconsider their position and conditions of service. He has given instances—compared them with the Lawyers—and I do not want to argue more. As a matter of fact, I am glad that he said that he is not a Doctor but he realises the seriousness of the situation. When I mentioned here a few months ago that the lives of the people of the Eastern Region are in great danger people laughed. It is because of this anomaly that people go about with syringes and needles and all what nots in their pockets giving injections. Government does not take action to protect the lives of the people of the Eastern Region. Mr Speaker, Sir, I am advising the Government not to trifle with such a matter. It is a very important allegation and it is up to you to investigate. After all, the lives of the people are of paramount importance. Do not forget that I am not on this side merely to oppose; I give credit where there is one and I do so when I feel that you have made an attempt. But it is a very poor attempt and you should make another attempt to come nearer to what the people want—Universal Primary Education. That is what they want. If you do not give it there will be no rest in the Eastern Region.

Make this a point to recommend to the Ministries and the Executive Council. They will agree because they know that it pinches. The other day I said that Government is the shoe that we wear. We wear the shoe and we know where it pinches.

An hon. Member: Where does it pinch you?

Dr Onubogu: In the U.P.E. If there is no U.P.E. there should be no University. After all, election is coming. I am saying right now that it is going to be an election issue.

Mr Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members know that this is their only allotted day for the debate. With your permission I am going to limit the debate to not more than 15 minutes to each Member so that it may go round.

Mr M. N. Onwuma (Aba Division): Mr Speaker, please permit me to say that the frequency with which the Leader of the Opposition points an accusing finger on the Ministerial Bench on the way in which the Estimates are produced is most indecorous. It is not enough for any one to think that apparently he is the only person who can read and in any case even if he is correct, I do not think he is right to point accusing fingers on the Ministerial Bench and say things like that. His prudent speech had been spoilt by most unusual remarks. Another point is that he completely omitted the Accountant-General's report. Mr Speaker with your permission I beg to quote the relevant portion. "Since there is a deficit of £156,000 . . ."

An hon. Member: What page?

Mr Onwuma: Mr Speaker, in the Accountant-General's Report it is remarked that there was just a deficit of £156,725 though the accrued interest on Government Investments had considerably offset this deficit. That is the only point which the Leader of Opposition said. It is the only exception which he mentioned. Supposing I have spent a certain amount during a certain period and during this period I adjust my idea of the amount of money I wanted to spend and decide that more of it should be cut off from the saving, I do not know what is wrong with that.

You will notice from the above that an additional provision of £40,000 in respect of grants involve a reduction in the reserves in the Approved Estimates. It means that if a certain amount of money has been allocated for certain purposes, and during the current time you discover that it is not necessary to spend that amount of money, you can withhold the expenditure for other purposes or pay it back as a reserve. If you say that is no saving, it is for you to tell us what savings are.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like you to know that the point we are emphasising is about increase in revenue. As a matter of fact, we are worried about our revenue. It is between this time and the months of January and February that most of the crops are harvested, that more of the revenue will come in and we are hoping that between now and March we will get a clear picture of the whole situation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, sometime in January and February all sorts of venoms were poured on the Ministry of Education for the failure of the U.P.E. I think it is correct that when the Ministry comes forward with a very good plan we must also praise it. The Minister of Education has made an announcement which I think will go down to remove some of the difficulties we experienced a short while ago. The U.P.E. will now go one step further. We congratulate the Minister of Education on that.

The reduction in fees is also very welcome. The reduction also in the Assumed Local Contribution is indeed most welcome because it will reduce some of the burden of the people. We know that there was not enough money at the time to carry out this gigantic project. I think that anybody in this Region who is not biased will indeed welcome the idea of taking the whole thing step by step.

I would like to point out to the Minister of Education that I am not really quite happy about primary school teachers teaching secondary school subjects in primary schools. It is possible that you may have some teachers with secondary education but you must not forget that those teachers who elect to teach after having gone through secondary school course have not got the Grade III certificate. In any case, the

[MR ONWUMA]

time factor is against the introduction of the secondary school subjects.

Further, all is not well with people with science degrees who go into Education Department or Voluntary Agencies. You have quite rightly said that every secondary school should have a teacher with science knowledge. That is very well indeed. Perhaps it may be possible for you to put forward a project like Emergency Science Training School as we have in Lagos. It may be necessary to do something like that.

Mr S. J. Amachree (Degema Division):

Mr Speaker, I have to thank the Government for having considered Degema by improving the hospital there. At the same time I have the following remarks to make. I have been in the Government service and I have known what Estimates are. Estimates are not theories but figures. The Leader of Opposition has pointed out some figures, and before anybody could pass any judgment it will be left to the Minister of Finance to prove that these figures are not right. I am not condemning anybody nor am I accusing anybody until I have heard from the hon. Minister of Finance why the sum of £172,300 should be a deficit. It is left to the Minister of Finance to explain. I represent a community of people, a constituency. I have to report to my constituency that the Leader of the Opposition accused the Government of a deficit of so much and the Minister of Finance defended himself and it was proved that the Minister of Finance was right, otherwise I have to report as the natives may understand that the Government is having a deficit of money sufficient to fill this hall. I will be very much interested to hear from the Minister of Finance his explanation of this deficit.

Dr A. N. Obonna (Owerri Division):

Mr Speaker, I rise to speak on the Supplementary Appropriation Bill and before doing so I must clarify some points raised by the Leader of Opposition and some Opposition Members. In the first place, I wonder if the Leader of Opposition wants us to believe that a deficit Budget is something very serious to worry about. In fact, experience has shown that in other countries like America wishing

for expansion, a deficit Budget is very much welcome. Even in domestic affairs one has to run a deficit at one time or the other in his financial dealings. Having a deficit does not mean bankruptcy. There is no cause for alarm even if the Region has a deficit of £172,300.

An Opposition Member: Are you admitting the deficit?

Dr Obonna: It is assumed for purposes of argument. I have to thank the Chief Whip for having explained the other points raised by the Opposition Members.

Then I come to the point of business: that the Government must be congratulated on the achievement they have made. During the last Budget Meeting in fact, every one of us felt that something was wrong; the Opposition thought that the Government was going to wind-up.

Now, we have free Primary Education extended to Standard I. We expected that they would congratulate the Government, but Members of the Opposition say that the Government is in deficit. They also say that the Government should further extend the facilities. Where will they get the money?

I wish also to congratulate the Minister of Education for extending the facilities to Standard I, and I am sure the people of this Region welcome it and they are happy about it. Why will he extend the Free Primary Education to Standard II and leave the rest of the classes? I think it is better to extend the facilities and benefits to everybody rather than to confine it to a few.

I want also to congratulate the Minister of Health for extending free medical service to school children of this Region. It is true that in the past some children had been treated free, but I am not sure whether free surgical operation had been extended to these children. This present announcement says that school children should be treated free, even including surgical operation. I think it is something to be welcomed.

Another thing I want to say is that this free medical treatment to children will mean more

work on the Doctors and I will like the Government to compensate them by increased salaries. We have heard that in Ghana private practice has been abolished but as a result of the abolition increases in their salaries have been made. I would like such compensations too to be given to the Doctors by this Government in order to make them more contented. You will also find that Doctors have a good case. Since 1955, many Doctors have either died or resigned and since then only very few Doctors have been employed. In fact since 1955 over 45 Doctors have qualified in Nigeria and of this 45; 30 Doctors are from the Eastern Region and only six of these 30 are employed in the Eastern Region, which means that if the Doctors were contented many more of them could have been employed. Something must be done now that the Supplementary Estimates for 1958-59 are being considered.

I would also like to praise the Commissioner of the Board of Internal Revenue. I think those who go about in this Region will find out that that Department is doing a lot of good work. You will find that from this month to January and February the revenue of the Eastern Region will be very much increased. They are working very hard in collecting the taxes, and, in fact, the willingness and speediness with which the people of the Eastern Region pay their taxes today indicate that they are satisfied with the services and amenities they receive from this Government. In fact there has been much improvement made in so many places like Ogoja, Okigwi and Calabar. This is due to the Government being alive to its task, and we would like similar improvements to apply to the other Divisions.

We would like the Minister of Transport to tour Owerri Division, so that he might see things for himself, as there are many things which require improvement.

Another point I would like to clear is the impression that Doctors are not doing their best because they are inadequately paid. I do not think that Doctors do their work according to the salaries they are paid. The fact is that they are over-worked. No Doctor will work according to the pay he receives. In short the statement may mean "no pay no work", which does not apply.

Another point is that now the financial position of the Region has improved, we would like to see our Ministers go back to their old pay. Otherwise it will portray us as poor and inferior to the outside world. It may mean that our Ministers do not measure up with Ministers elsewhere. In fact, I congratulate them for exercising self-denial, and I think the people of the Region appreciate their magnanimous spirit.

Yet another point is the question of promotion in the Civil Service. We would like members of the Civil Service to be promoted as vacancies occur. In the Treasury Department, there is a lot of discontentment, where some people were promoted but later on this promotion was cancelled. It is causing a lot of concern, and we would like the Government to reconsider its step, as it is heart-breaking to promote one today only to cancel it tomorrow. There is no doubt that these things are being done in the hope of saving money for the Region, but members of the Civil Service who merit promotion must be promoted.

Finally, I must thank the Government for all that it has done in the Region. Those who sound election alarm should rest assured that the good work of our Government is resounding all over the world, and without forecasting the results of the next elections we are sure to come into power again. (*Applause*).

Chief G. N. Agbasiere (Orlu Division): Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to thank the Government for the progress they have made. I am also thanking the Government for the announcement they have made this morning about the Provincial Administration.

About Primary Education; how glad the people at home will be when they hear that they are going to have a free education—that is, not paying anything up to Standard I. What we hon. Members have now to do is to thank the Government. I know very well that between now and 1960, we will have free education in more classes. I want to announce something about the County Schools. These County Schools are for Government and we, as part of the Government, should have our eyes on them in order to save the school children.

[CHIEF AGBASIERE]

I now come to water supplies. I beg Government to try to give water to colleges. We talk of bore-holes. I think that if we have several tanks for colleges that will solve the situation. Every big college should have about four tanks. If we wait for bore-holes, I think students may suffer considerably.

Another point I want to raise is about farmers. You know that farmers had much trouble two or three years ago with the question of insects etc., I would like Government to try and look into this trouble and help farmers to fight these insects that destroy the farmers' crops by providing them with the medicine that can eliminate these pests and thereby save their crops.

Another point is to tell the Government to remove the Opposition Members from this side to another place. This will help people to know the Opposition Bench. I hope that they will be removed as quickly as possible.

Mr J. M. Ito (Ikot Ekpene Division): I rise to support the Supplementary Appropriation Bill.

I have to thank the Minister of Education for the effort made to reduce school fees and I believe the method of gradualism now adopted will continue in order to avoid any chaotic situation and further crisis. It is our desire that the Ibibio State College be placed on the Approved List of Colleges and to enjoy the amenities as other schools. I hope the Minister concerned will take note.

I have to thank the Premier for the pronouncement he made this morning on the question of the creation of Provinces but I was rather disappointed on the site of Headquarters. In my opinion, it should have been a question left to the people concerned to decide. If the question of Opobo Annang is under consideration, then the question of Headquarters should not have arisen because the question of Abak being a Headquarter was to centralise the areas concerned.

There is a call for water supply. We are in dire need of water and the Minister concerned should take immediate step to see that this is done.

Another point is that there is a cog in the wheel of administration as the Ministry of Local Government has failed to enforce its instruction in respect of the transfer of Local Government Officials.

For the Minister of Health: I have to say that the public is suffering a great deal at Ikot Ekpene due to shortage of drugs. I would like the Minister of Health to note this.

It is wrong to say that the Opposition should not express its opinion. I think everyone is entitled to contribute his share to this debate. After all, the Opposition are paid to do the work and they should therefore do the work. I see no reason why we should say anything contrary to that. I do not think that after putting up the Estimate they should go away without saying something. They must have to say something whether right or wrong, qualified or unqualified.

I would like to thank the Government for what they have done. The announcement on education and other things are welcomed.

Mr A. G. Umoh (Enyong Division): Mr Speaker, before I go on, I would like to say how gratifying it is to know that the U.P.E. is going up to Standard I. I would have congratulated the Minister, but I am not so sure if they are making a good start now. I would like to advise the Government that "once beaten twice shy", they should make sure that nothing goes wrong again. But my information is that Government is making up its mind to close down girls' schools in order to save money to set up the U.P.E. Scheme.

Government Bench: That is not correct.

Mr Umoh: However, it was something we heard before we came here and I would like to be proved wrong. I would like to assure Government that these schools are very useful and it would be against the interests of the tax-payers to close them. Before I go on to another point, I would like to join hon. Ito in opposing vehemently the removal of the headquarters of the Annang Province from Ikot Ekpene to Abak.

Government Bench: Is it in Enyong?

Mr Umoh: Whether the Minister of Internal Affairs represents Ikot Ekpene I do not know.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to get on to rent control. Last year a law was passed to control rents and we heard that a room would cost £1 16s 0d. I am not here to quarrel with the high rent, but with the application of this law. Mr Speaker, Sir, we want you to know that there are at least two Ministers in this House who are charging £20 for five rooms and a third £10 for three rooms in Enugu, when the ordinary man in the street is charging £1 16s 0d for one room. I strongly feel this is wrong.

An hon. Member: The law is there. Take them to Court.

Mr Umoh: What I have said now is absolutely true.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to say a word about the Executive staff in the Treasury Department. According to Davies Commission certain scales were fixed for certain staff in the Executive grade in this Department. It is known that in the North and in the West and in the Federal Governments the recommended scales have been followed but in the Eastern Region it is different. In the Federal Government it is £564 - £972; Western Region £540 - £972; Northern Region £540 - £972; in the Eastern Region it is £390 and ends at £714. We understand this is causing a lot of dissatisfaction among the Treasury staff and I appeal to Government to consider this matter.

Mr Speaker, Sir, there is also another question and this is about the assessment of people in this Region. I must admit that the Internal Revenue Department has been recently established and possibly has not sufficient staff to do its work; but I must say that the way assessment is being carried out at the moment is most unsatisfactory. It appears to me that people who go out to assess simply sit down in one station and get information about people they are going to assess. There are cases of very poor farmers who should be paying the ordinary tax but who are placed on income tax, and I am wondering how the Government will succeed in getting money from these people.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have put in a few questions in this House about the attitude of the Government towards the people that come from the

Minorities Areas. I do agree myself that we in the Opposition give a lot of headache to the Government but where there is democracy you will not expect that there will be no opposition. What is happening in this Region is that the people who are from the Minority areas and who pay their taxes are being denied basic social amenities completely, and what is more, Sir, if you ask any of the N.C.N.C. people why this is happening, you will be replied that it is because you did not join the Government Party. I feel that this is not fair. The Opposition in this House has not gone to the extent of stopping the people from paying their taxes. The people are paying their taxes. They should get services out of the taxes they are paying.

Mr Speaker, I would like to remind the Minister in charge of Works of the sufferings of the people in the rural areas. Today we are talking about pipe-borne water. As often as I have talked about water here I have said that there are several people who are suffering but who are really paying taxes. During the last Budget meeting here in March the Minister said that he was going to start the scheme but up till now nothing has been done about it. The same thing applies to the tarring of the roads from Ikot Ekpene to Uyo and when we ask why this is not done we are told that it is because "you are not co-operating with the Government". Government should not victimise the people arbitrarily. They should not punish the people who are paying taxes.

Mr K. Kiri (Degema Division): I rise to support the Supplementary Appropriation Bill. I note that the Minister of Production has just returned from a far country which is highly industrialised—the United States. Having seen what has happened there he should be able to draw up a scheme, a practical scheme whereby the Eastern Region would be industrialised in a reasonable time. I say so because the only possible way that we can advance or we can improve our revenue is through industrialisation. May I suggest to the Minister of Production that it is not necessary that we should start with heavy industrialisation that he had probably had the opportunity of seeing. We could at first start with industries which we have, provided we have the raw materials with which to begin, such as food industry. This is very essential. May I call his

[MR KIRI]

attention, Sir, that it is time that we have food research centres. Most of our products should be improved and be exported from places where they are produced to other places where they are needed, such as yams from Abakaliki to such places as Enugu.

Secondly, Sir, may I call the attention of the Minister of Education to the injustice which, probably unfortunate, is done by his Department to people who come outside the Ibo and Efik areas. If you go through the question paper of the Eastern Region of Nigeria Ministry of Education Teachers' Grade III Certificate Examination 1958, Questions 7 and 9 gave advantage to people from the Ibo and Efik areas who were given the opportunity to choose five out of nine questions and non-Ibos/Efiks had to choose five out of seven questions. With your permission may I read it as an exhibit. Question 7: "In introducing into our schools the grammar of our language Ibo/Efik what approach would you suggest is most suitable?" Question 9: "Outline the method and apparatus you will use in making beginners associate the sounds of their vernacular Ibo/Efik with their respective written symbols."

One should not expect to see these in an examination paper which is supposed to be fair to all candidates so that I think these two questions make the paper unfavourable to non-Ibos and non-Efiks.

May I call on the Minister of Education to realise that it is time we got through the curriculum of our schools because education now is education for youths and not only for students to be employed. I wish to suggest where possible that we examine what is done in the West and see whether we can follow up practical methods of improving our education. I do not see what is wrong with that.

Mr Speaker, may I ask the Minister to say what he has been able to do in regard to the expansion of secondary schools in the minority areas, such as Degema and Brass Divisions, which at present suffer. I say so because my Division is the only one in which we have only one or two secondary schools.

It is time we encouraged commercial education in the Region because as Ministers travel from place to place, they must have realised in other civilised countries that commercial education is encouraged. It is hardly necessary to emphasise the need for and importance of commercial education this time.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am asking the Minister of Welfare to realise that in the Eastern Region there is considerable unemployment. If we do not want to suffer the dangers of unemployment, we must make room for employment.

May I suggest to the Minister of Commerce to see if it will not be advisable for him to have a round table conference to see that expatriate firms do not engage in retail trade. They have the capital; let them concentrate on wholesale trade, leaving the retail business to petty traders.

May I call the attention of the hon. Premier to the fact that we are not just grumbling because we like to do so. We are trying to be frank in saying that we have not been having a square deal. I am happy that the hon. Premier had made it possible during his visit to see as many places as possible in our Division and also promised to make Ministers tour and see things for themselves. I will be very grateful if Ministers will see what they had done in the neglected areas.

Mr S. T. Akpan (Eket Division): Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to make one point which I feel has not been covered and that is about the plan which the Minister of Education has advanced to this House. It is true that we have to congratulate the Minister of Education on trying to make the U.P.E. free up to Standard I, but we regret to note that attempts made about reliefs exclude Standards V and VI for the simple reason that Secondary School subjects like Geometry, Algebra, etc., would be introduced in those classes. Sir, I would like the Minister to come out more frankly and face the public if it is the intention of the Government that these classes should continue to pay the old rate of fees. Well, it is the Government that is ruling and nobody will go against it, but to hide under the camouflage of introducing secondary school subjects and fix the fees at £6 after the debate in this House is what is not good. The

Government has again this year made the statement that these Secondary School subjects will be introduced, which is not likely to be true. What the Government wants is the people's money by fixing the fees at £6 and the Government must have a reason for it; but why can't they be bold enough to tell the truth that they want that money?

I would like to say that the reduction of fees as announced recently is no concession because it is the people's right; the people are entitled to education and more so they are entitled to free primary education according to Government scheme, so that it is wrong terminology to describe the announcement as a concession. I would like to say that they are beginning to do their duty. In beginning to do that duty, Sir, I would like the Minister to have extended that privilege to children in Standards V and VI, no matter whether it is 10s reduction or more. But he argued that he has increased the administration fees to Voluntary Agencies. What has that got to do with the poor parents who are struggling to maintain these children? After all, they are talking of a University; if a child does not properly pass through a secondary school, it is difficult to understand how he can benefit from the University. The parents' palm oil and palm kernel money is being dumped into the University project.

Mr Ikoku: Point of Order—According to Standing Order 27 (2) "Members shall not cross the floor of the House unnecessarily nor sit in a place allotted to any other Member."

Mr Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance may now wind up the debate.

The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke): As is usual, the Leader of the Opposition has attempted to confuse the House with figures and no doubt a Member of this House in the person of Chief the hon. Amachree rightly pointed out that he has been confused and asked the question whether it is true that we are going to budget a deficit this year. Well, I want to prove to him that this is really an unnecessary alarm.

The expenditure provided for in the original Estimate is £13,847,880. The additional expenditure provided by special warrant and by this Supplementary Estimates is £867,035, making a total approved expenditure for the year of £14,714,915. This figure is given at

page E. 15 of the Supplementary Estimates, but it is not all this money that will be spent because there will be savings. These savings are referred to in paragraph 5 of the Memorandum to the Estimates. We still do not know exactly what savings will be realised but we are confident that we are getting, any way, the £550,000 which is shown at that paragraph.

If we take away the £550,000 of savings from the figure of £14,714,915, there is left £14,164,915. Expenditure for the year is not likely to exceed this sum and may be less. On the expenditure side, the original Estimates show £13,847,880. In paragraphs 2 and 3 on page E. 25, attention is drawn to additional revenue items totalling £420,000, and adding £420,000 to £13,847,880, the Revenue is expected to come to at least £14,267,880. In short, Revenue is expected to be at least £14,267,880, and expenditure not more than £14,164,195. There will be a surplus of at least £100,000. (*Applause*).

The Minister of Production (Dr M. I. Okpara): This is the arithmetic we believe in.

Dr Imoke: All these figures correspond with those quoted by the Leader of the Opposition, hon. Ikoku, in his speech, except that he left out the £550,000 savings.

I just want to comment briefly, Mr Chairman, on the points raised by one or two speakers. Hon. J. O. Ihekwoaba made a remark about people being assessed on one income and afterwards another source of income is found and that one is assessed along with the first one, or treated separately and so forth. Now, if you take a person who earns an income of £1,200 and make him pay tax on £1,200, the same person has a house bringing him an income (he may have two or three houses), of another £1,200. If you tax that separately, then someone who has just one source of income of that same amount will be paying more tax than the one you tax separately. So it would not be fair to have to separate the assessment. It would be fairer to join the two before you tax.

Dr the hon. Walter Onubogu—unfortunately he is not here—complained that owners of houses should not be made to pay tax. The point there is that a man who earns an income (let us say a clerical staff in the

[DR IMOKE]

Government Service, who has to hire a house) pays out his rent for that house. But Government does not deduct the rent, it takes the tax from his basic salary without deducting the rent. And so a man who has a house if he is not taxed for living in a house, there is an injustice there again because he does not pay rent to anybody. At any rate, I should like to explain to the House—and I think Members will be happy to hear—that this is a controversial issue. According to the advice given me by my advisers the United States do not tax owners of houses and the United Kingdom is considering reviewing the system because of complaints. If this is true all I can say is that the Government will look into the matter. (*Hear! Hear!*).

Question put and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a Second time and under Standing Order 66 (4) stood committed to the Committee of Supply.

Committee: Tomorrow.

(2) The Customary Courts (Amendment) Bill, 1958—Second Reading—*Deferred until Tomorrow.*

ADJOURNMENT

The Minister of Production (Dr M. I. Okpara): Sir, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until 9 o'clock a.m. tomorrow.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to remind hon. Members that the Development Corporation is showing a Film of their activities at the fore-court of this hon. House at 6.30 p.m. The Film will run for about 25 minutes and that will, I think, give those who wish to attend the Cocktail Party ample opportunity to see this.

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

Question proposed.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATES

(1) Circulation of Ministerial Statements

Mr O. Arikpo (Obubra Division): Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to call attention of the

Government to a matter of fundamental principle. During the course of this week, three Ministers had made three very important Ministerial Statements. Now, as the Premier rightly pointed out, when a Ministerial Statement is made, no subject is before the House for debate and so the subject cannot be debated by the House. On the other hand, it is also recognised as a Parliamentary practice that any matter of very vital importance in the light of the community, when raised in Parliament, is usually raised in such a form that the House has an opportunity of expressing an opinion on such matter. Now, three matters raised this week in these three Ministerial Statements are, admittedly, matters of the greatest practical importance to this Region; and one would have thought that the Ministers concerned would make it possible for the matters to be debated at a very early moment.

It is most regrettable, Sir, that not only has no indication been given by the Government Bench that an opportunity will be provided for the debate on these matters, but the Statements are not even circulated for the information of Members. It is a usual practice in this House, as in all other Houses, that Ministerial Statements of such importance are circulated either before or immediately after they have been made. Now, on these three occasions this week these very important Statements, either through oversight or for some other reasons not known to this Side of the House, have not been circulated for the information of the Members of the House.

I do not intend to impute motives, but I just want to say that the matter raised by these three Statements are so important that I think it is a matter of ordinary courtesy, if nothing else, that the Statements should be circulated for the information of Members of the House so that any Member who feels that the matter therein contained should be debated could take advantage and put down a substantive motion for the matter to be debated in the House.

I am, therefore, requesting the Government, kindly, to make it possible for Members of the House to see these Statements in prints before the House adjourns.

The Premier: Mr Speaker, I thank my learned Friend from Obubra for his remarks and I am glad he made it quite clear that it is

not obligatory for Statements made from the Treasury Bench to be circulated. I have taken consideration of his request that these Statements be circulated and I agree with him that it is necessary that Members of the House should follow intelligently the nature of these Statements. But I must say that each Statement which was read here by the Ministers was handed to the staff of the Clerk of the House so that it should appear in the *Hansard* but now that the hon. and learned Member has indicated that it would be to his best interest and the best interest of all to see that they have Statements of this nature circulated we shall have so many copies made out.

Another point I would like to make on this particular issue is that it is not right that debate on Government Bills should be initiated whenever Ministerial Statements are made. I do not want to cite any authority, but it is quite obvious. The only thing is that it is for the Opposition Members of the House to give notice of a Motion on any aspect of any Ministerial Statement. As it is, the Statements are those of policy and go to clarify certain issues which Members may not be able to notice or appreciate. Another practice in the House of Commons is that Members of the House can also, with Mr Speaker's permission, raise a point on Adjournment. We are quite prepared to co-operate with the Opposition, if for example, they give notice of any motion to debate any aspect of Government Statement. They could raise any issues they care to raise on Adjournment. What I gather in the learned

Member's statement is that he would like to have copies of these Statements and I think I give him this assurance.

(2) House Rent Profiteering

Mr Ogon: Mr Speaker, I want to raise a very big matter in connection with houses in the reservation area where an hon. Member, in the course of his speech, said that there existed rent profiteering. I would say that his speech is most wicked and most irresponsible. If for instance, somebody has a house in Government reservation areas, properly furnished, that house does not come under the Law. In point of fact, if he knows any Ministers who own houses outside this category profiteering, in the course of his speech, he ought to tell us. I understand that it is not true. There is no atom of truth, so that this method is very objectionable. In any case, it is expected that if a person is profiteering on rent the tenant is empowered to refuse to pay this rent or the landlord could sue him. I am saying that no Minister should own a house and profiteer on rent. But I object to the hon. Member's method because it is hitting below the belt. We have to run this country in a fair and just way.

Question put and agreed to.

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

EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Saturday, 13th December, 1958

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

PRAYERS

(Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

The University of Nigeria

The Premier (Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe): Mr Speaker, I am happy to report to this hon. House the progress we are making with the University of Nigeria.

Eastern Region Official Document No. 2 of 1958 which was published earlier this year, entitled *University of Nigeria*, reported the steps that had been taken up to that date. Since then much has happened. Government has now acquired the land at Nsukka, approximately 600 acres, for the site of the University itself. A Planning Authority has been set up to plan the right use of the land around the site of the University, and, with the willing co-operation of the people of Nsukka, is considering the zoning of the land for different purposes, so that expansion can take place in a properly planned manner in the area around the site.

A distinguished firm of London Architects, James Cubitt and Partners, has done a great deal of preparatory work. Experimental buildings have been put up to explore designs for students' quarters and to test the building materials on the site. Plans have been prepared by the Architect—plans which have the great merit that the buildings are designed to blend with the great natural beauty of the surroundings and fit the setting well. A preliminary financial statement of estimates of cost has been prepared by him, and this is now being examined with a view to building construction in phases, suited to the academic requirements of the University as the different Faculties are set up.

In the meantime, we have had a visit from University experts, which, as stated in the White Paper published earlier this year, was arranged by the Inter-University Council of Britain and the International Co-operation Administration of the United States. Dr J. W. Cook, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Exeter and Mr John A. Hannah, the President, and Mr Glen L. Taggart, the Dean, of Michigan State University visited the

Region in April and May of this year. They have presented a Report which was laid on the Table of the House at this Meeting and is published as Eastern Region Official Document No. 4 of 1958. I commend it to hon. Members to read and study.

With the permission of the House, Mr Speaker, I will summarise the salient points in the Report:—

(1) It is the object of the University to relate its curriculum, research and other activities to the social and economic needs of Nigeria.

(2) Although many of the students leaving our Secondary Schools are not at present qualified to enter a University, the advisers report that there is likely to be an increasing stream of students who will be qualified; and that the indications are that University College, Ibadan, will be increasingly unable to cater for the needs of all those who both desire and are qualified to enter a University. There is therefore a good case on educational grounds for the establishment of a second University.

(3) There is sufficient financial support to make a start.

(4) The University of Nigeria will serve not just the Eastern Region, but Nigeria as a whole, and it is hoped that the University will attain sufficiently high standards to be able to serve the whole of West Africa in the future and carry much of its research and programming to that area.

(5) The site at Nsukka is attractive (that is the opinion of the experts) . . . (*Cheers*).

Mr S. O. Achara (Okigwi Division): We understand that the land is yours.

The Premier: You can only say that in this House and not outside.

Mr Speaker, I will start again from the fifth point of my summary of the salient points in the Report before I was interrupted:—

(5) The site at Nsukka is attractive and suitable if it is desired to serve other Regions as well as the Eastern Region. Communications will be satisfactory when the tarring of the road to Nsukka is completed, and

ample water is available, according to the engineering firm which has drilled two sample wells at approximately 600 feet below the surface.

(6) The Advisers recommend that a Provisional Council should be established and that its members should be able to relate the academic requirements with the economic and social needs of Nigeria.

(7) The Advisers place the highest priority on calling in a group of education experts to make an intensive analysis of the social and economic problems of Nigeria, with a view to deciding what the University should teach. The following academic fields should be considered for inclusion in the University's field of work:—

- (a) The Sciences.
- (b) Agriculture.
- (c) Engineering.
- (d) Home Economics, i.e., Domestic Science.
- (e) Business and Public Service.
- (f) Education—especially Teacher Training.
- (g) Humanities and Theology.

(8) An important aspect of the analysis and planning for the University will involve the initial and recurrent costs. It is necessary to establish a set of priorities on which parts of the Institution should be developed first and to what extent.

(9) It is important that architectural planning should not run ahead of decisions on the Faculties and Institutes to be set up at the University.

(10) The group of experts should be concerned also with the development of a Charter for the University in terms of its Directing Board and governmental relations.

(11) The advisers cannot put too much emphasis on the importance of obtaining the right staff for the University. This will include the selection of 25–40 Nigerians, who have already obtained University Degrees, to be sent for training at the Doctorate level so that there will be suitable Nigerians who could take up posts on the staff of the new University.

(12) In conclusion, the advisers believe that the development of the University of Nigeria, based on the concept of service to the problems and needs of Nigeria, is a desirable project and one that should receive support from any source which could help to make it a sound endeavour.

As I have explained in my Foreword to this Report, the Government of the Eastern Region accepts the proposals contained in this Report and will proceed to implement them without delay. The next step will be to appoint a Provisional Council. That Council will then call in suitable experts in different fields to make detailed plans of the Faculties to be established. When this is done, it will be possible for the architectural drawings to be modified, the Architect's final plans prepared with the help of quantity Surveyors, and the construction of the buildings can then begin.

Mr Speaker, there are two final matters which I should report to this House. I am keeping hon. Members fully informed, as I have done throughout and as I shall continue to do. One point is that by the end of this year we shall have funds amounting to £2 million available for the University. The other is that I am happy to report that, after discussions which I held with representatives of the University of London while I was in the United Kingdom, it has been agreed tentatively that subject to formal arrangements being concluded by both parties the University of Nigeria shall be accorded "special relationship" with the University of London, and will be able to award University of London degrees. (*Cheers*).

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(1) The 1958–59 Eastern Region Supplementary Appropriation Bill

(First Allotted Day)

Considered in Committee of Supply.

(In the Committee)

Clauses 1–5 postponed.

FIRST SCHEDULE

HEAD 421—PREMIER'S OFFICE

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £42,470 for Head 421—Premier's Office—stand part of the First Schedule.

Sub-head 1, Item (58)—Permanent Secretary (Establishments), Group 5

The Premier: Mr Chairman, I beg to move to *delete* under Sub-head 58 the word "Establishments". The reason for this is that when the Executive Council decided to create the post of a Permanent Secretary in the Premier's Office it was agreed that the Permanent Secretary will be detailed, among others, to be responsible for Establishments; but it was not intended to create a specific post of Permanent Secretary (Establishments). If that were done, it would be impossible to post any other Permanent Secretary to act therein excepting with the permission or authority of the Public Service Commission. The Government prefers to have a Permanent Secretary who can be posted to act as Permanent Secretary in any other Ministry according to the exigencies of the Service.

Question proposed.

Mr E. O. Eyo (Uyo Division): On point of order, Sir—Standing Order 67. Part of it reads as follows:—

"... Not more than three days shall be allotted to the consideration of the Bill in Committee of Supply and only one day's notice of amendments shall be required."

The Chairman: A notice of this amendment was received in the office yesterday, so you have already had the notice.

Question put and agreed to.

Other Charges**Sub-head 12—Leave Passage for Premier, Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries.**

Mr E. O. Eyo: Mr Speaker, I rise to move under Sub-head 12 to leave out the words "and Parliamentary Secretaries" and the provision of £1,400. Sir, the proposal before the House is to make provision for the sum of £1,400 to enable Parliamentary Secretaries to spend their leave abroad, and we are strongly opposed to that. If you refer to the Approved Estimates for the year, at page E 24 under Head 421—Premier's Office, under Sub-head 12, you will see—Leave Passages for the Premier and his Ministers at £1,400, then there was no question of Parliamentary Secretaries spending their leave abroad. And the proposal now to include or to make it possible for Parliamentary Secretaries to spend their leave abroad is just

unacceptable. There is no reason why Parliamentary Secretaries should spend their leave abroad at the tax-payers' expense. No reason whatsoever.

Government Supporters: Why?

Mr E. O. Eyo: We do not mind if the Premier and his Ministers spend their leave abroad. We can understand that. But we just want to be told why Parliamentary Secretaries should spend their leave abroad at public expense.

May I draw your attention to the Memorandum attached to the Supplementary Estimates page E 126, and with your permission may I read paragraph 7:—

"It is the policy of the Regional Government that the Supplementary Estimates shall be utilised primarily for the amendment of the Approved Annual Estimates, and not for the implementation of completely new policies . . ."

I submit, Sir, that the proposal to make provision for Parliamentary Secretaries to spend their leave abroad is a completely new policy because only a few months ago the Government submitted its annual budget and provision was made under Head 421 Sub-head 12—Leave Passages for Premier and Ministers £1,400. Then there was no question of Parliamentary Secretaries having to spend their leave abroad. If we should allow this situation it will cut across what Government has said at page E 126 outlining its financial policy.

Now, Sir, you heard Members ask me why Parliamentary Secretaries should not spend their leave abroad. The reason is simply because it is going to cost the Region £1,400 to enable Parliamentary Secretaries to spend their leave abroad. We want to know why Parliamentary Secretaries must go abroad to spend their leave at the expense of the public. We can understand the Region making provision for the Premier and his Ministers going abroad to spend their leave. Why must we go further to make provision for Parliamentary Secretaries to spend their leave abroad. I must warn the Government that they are trying to create a dangerous precedent. Is this an attempt to equate Parliamentary Secretaries with Ministers? Does it mean that if a Minister is entitled to something a

Parliamentary Secretary should also be entitled to that thing? We can understand a Minister of State wanting to maintain Ministerial prestige, but, Sir, if everything we give to Ministers must also be given to Parliamentary Secretaries I am afraid that very soon Parliamentary Secretaries will think they are equally as good as Ministers, and we are opposing this very strongly.

Sir, I beg to move.

Question proposed.

The Premier: Mr Chairman, I am very much surprised that hon. Eyo should be speaking in the way that he has just done. After all, he is supposed to know the Constitution. He knows quite well that Parliamentary Secretaries are Junior Ministers. He knows, too, that they are entitled to the dignities attached to that office. I refer to Constitution (Order in Council) Section 120 (i). With your permission, Mr Chairman, may I read it.

“The Governor of a Region may appoint a Parliamentary Secretary from among those members of the Legislative Houses of the Region who are eligible for appointment as Regional Ministers to assist any Regional Minister.”

Well, if they are eligible for appointment as Ministers and, in fact, they have at times acted as Ministers, why should they not be equated to Ministers? They are Junior Ministers conventionally and this Region is not the only Region which allows Parliamentary Secretaries to spend their leave abroad. We are not going to cancel it. It is our policy. That is the first point.

The second point is that this is not the first time provisions for Parliamentary Secretaries' Passages have been passed by this House in the Estimates. Hitherto, it was under a pool called, “Passages”. Parliamentary Secretaries went on leave last year, we approved it; they have gone on leave this year, we approved it. Why then should the Opposition Chief Whip come to mislead the House by giving the impression that it is totally new? I say that this is unfair.

Then again, he referred to paragraph 7 of the Memorandum on the Supplementary Estimates which is as follows:—

“It is the policy of the Regional Government that the Supplementary Estimates shall be utilised primarily for the amendment of the Approved Annual Estimates, and . . .”

What do we mean by “amendment”? I have just pointed out to you that it is the policy of this Government since the last three years for Parliamentary Secretaries to go on leave abroad. (*Interruptions*). If he is in doubt about anything not appearing in the Estimates, all he has to do is to put in a question before the House or raise it on adjournment and then I will explain. I repeat again that it is the policy of this Government that Parliamentary Secretaries go on leave. Therefore, his argument in connection with this particular point falls flat.

Now, on the merit of this particular argument as to why we have made the provision: if Members of the House will look over Head 421 again, they will notice that we indicated in italics that item (d) was underestimated in the Annual Budget and that (p) means that there has been a change. We have changed now from passages to have it right there under the Premier's Office. This is my explanation, and if my hon. Friend (I always hesitate to call him so, but I still say my hon. Friend) (*Laughter*) had gone through very carefully, he would not have raised this point.

Therefore, we object to this amendment.

Mr Ikoku: Mr Chairman, I would just like to say frankly that I am not impressed with the argument on floor. We do not see any reason why Parliamentary Secretaries should spend their leave abroad at public expense for two main reasons: the first is obvious, and it is that it is very expensive for the Region. The Region should not be called upon to spend money on Parliamentary Secretaries who want to spend their leave overseas. The second reason, Sir, is that these people are Junior Ministers. No doubt, they are not Ministers. The citation from the Constitution (Order in Council) is rather a funny one.

[MR IKOKU]

The mere fact that you are eligible for appointment as Minister does not mean you should enjoy all the rights of a Minister. If the principle is that they are eligible for appointment as Ministers, therefore, they should enjoy the full privileges, then the next thing should be to give them the full salary.

Mr E. O. Eyo: Exactly!

Mr Ikoku: As far as we know, there is no precedent.

The Premier: We will create one then.

Mr Ikoku: I can understand a Minister going overseas to spend his leave abroad

because he should use that opportunity to know one or two things to improve the work of his Ministry.

An hon. Member: What of Mr Morgan?

Mr Ikoku: Mr Morgan came here on duty and he is a Minister of State. He is not a Parliamentary Secretary.

Is a Parliamentary Secretary a Minister of State? Mr Chairman, Sir, in fact, from the attitude we are having from the Government side, there is no need for much talking. We are not going to accept it. It is a misuse of public money.

Question put.

Committee divided.

Ayes 14. Noes 49.

Division No. 3

9.45 a.m.

Ayes

Mr S. O. Achara
Mr J. A. Agba
Mr S. T. Akpan
Mr S. J. Amachree
Mr O. Arikpo
Mr H. U. E. Edelduok

Rev. O. Efiong, C.B.E.
Mr M. U. Etuk
Mr E. O. Eyo
Mr S. G. Ikoku
Mr E. Ita
Mr O. O. Ita

Tellers for the Ayes:

Chief I. I. Morphy
Mr A. J. Ekpe

Noes

Mr W. Abengowe
Mr O. U. Afiah
Chief G. N. Agbasiere
Mr D. S. A. Agim
Mr D. E. Akilo
Mr H. U. Akpabio
Mr D. O. Aligwekwe
Mr S. N. Alo
Mr J. W. E. Anaba
Mr R. O. Anoke
Dr N. Azikiwe
Mr E. Chidolue
Mr A. O. Chikwendu
Mr E. A. Chime
Mr E. Emole
Mr E. U. Eronini
Mr I. U. Imeh

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 G. C. Okeya
Mr E. P. Okoya
Dr M. I. Okpara
Mr K. J. N. Okpokam
Mr B. C. Okwu
Chief S. E. Onukogu
Mr P. A. Onwe
Mr N. O. Onwudiwe
Chief A. N. Onyiuke

The Chairman: The question is whether the Minister was there or not.

Mr Agba: He came, but to what extent? It is not a question of coming. Quite a lot of Ministers go to some places to get publicity and to be mentioned in radio and newspapers that this and that Minister visited this place and that place. That is not the sort of thing I am referring to. I am talking about coming to do something. When Dr Okpara visited the place everybody felt the effect of his visit, but if anyone should visit a place privately, I do not regard that as a visit.

I would like to say, Sir, that on this question of hospital Obudu is unique in a way—unique from the point of view of medical services. If you look at the population you will see really what I am referring to. There is no one hospital in the place apart from little dispensaries. This special hospital is the only one that serves the people. I am not really asking very much; what I am asking is that the Minister should make it a point to go there and see for himself what are needed in the hospital, how the money that the Government has voted out is being spent and what sort of treatment is given to those who attend the hospital. I am making this observation here that certain things are needed in the hospital—it needs expansion, it needs equipment, it needs proper attention and it needs adequate staff. These things should be provided because this is the only hospital that we have.

The Chairman: Hon. Agba, are you withdrawing the motion now?

Mr Agba: Sir, I do not really want a division.

The Chairman: So you are withdrawing it?

Mr Agba: Alright, Sir.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Question, That the sum of £1,790 for Head 442—Ministry of Health—stand part of the First Schedule, put and agreed to.

Sitting suspended at 11.05 a.m.

Sitting resumed at 11.15 a.m.

HEAD 443—MEDICAL SERVICES

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £80,685 for Head 443—Medical Services—stand part of the First Schedule.

Mr A. O. Chikwendu (Bende Division): Mr Chairman, I want to make a few comments on this Head. On Sub-head 1 item 36, I want to say that the Government is not interested in the coming into service of these Pharmacists but only in their work. It has even been realised that some of the students who qualify and obtain the Yaba Diploma find it difficult to enter into the Senior Service.

Recently a student obtained the degree of Pharmacy in the University of London and was offered employment by the University College, Ibadan at a high initial salary but the Eastern Government blocked his way by informing the University College, Ibadan that he was bonded. The Eastern Government now has offered him a salary much below what the University College offered him. I am asking that the Minister of Health should look into it. If they know that they will not be able to offer Pharmacists salaries commensurate with their training and experience, they will find that Pharmacists will be leaving the service from time to time. I am asking that this matter be closely considered.

Question, That the sum of £80,685 for Head 443—Medical Services—stand part of the First Schedule, put and agreed to.

HEAD 444—MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £1,390 for Head 444—Ministry of Information—stand part of the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

HEAD 445—MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £7,220 for Head 445—Ministry of Internal Affairs—stand part of the First Schedule.

Sub-head 1—Personal Emoluments

The Minister of State charged with responsibility for Customary Courts and the Appointment and Recognition of Chiefs (Mr R. O. Iwuagwu):

[MR IWUAGWU]

Mr Chairman, in moving that £1,290 be provided for four Assistant Customary Courts Advisers, Members will readily appreciate that my concern is to provide the day-to-day administration that these Courts require. It is not possible for the Customary Courts Adviser sitting in Enugu to do this all by himself. Equally, there must be a relief for him to go on leave.

It is not expected that Customary Courts will require the same degree of supervision as Native Courts had from District Officers and Residents. Indeed, the Customary Courts Law does not provide for such close supervision. Nevertheless, the Customary Courts will need guidance and it is important that the Customary Courts Adviser's power should be used promptly when the need arises. It is therefore proposed to have an eventual establishment of eight Assistant Customary Courts Advisers, one per province. In the immediate future, however, half this number will be sufficient but the full establishment will be provided in 1959-60.

These officers will be lawyers. A legal qualification is felt to be necessary to lay a firm foundation for the ultimate integration of all the Courts in the Region into one judicial system.

That is not to say that we did not consider appointing Administrative Officers as Assistant Customary Courts Advisers. But it is felt that these officers are heavily committed in many other duties and that therefore it was not practicable to employ them in this way.

The precise location of each Assistant Customary Courts Adviser has not been decided. But it is clear that their appointment will involve the building of at least four quarters at a cost of £15,600. As to office accommodation, this it is hoped, will be provided at the Customary Court nearest to their Headquarters.

Mr Chairman, I beg to move.

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Sub-head 2.—Motor Basic Allowances

The Minister of State charged with responsibility for Customary Courts and the Appointment and Recognition of Chiefs (Mr R. O. Iwuagwu):

Mr Chairman, in moving to increase Sub-head 2 by £290, I would refer Members to my preceding speech. These funds are to provide these allowances to the Assistant Customary Courts Advisers.

Mr Chairman, I beg to move.

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Sub-head 3.—Local Transport and Travelling

The Minister of State charged with responsibility for Customary Courts and the Appointment and Recognition of Chiefs (Mr R. O. Iwuagwu):

Mr Chairman, £400 is required to meet the mileage claims of the Assistant Customary Courts Advisers.

Sir, I beg to move.

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Question proposed, That an increased sum of £9,200 for Head 445—Ministry of Internal Affairs—be inserted in the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

HEAD 446—PRINTING AND STATIONERY

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £5,245 for Head 446—Printing and Stationery—stand part of the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

HEAD 449—MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £4,790 for Head 449—Ministry of Local Government—stand part of the First Schedule.

Mr Agba: Mr Chairman, before I proceed to move reduction on this Head, I am going to make two small corrections.

The Chairman: You can speak on the Head as it is, but you cannot at this moment give any notice to reduce it.

Mr Agba: A lot of what I said previously on Head 442 holds good for this Head also. My main purpose for moving an amendment on this Head was really to point out to the Minister discrepancies existing in Councils and these discrepancies are those which the Minister has not attempted to eradicate. I feel very strongly that the Government is giving out a lot of money to the Minister to manage the

Councils. This is really squandering the money because I feel strongly that the Minister concerned does not seem to realise that it is the Region's money that is being spent in these Councils and that the Councils should spend this money judiciously. You remember a couple of days ago the Minister introduced a Bill, an amendment to the former law, asking the House to approve the tightening up of the administrative functions of the Councils. After he had been given more powers by the House to tighten up the administration of the Councils he has come forward now to ask for more money to give to these Councils. I would like to say—and I am appealing too—that the Minister should be more energetic. If he has been energetic in other areas, he has not been so far energetic in certain areas. For example, Obudu has not felt the influence and authority of the Minister of Local Government.

Some Members of this hon. House observed a few days ago that reports on various Councils have been sent in to the Ministry—reports of Secretaries taking part in politics, reports of Chairmen of Councils using the Councils' stationery indiscriminately. Funds are being lost to Councils owing to bad handling, and as an hon. Member remarked, three months or even more, might expire and nobody hears of an answer to a complaint sent to the Ministry and consequently the whole matter may simply die away. I think, Sir, that some of the hon. Members will remember that I personally brought in a report that Native Courts have been closed by a certain Secretary. That report was read here. Sir, I would say that the Minister concerned should take note of what is meant by "realism" and "reality". Instead of going out there to see if the report brought in by an hon. Member was true, he simply sat back and, according to him, perhaps ordered some people to investigate the matter. Now, that matter has died away. Sir, I would like to know what is the idea of coming to this hon. House and asking for more powers and when these powers are given, they are not exercised. It is a mere abuse, a mere waste of time—as a matter of fact, it is a waste of speech, energy and also the time of the House.

When we give out money now to this special Minister, the Minister will be satisfied to send that money to these Councils and he

will not be careful to see that the money so sent out is put to a useful purpose. I do not mean to make a lengthy speech here but I really would urge that the Minister takes more interest in the Councils. Let him see that the money paid out to the Councils is used as it should be used and not merely squandered.

Again, he should also see to it that the powers given him by this House are properly used. I cannot see why a man charged with the responsibility of the State should merely be satisfied with merely sending out messengers to see what is happening and then be satisfied with whatever report is given him.

I am aware that he may attempt to exonerate himself by the complaint that in Ogoja area the roads are bad and so he is afraid to go there. But as a member of the Executive he should go and try to see for himself what it is like and also have the pinch the other Members who come to the House here always feel.

Mr S. N. Alo (Abakaliki Division): Mr Chairman, I rise to make observations under Head 449. It has often been repeated in this House that it is the wish of the people in some areas that Secretaries who have been quite long in the areas should be transferred to other Divisions. This will bring a change in the way some Councils waste money. I say this because in some Council areas, Secretaries and Chairmen of Councils at times divide contracts up to a maximum of £49 knowing too well that contracts of £50 will go to Tenders Board as provided by Law.

I will also suggest that, since the original Local Government Law has received many amendments, the Minister may make it possible to compile these amendments into a book in order to make it possible for various councils to understand changes in the Law. Mr Chairman, I wish the Minister to take note and consider these few observations.

Mr K. J. N. Okpokam (Ikom Division): Mr Chairman, I just want to say something about some observations made in this House. One is that complaints brought up should be investigated by the Minister of Local Government regarding the staff of the Councils. I do not believe that there are several things left

[MR OKPOKAM]

undone but he has not gone into matters concerning the staff, beginning from Secretaries to Examiners of Accounts. The Examiners of Accounts should go carefully into the accounts of Local Government Councils and should see that any money sent to Local Councils is not missing. Members of the Audit Department tour every year to examine all the accounts of Councils and the Minister should exert his powers over the Local Councils. I think this is a very clear remark made out of sincerity. It is unfair and I do not criticise people unscrupulously. The work of the Minister of Local Government must be accepted as altogether fair. It is sufficient to ask the Minister to tour for the examination of the work of many councils.

Mr P. A. Onwe (Abakaliki Division): Mr Chairman, I am interested to speak on this Head.

Mr Chairman, I wish to say that several amendments have been brought to this House and I am one of those who say that we do not stop only with these amendments but implement them also. I agree that the Ministry of Local Government is working very hard. I also agree that many councils in the Region have been doing their best, but those councils in the areas so backward as mine cannot boast of doing anything at all. I think we require extra attention from the Ministry. The fact is that when the Government makes available grants to the councils, I think it is the sacred duty of the Ministry to guard against any wrong use of those grants. It is public money. Several times we brought complaints of how money was being used in the Abakaliki Council. It was then a County Council. When the County Council was abolished the executives of the County Council whom we complained against were all shifted into one District Council. As a result, the same thing that happened in the County Council is now taking place in the District Council and all attempts to get the Minister to transfer some of them to other areas have failed. The fact is that, at the moment, Ishielu District Council is not an institution for which it is meant. It is being turned into a political party. They do not even mind the Minister. I have seen one or two cases where the Minister made a ruling and they refused to take it—and the Minister surrendered.

There is a case of a clerk referred to by the hon. Member from Onitsha yesterday who has served the Council for twenty-five years. He has a family of eighteen, and during the abolition of the County Councils he was dismissed without notice just because he failed to take sides with an opposing camp who wanted to wreck everything and everybody who had the gut to criticise them. Even the Government has earned a vote of censure from this council. The Secretary is never in the office except on the meeting day. He goes on with the Chairman campaigning everyday. And that brings me back to report a case where the Ministry of Local Government is handling the affairs of chiefs and natural rulers—whether it is the responsibility of this Ministry to appoint and recognise Chiefs.

The Chairman: Order! Order!

And it being 11.45 o'clock a.m., the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress and ask leave to sit again.

(Mr Deputy Speaker resumed the Chair)

Committee report Progress: To sit again on Monday, 15th December, 1958.

(2) The Customary Courts (Amendment) Bill—Second Reading. *Further deferred until Monday, 15th December, 1958.*

ADJOURNMENT

The Minister of Production (Dr M. I. Okpara): Mr Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Monday, the 15th of December at 10 a.m.

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

Question proposed.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

Radio Masts and Roads in Calabar

Rev. O. Efiang, C.B.E. (Calabar Division): Mr Speaker, Sir, I just want to make this observation. The Shell Company erected two radio masts near Odukpani road in Calabar. This has proved very dangerous to aircrafts entering Calabar to the extent that the W.A.A.C. suspended air services for some time there.

A reputable organisation like the Calabar Chamber of Commerce sent a telegram to enquire from the Director of Civil Aviation why such party erected these radio masts, but no reply was received. Then a reminder was sent and there was no reply. We are experiencing this growing discourtesy by constituted bodies to the electorate. No answer whatever was received, and so we feel that the lives of the people in this Region are in danger. We realise that this is a function of the Federal Government, but we feel that this could be appropriately handled by the Eastern Regional Government.

Another thing is that we are not only experiencing inconvenience from the Director of Civil Aviation, but also receiving inconvenience from the Local Government Councils. Roads are very, very bad in our area. We wrote to the Urban District Council and no answer was received. Therefore, we feel that our voice could be heard if we make representation here so that the appropriate quarters should take note and act accordingly.

Mr Eyo Ita (Calabar Division): Mr Speaker, I beg to support the Rev. Efiang in his statement about the obstruction in the Airport at Calabar, by the Shell Company putting up radio masts. It is retarding economic progress in Calabar and making it inconvenient for everybody including the members of Government who might want to travel by air to Calabar. Complaints were made by the community and members of the Chamber of Commerce; telegrams and letters were sent, but no response was received. We now appeal to the Government of the Eastern Region, even though it is not its responsibility, to take the necessary steps to help us out of this difficulty.

The Minister of Works (Mr O. U. Afiah): This is the first time this matter has been brought to my notice and I give Members the assurance that the matter will be investigated.

Question put and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at ten minutes to twelve o'clock noon.

EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Monday, 15th December, 1958

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

PRAYERS

(Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

PAPERS

Mr Deputy Speaker: During the present Meeting some Papers were circulated to all Members. These Papers are deemed to have been laid upon the Table and will be entered upon the Votes and Proceedings of today. They are:—

- (1) Eastern House of Assembly Debates, Official Report, Second Session, Third Meeting, 22nd August, 1958.
- (2) Legislators of Eastern Nigeria, 1958.
- (3) Eastern House of Assembly Debates, Official Report, First Session, Third Meeting, 13th to 18th February, 1958.
- (4) Annual Report: Secondary Industries, 1957-58.

Presented

The Third Annual Report of the Eastern Regional Marketing Board, 1st January, 1957 to 31st December, 1957. (*The Minister of Production*).

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

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

U.P.E. Modification

204. **Dr A. N. Obonna** asked the Minister of Education, how many children have left school in each Division as a result of the U.P.E. modification, and how many teachers have lost their appointments in each Division following this modification.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Education (Mr L. O. Uzoigwe): I am directed to answer as follows: The number of teachers in the Region who became redundant as a result of the modification to the U.P.E. Scheme was 2,495. This figure is based on returns submitted by the School Managers. On the assumption that there were forty children per class, it can be said that about 99,800 children left school as a result of the modification.

It is regretted that it is not possible to supply the figures by Divisions. The figures quoted

are based on returns submitted by the Voluntary Agencies who do not provide them on a divisional basis. The only way to obtain figures on a divisional basis would be to ask the Voluntary Agencies to break down the figures submitted by them. This would be a monumental task which I do not feel justified in asking the Voluntary Agencies to undertake on our behalf. It might involve the Voluntary Agencies in checking as many as 30,000 forms.

Mr J. A. Agba: I will like to ask the Minister of Education whether they have not had Education Officers in each Division to supply these figures?

The Minister of Education: There are Provincial Education Officers not Divisional.

Teacher Training Institutions

217. **Mr S. T. Akpan** asked the Minister of Education, whether, in view of the indirect discriminatory attitude of Missions to women teachers seeking admission into their Training Institutions, the Government will not consider the establishment of Women's Training Colleges in each of the former Provincial areas or, alternatively, consider granting financial aid to District Councils or Groups of District Councils prepared to provide such Colleges for women.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Education (Mr L. O. Uzoigwe): I am directed to answer as follows: I am not aware of any discrimination by Missions. On the contrary training of women teachers has been stepped up. 27.63 per cent of the Training Colleges are for women as the following figures will show:—

	Male	Female	Total
Higher Elementary Colleges ..	38	18	56
Elementary Teachers Colleges ..	72	24	96

The establishment of more Government Training Colleges is not an economic proposition at this time even if it was considered desirable.

In implementing the policy of the Sessional Paper No. 2 of 1954, Government has set out to help create on a 50/50 basis no less than eleven Local Government Training Colleges. These could have been for men or women.

The Voluntary Agencies and Local Government Councils are the best judges of what they require.

Ifuho Women's Technical Centre

218. **Mr S. T. Akpan** asked the Minister of Education, whether Government would consider making grants-in-aid available to the Ifuho Women's Technical Centre to enable it develop and operate as a recognised Centre.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Education (Mr L. O. Uzoigwe): I am informed that on the premises of the Holy Child Training College, Ifuno, there are facilities for post primary girls to do a two-year course in Needlework, bakery and weaving. The products are sold and with the profits leavers are supplied with the tools of their trade. This is presumably the Centre referred to by the Questioner.

Last year Government paid £180, from the Domestic Science vote, towards the salary of an Instructor and £90 towards equipment. It is hoped, if funds allow, to assist the Centre again this year. However, it is not at present Government's policy to make grants-in-aid to such Centres. Grants-in-aid are made for Primary and Secondary Education, and for Teacher Training Colleges.

Exodus of Teachers from the East to the North

220. **Mr D. E. Akilo** asked the Minister of Education, whether he is aware of the exodus of teachers from the Eastern Region to the North; if so, what is the cause and what steps is the Minister taking to remedy the situation bearing in mind that such exodus lowers the efficiency and standard of education in this Region.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Education (Mr L. O. Uzoigwe): I am directed to answer as follows: I am aware that teachers do from time to time leave the Eastern Region for service in the Northern Region, but the numbers involved are so few that it does not present any problem at the moment.

Executive Post: Government Technical Institute and Trade Centre

221. **Mr D. E. Akilo** asked the Minister of Education how many Africans (giving names) have been promoted to the Executive post in the Government Technical Institute and Trade Centre, Eastern Region since its establishment.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Education (Mr L. O. Uzoigwe): I am directed to answer as follows: There are no Executive Grade duty posts in the establishment of the Technical Institute and Trade Centre, Enugu. The answer therefore is Nil.

If, however, a post of authority is intended by the Questioner, the answer is one, namely, Mr Okezie promoted to the post of Vice-Principal.

Niger Land Transfer Agreements

222. **Mr R. O. Ukuta, M.B.E.** asked the Minister of Town Planning, who were the signatories to the following Niger Land Agreements:—

Agreement No. 38, granted by Chiefs and people of Ogrugru to the Royal Niger Company Chartered and Limited on the 20th June, 1896.

Agreement No. 51, granted by Chiefs and people of Ojo on the 20th June, 1896.

Agreement No. 52, granted by Chiefs and people of Iga on the 20th June, 1896.

The Minister of Town Planning: Sir, the signatories to the agreements were as follows:—

AGREEMENTS

Agreement No. 38 granted by Chiefs and people of Ogrugru to the Royal Niger Company Chartered and Limited on the 20th June, 1896

SIGNATORIES

Vendors

Purchasers

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| (1) Okwella | Frederick Harry Ott, |
| (2) Eguma | for and on behalf of |
| (3) Osiko | the Company. |
| (4) Gbada Akor | |
| (5) Gbada | |
| (6) Monkoro | |
| (7) Okuteno | |
| (8) Adjodo | |
| (9) Ifida Ajuma | |

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

207

[*Oral Answers*]

15 DECEMBER 1958

[*Oral Answers*]

208

AGREEMENT

SIGNATORIES

	SIGNATORIES	
	<i>Vendors</i>	<i>Purchasers</i>
Agreement No. 51, granted by Chiefs and people on the 20th of June, 1896.	(1) Wonkoro (2) Gbaje Oke (3) Enedah (4) Ifida	Frederick Harry Ott, for and on behalf of the Company.
Agreement No. 52, granted by Chiefs and people of Iga on the 20th June, 1896.	(1) Agbata (2) Atshioba (3) Osakwa (4) Ejogar	Frederick Harry Ott, for and on behalf of the Company.

Loans to Co-operative Societies

225. **Mr R. O. Ukuta, M.B.E.** asked the Minister of Commerce, what is the amount of loans granted to different Co-operative Societies in each of the Divisions since April, 1958 to date, particularly the Rice Farmers' Societies.

is the main source through which funds flow to Co-operative Societies in the Region has granted loans to various Co-operative Societies in the Region.

The Minister of Commerce: The Regional Co-operative Bank of Eastern Nigeria which

The details of loans granted to the various Co-operative Societies from 1-4-58 to 30-11-58 by the Regional Co-operative Bank are as follows:—

<i>Division</i>	<i>Society</i>	<i>Amount</i>
ONITSHA	Old Pauline Co-op. Housing Society	3,500
	Igbariam Farmers Co-operative Society	250
	Nando Farmers Co-operative Society	100
	Aguleri Farmers Co-operative Society	100
NSUKKA	Adani Rice Farmers Co-operative Society	500
ABAKALIKI	Abakaliki Co-operative Rice Marketing Society	2,500
AFIKPO	Igbo Rice Farmers Co-operative Society	50
OGONI	Okwali Co-operative Thrift and Credit Society	160
ABA	Eastern Nigeria Co-operative Exporters	1,050
	Owerri Provincial Co-operative Bank	3,500
PORT HARCOURT	Port Harcourt Co-operative Tailoring Society	168
UYO	Calabar Provincial Co-operative Bank	7,500

Missing Employee of the Co-operative Department

226. **Mr D. E. Akilo** asked the Minister of Commerce, whether he is aware that one Benedict Magbo of Umana in Udi Division, an employee of the Co-operative Department, was reported missing since July this year; if so, how far has the police investigation gone and what steps is the Department taking to safeguard the interests of the family of Mr Magbo.

The Minister of Commerce: Mr Magbo has never been an employee of the Co-operative Department of my Ministry. He was an Auditor employed by the Co-operative Union of Eastern Nigeria Limited. This is a Corporate Body registered under the Companies Ordinance and operating under the Eastern Region Co-operative Law like any other Co-operative Society in the Region. It is therefore a separate entity from the Co-operative Department of my Ministry.

My information is that Mr Magbo was last seen at the Co-operative Union Office at Aba on the 5th of August. On that day he obtained a salary advance of £10 on submission of an itinerary for an inspection tour of parts of Bende Division. According to this itinerary the tour began on the 1st and was to end on the 31st of August. When Mr Magbo did not return at the end of his tour a report was made to the police. Futhermore, the Co-operative Union of Eastern Nigeria made exhaustive enquiries to locate him but efforts so far have proved unsuccessful.

Mr Magbo is unmarried and has no family but his relatives have been kept fully informed of the progress of police investigations.

Tarring of Ediba-Obubra Road

227. **Mr J. W. E. Anaba** asked the Minister of Transport, when and how soon will the tarring of Ediba-Obubra Road recommence.

The Minister of Transport: The contract to tar the Obubra-Ediba Road was given to Nigerian Engineering and Manufacturing Company, Limited on the 22nd of December, 1956. But due to very slow rate of progress the contract was determined on the 1st of May, 1958, by which time approximately seven miles of road had been tarred. Consideration will be given to the inclusion of this project in the 1959-60 Estimates as soon as the Ministry of Transport's allocation of capital funds for next financial year is known.

Rural Water Supply

242. **Mr R. O. Ukuta, M.B.E.** asked the Minister of Works, whether it is a fact that in pursuance of Government policy the defunct Nsukka County Council paid over £5,000 as its share of the estimated cost of providing boreholes for rural water supply at Eha Alumona, Ovoko and Ohodo towns in Nsukka Division; if so, what is holding up the construction of these boreholes.

The Minister of Works: Yes, Sir. The Nsukka County Council did pay £5,000 as the community's share for the three boreholes mentioned. There have been many reasons for the delay in starting pumped and piped schemes in the Region in general and for these

three boreholes in particular. The two most important have been firstly the prolonged negotiations with the Secretary of State to alter the rule which stipulated that expenditure on pumped and piped supplies should not exceed 10s per head of the community which were to benefit from the scheme, to one whereby the sum should not exceed 10s per head of the population of the District Council concerned. This was a very necessary amendment as pumped and piped schemes cost on an average 25s per head of the immediate population to be served, and if C.D. & W. funds were to be limited as formerly laid down, either none could be constructed at all, or the community concerned would have to pay more than half the cost of the scheme. I am happy to inform the hon. Member that the Secretary of State has recently agreed to this amendment.

The other delay is that at the moment there is only one drilling company in the Eastern Region, and in accordance with the terms of the C.D. & W. Scheme, negotiated contracts with a single firm are not permitted without the Secretary of State's express approval, which approval has not been forthcoming in spite of this Government's requests to this effect.

Government has anticipated an unfavourable reply and all the pumped and piped schemes which are set out at Appendix "B" of the Eastern Region Official Document No. 5, 1958 which I laid on the Table of the House on Wednesday, the 10th are in the process of being surveyed, and it is hoped that by the middle of next month, the necessary documents to allow for competitive tendering by drilling companies will be in the hands of the Crown Agents. In the meantime, all the drilling firms who are likely to be interested in these projects, have been notified of this forthcoming tender, so that they can make preliminary arrangements now with a view to starting work early next financial year and completing all the projects listed at Appendix "B" of the Official Document by 1/10/60, at the latest.

Mr Ukuta, M.B.E. Does the Minister think that the Nsukka people will appreciate this lengthy reply?

The Minister of Commerce: I think they will.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

The House of Chiefs

The Premier (Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe): Mr Speaker, hon. Members will, I know, want to know what plans Government has for the setting up of a House of Chiefs. I am glad to make this Statement in order to give them full information.

I will first read the paragraph in the Report by the Resumed Nigeria Constitutional Conference on this subject, Paragraph 61 reads as follows:—

“The 1957 Conference agreed to recommend (paragraph 23 of Cmnd. 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. They have agreed that there shall be seventeen First-class Chiefs, as set out in Annex IV, of whom eight are traditional Paramount Rulers, and the remaining nine represent the nine provinces proposed by the Eastern Regional Government for the Region. The Second-class Chiefs are to be selected by and from among the Clan Heads, Village Group Heads and Village Heads to represent all Divisions of the Region according to their population.

The Conference agreed to recommend that a House of Chiefs should be established in the Eastern Region with a total membership of not more than eighty, consisting of seventeen First-class Chiefs, fifty-eight Second-class Chiefs and five Special Members. The Conference took note of an undertaking by the Government of the Eastern Region to establish the House of Chiefs either immediately before or after the Budget Session in the Spring of 1959”.

The Government of the Eastern Region has accepted this recommendation of the Conference.

The seventeen First-class Chiefs of the Eastern Region are:—

1. Eze Aro of Arochuku.
2. Amayanabo of Bonny.
3. Obong of Calabar.
4. Amayanabo of Kalabari.
5. Amayanabo of Nembe.
6. Obi of Oguta.
7. Obi of Onitsha.
8. Amayanabo of Opobo.
9. Representative of Aba-Bende Province.
10. Representative of Ahoada Province.
11. Representative of Annang Province.
12. Representative of Awgu-Nsukka-Udi Province.
13. Representative of Calabar Province.
14. Representative of Ogoja Province.
15. Representative of Onitsha Province.
16. Representative of Owerri Province.
17. Representative of Rivers Province.

Hon. Members will note that the first eight of these seventeen First-class Chiefs are what may be described as “natural paramount Chiefs”. The remaining nine First-class Chiefs will be appointed by the Governor in Council. In the event of dispute as to the qualifications of any of them, the provisions of the Recognition of Chiefs Law will apply.

With the seventeen First-class Chiefs there are to be fifty-eight Second-class Chiefs to be Members of the House of Chiefs. Hon. Members will note that it has been agreed that they are “to be selected by and from among the Clan Heads, Village Group Heads and Village Heads to represent all the Divisions of the Region according to their population”. Government proposes to arrange for this process of selection to be carried out in the following manner. Every village ward which has representation on a Local Council will be invited to choose a person who is either a traditional Chief, or who is a Chief in the sense that he has been selected to speak for them on matters of tradition and custom. In most cases the choice, at this level of the smallest village unit, will, it is hoped, be by popular acclaim and undisputed. In the event of a dispute it shall be resolved by the Minister concerned.

The Fourth-class Chiefs or Village Heads for the Local Council area will then meet together and select from among their number

Chiefs to go forward from the Local Council Wards to the meeting of Chiefs in the District Council area, who will be known as Third-class Chiefs. These Third-class Chiefs or Village Group Heads will then meet together and elect from amongst themselves from the District Council Wards the Second-class Chiefs or Clan Heads. The latter will then meet at the Divisional level to select by secret ballot from among themselves the Second-class Chiefs who will become Members of the House of Chiefs for their Division, in accordance with the formula agreed with the Opposition on the classification of Chiefs. That is, "one per Division with an additional representative for a population of 250,000 or over, and a further representative for a population of 400,000 or over". Government proposes that the system used for election to the Local and District Councils should be employed in translating the above policy into action.

The procedure I have described above is, as I think hon. Members will agree, as clear and simple and fair a procedure as can be devised. It is the intention of Government to start the process early in the New Year and for the procedure of selection to be so arranged that the House of Chiefs can be constituted in time to hold its first meeting in this House and sit immediately after the rising of this House at the conclusion of the Budget Session.

I should like to add, in conclusion, that English will be the medium of expression in the House of Chiefs; but lack of knowledge of English will not constitute any bar to qualification and entry to the House of Chiefs.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Sittings of the House

The Minister of Production (Dr M. I. Okpara): Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move the first Motion standing in my name: That the Resolution of this House relating to the Hours of sitting and bearing date the 10th December, 1958, be revoked.

With your permission, Sir, may I also move the second one which has bearing to the first one: That pursuant to paragraph (8) of Standing Order No. 4 the proceedings on the

business in Today's Order Paper be exempted from the provisions of paragraph 3 of Standing Order No. 4—Sittings of the House.

These two Motions, Sir, are designed to conclude the business of this sitting of the House today and it is proposed that we should sit from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. with a couple of hours break and resume at 3 p.m. and break again at 6 p.m. returning at 9 p.m. if the business is not concluded and go on until the whole business is concluded.

Sir, I beg to move.

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

Mr Deputy Speaker: We will take the Motion one by one.

Motion No. 1—Hours of sitting of the House.

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That the Resolution of the House relating to the Hours of sitting and bearing date the 10th December, 1958, be revoked.

Mr Deputy Speaker: Motion No. 2—Sittings of the House.

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That pursuant to paragraph (8) of Standing Order No. 4, the proceedings on the business in Today's Order Paper be exempted from the provisions of paragraph 3 of Standing Order No. 4—Sittings of the House.

Adjournment Sine Die

The Minister of Production (Dr M. I. Okpara): Mr Speaker, I beg to move, That at its rising Today, this House do adjourn *sine die*.

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

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That at its rising Today this House do adjourn *sine die*.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(1) The 1958-59 Eastern Region Supplementary Appropriation Bill

(Second Allotted Day)

Considered in Committee of Supply (Progress 13th December).

(In the Committee)

**HEAD 449—MINISTRY OF
LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

Question again proposed: That a sum not exceeding £4,790 for Head 449—Ministry of Local Government—stand part of the First Schedule.

Mr P. A. Onwe (Abakaliki Division): Mr Chairman, last Saturday I was saying that I was wondering whether the policy of the Ministry of Local Government and that of the Minister of State responsible for the Appointment and Recognition of Chiefs and Customary Courts did not conflict, in the sense that I had the information that in certain Council areas in Abakaliki, Councillors have been permitted through a circular from the Ministry of Local Government to appoint chiefs and natural rulers. This they did from among themselves. This has happened in two District Councils in my area. It would be good, therefore, if the Ministers concerned could enlighten us, or the Government for that matter, could make a categorical statement to define the functions of these two Ministries because it is causing a lot of trouble in the rural areas. Even though the Jones Report has it that in certain areas like Abakaliki and Ogoja Divisions there are nothing like chiefs, yet the people have been existing. Before the advent of the white man we had been governing ourselves on the basis of our own tradition, and this tradition has been handed down from time to the present day. So I do not think it would be fair for ruling families to be robbed of their right just because certain people have the privilege of becoming councillors and or chairmen of councils. I would like a thorough investigation to be made into this state of affairs and a definite statement made by Government.

Another point about the Ministry of Local Government which I would like to raise is the question of handling the finances of the Councils. I am not saying, Sir, that all the Councils in the Region are bad. What I am saying is that some Councils, especially Councils in backward areas like our own place, have been left to be loose. I am therefore inviting the attention of the Ministry concerned to give adequate supervision to Councils in Abakaliki Division. For instance, when grants are made by the Government, these grants are supposed to be well used, to be used to the advantage of the people. What we have

in our area is that usually the Chairman and the Secretary constitute the Council. They handle the affairs of the Council in their interest alone. There are cases where contracts have been awarded and without completing the work the whole money was paid out. This is true of our U.P.E. schools.

I will be able to point out such schools and buildings the work of which was not completed and the money was paid out. The Local Government Commissioner is aware of this, and he has made several attempts to stop it. This was the time when the Councils were left to handle contracts, but the funny part of it is that since the Tenders Boards were created these Councils ceased entirely from publishing or giving out any work through the Tenders Board. What they do is to give out the work piecemeal, so that a project that may cost £2,000 to £3,000 will be cut into pieces and given out till the whole work is completed. I would also like to say, Sir, that it is unfortunate that where costs of buildings have been estimated, sent to the Ministry of Local Government for approval, and the work completed, certain individuals when transferred to certain council areas, have considered themselves too superior to live in these houses—they want senior service quarters. I wonder whether a subsequent estimate should in that case be sent to the Ministry of Local Government for approval so as to erect buildings which will suit these people. All these the Minister should look into including the fact that the Ishielu District Council offices are being used for the filling of sweepstakes, football pools, etc., because nobody is to be found there except the Treasurer. The Secretary is never in the office since he goes about playing politics.

My last point, Mr Speaker, is the distribution of amenities. I am saying that there is a lot of discrimination in the way amenities are being distributed. If you go to my own Division you will see that in some District Council areas amenities are centred in a place, without considering the other areas. The amenities are always provided for the few instead of making it possible for as many people as possible to enjoy the things, and in this case the Minister will do well to look into it, and of course provision should be made whereby the Local Government Councils should be given certain responsibilities. There was nearly trouble in Abakaliki because of rates this year,

and the reason was because the people had repeatedly spoken their minds in the way rates were being used. Each council area wants the money collected from such area to be used for that particular area. Unless this is looked into amenities cannot be said to be well distributed.

Mr S. G. Ikoju (Enyong Division): Mr Chairman, while I acknowledge the fact that the Ministry of Local Government is a particularly complex Ministry to handle, I hope the Minister of Local Government will not mind my drawing his attention to one or two salient matters. I would like to know exactly what is happening as regards the appointment of Chiefs and Natural Rulers in Rural District Councils. It seems to me that the new Instruments constituting these District Councils have been got up without provisions being made for traditional rulers, at least in some Councils. I know that provisions have been made in some councils, but there are many in which no provisions have yet been made. We would like to know, at least, which Chiefs are to sit on these councils. It would help to restore an unsettled atmosphere in these rural districts. The present situation of postponing these appointments and leaving the whole thing in the air is causing a good deal of uncertainty in the rural areas. The Ibiono and Itu-Itam District Councils provide good examples. The District Officer who was there at Itu round about May, 1957, had actually drawn up the total which should sit on these two Councils; but since then no steps have been taken and, in fact, there is an unconfirmed rumour that these two areas did not have these natural rulers.

I would like, Sir, to draw the attention of the Minister of Local Government to something which seems rather an explosive but I hope it is not going to be an explosive this time.

The next question is that of having natural rulers sitting in the Calabar Urban District Council. I would like to make it known to Government that they will not be helping to create a settled atmosphere in the Region if they take any steps which suggest that they are out to flout established tradition and custom of the people of this Region. There was the case of the Obong of Calabar, who was appointed the first President. In the first

instance, Sir, it was moved to have three people to rotate as the President for the Calabar Urban District Council. But a further attack was made on the Obong of Calabar by reducing him to the third. The argument then was that he is *primus inter pares*, that is, first amongst equals; but now he is last amongst equals. I would appeal to the Minister of Local Government to give this matter a second thought in the interest of peace in this Region and in the interest of the tradition of our people.

I would also like to draw attention to the findings of the Jones Commission, which was set up by the Government. I am not going into details about the findings of the Commission, but I believe the Minister knows what these findings are and should allow himself to be guided by these findings.

Another side of the problem which would arise is in regard to the compilation of the Voters Register. I do not know if this is the problem everywhere in the Region. In certain areas, the ethnic relationships of the people have been used as the basis of carving out wards for District Councils. A good example is Ibiono. There you have people of the same group even though they live in villages which are not geographically regarded as a ward or unit in election into this District Council. Therefore, if we are going to use the Federal register as register for Local Government election, well it becomes obvious that this principle of ethnic relationship has got to be abandoned in favour of geographical principle in coming out of warfare of some of these councils. A very good example is the Anambra; the wards are not geographical at all. They are based entirely on the age groups.

In conclusion, Sir, I would like to appeal to the Minister to help the Region by seeing to it that the two new volumes are produced. The first volume should contain the principal law relating to Local Government in the Region plus all the amendments which have been made to it. It is most inconvenient, Sir, to look up *Gazettes*, 1955, 1956, 1957 in search of these amendments. I think it will be a good idea if the principal law and all the amending laws making the legal document were compiled into one volume. The second volume should

[MR IKOKU]

contain all the Eastern Region Legal Notices relating to Local Government in the Region so that we would have two very handy volumes which would be of use not only to the Minister and hon. Members but to the District Officers and staff of Local Government who want to use them.

Mr Eyo Ita (Calabar Division): Supporting the point made by the last speaker, the hon. S. G. Ikoku, I want to say that the matter regarding the position of the Obong of Calabar greatly concerns my people. There should be no doubt about the position of the Obong in our Local Government Council. The tradition of the people of the community is there. It should guide the hon. Minister of Local Government. The position of the Obong is further clarified by the latest provision of our Constitution. The hon. the Minister of Local Government should take note and do the right thing in this matter.

Another important matter to which I have already drawn the attention of the Minister of Local Government in an adjournment debate is that of Water Rate under which the people of Calabar are literally groaning because it has become utterly intolerable. This rate is based on houses owned by the rate-payers, and it is known that even poor women have been compelled to pay as much as £40 to £60 a year. Even schools and colleges are known to pay not less than £120 annually for this rate though there is no provision in grants-in-aid to enable school proprietors to meet such onerous demand, and income from rents in Calabar is so low that this rate is discouraging citizens from building houses for themselves and their families. Following my last speech on this issue I was amazed to learn from the Minister of Local Government that the appeals made from the Local Council and the people of Calabar for redress in this matter had not come to his notice. I cannot understand how such a vital matter should take so long to come to the notice of the Minister. I am emphasising once more that this rate is intolerable and that my people are groaning bitterly under it. The Minister should take immediate steps to bring about redress.

Question, That the sum of £4,790 for Head 449—Ministry of Local Government—stand part of the First Schedule, put and agreed to.

HEAD 452—PRODUCE INSPECTION SERVICE

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £650 for Head 452—Produce Inspection Service—stand part of the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

HEAD 453—MINISTRY OF TOWN PLANNING

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £100 for Head 453—Ministry of Town Planning—stand part of the First Schedule.

Mr Ikoku: Mr Chairman, Sir, this Ministry has been making certain announcements which strike us as quite important. A short while ago the Minister visited the University site at Nsukka and he made an announcement to the effect that it was Government policy that the whole of that area should be planned as a model township. I think I am correct in my reference.

We would like to know the total area involved under this new planning scheme, and we would like to know also who are the people to benefit by this new model township which is going to be set up in that area. We would also like to know what is going to happen to the landlords whose lands are affected—whether they are going to be paid compensation—and if so, how much?

The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole): Mr Chairman, the hon. Member has referred to the area to be planned for the University site. If he looks up the *Gazette*, he will find the area clearly set out there. The area to be planned by the Nsukka Planning Authority is set out in the *Gazette*. Nobody's land is going to be touched at all. The Planning Authority is concerned with planning of the area for the use of the landowners. All that we are concerned with is to have a model site surrounding the University site, and which will not disturb the village site. As far as possible, nobody's property would be affected.

Mr R. O. Ukuta, M.B.E. (Nsukka Division): Mr Chairman, I shall be grateful if you warn the Leader of the Opposition not to meddle with the affairs of Nsukka. Please tell him not to bring his confusion to Nsukka. He does not represent Nsukka. We the representatives of Nsukka can look after ourselves.

The Premier: Mr Chairman, I am asking for your permission to speak to this House because although the Leader of Opposition has put the question to the Minister of Town Planning as nicely as possible, I would like to take this opportunity now to name once and for all, all the sordid lies that have been paraded by certain Members of the Opposition to the effect that the land intended for the site of the University of Nigeria, or the land intended for town planning, belongs to me. I have nothing to do with it.

Last week, I think on Saturday, Mr Achara mentioned that the land belongs to me and I corrected him at once and told him that he dare not say it outside this House because it is definitely scandalous. Without trying to embarrass you, Mr Chairman, you hail from Nsukka Division and there are other hon. Members from the Nsukka Division in this House and they know that the land concerned belongs to the people of Oba or other villages there, and that this land is not owned by any particular individual. The Minister of Town Planning will bear me out that efforts are being made by the Government to meet the land owners direct and negotiate for this land. All along, these rumours have persisted and I feel that this is an opportunity to make it quite clear that if Members of the Opposition Party should make such statements outside the House, I shall be compelled to defend my reputation.

Question, That the sum of £100 for Head 453—Ministry of Town Planning—stand part of the First Schedule, put and agreed to.

HEAD 454—LAND

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £13,160 for Head 454—Land—stand part of the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

HEAD 455—SURVEY

Question proposed: That a sum not exceeding £3,420 for Head 455—Survey—stand part of the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

HEAD 456—MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £32,700 for Head 456—Ministry of Transport—stand part of the First Schedule.

Mr Ukuta, M.B.E.: Though I know that the Minister will say that the tarring of the 9th Mile corner is the responsibility of the Federal Government, as this tarring started from somewhere in the Northern Region, only God knows the time it will reach 9th Mile corner. I am soliciting that the Minister of Transport should bring pressure to bear on the Federal Minister of Works that the tarring should start both ways, because we live close to 9th Mile and passers-by do not know whose responsibility it is. I am pleading that the Minister of Transport should bring pressure to bear on the Federal Minister of Works on the issue.

The Minister of Transport (Mr P. O. Ururuka): Mr Chairman, I am very glad my hon. Friend has just brought up this point and it will be of interest to him to hear that we are really bringing pressure to bear on the Federal Government with regard to this particular road. It will interest him to know that during the time I went along with other Ministers to meet the hon. Premier and the other delegates from the London Conference, I had the opportunity of meeting the Federal Minister of Works particularly in connection with this road and it will be gratifying for him to know that the Minister himself, owing to the arrangements with me, is coming today and on his arrival, it will be our duty to go down this road with a view to making arrangements with the Contractor so that work will be started on this scheme. The Minister himself has agreed to do so. (*Applause*).

Mr M. U. Etuk (Uyo Division): Mr Chairman, I rise to speak on this Head. Early last week I heard what I regarded as a promise from the Minister of Transport about the tarring of the approaches to Etinan-Ekpena Ukpa Bridge. From time to time, we have been asking questions about this road in this House, but nothing has been done so far, and a wrong impression has been created that perhaps just because the Member is on the Opposition side that is why the Government has not considered this question. I feel it is a wrong impression because, although we stand elections on Party platforms, I regard it that when Government is formed it is supposed to deal fairly with all parts of the Region because we all do pay taxes. The Opposition is really essential if the Government is to run well.

The Minister of Production (Dr M. I. Okpara): Constructive Opposition!

Mr Etuk: To my understanding, the work of the Opposition is to help the Government to run well and it will be wrong if the Opposition Member is penalised because he is on the Opposition. I would like the Minister of Transport to erase this erroneous impression and sympathise with that particular part of the Region in getting this road and the approaches to the road tarred.

Mr K. Kiri (Degema Division): Mr Chairman, you know that for a long time I have been speaking on this subject. Sometimes we are informed that the subject is under the Federal Minister of Transport and that these waters are a Federal Territory. If this answer was true I would say that this particular Ministry has very little work or possibly nothing to do for the present Rivers Province. I am sure that the Minister is aware that the Federal Minister of Transport would have no time to think about this area. After all, the Ministers in this Region are those that see this area and they know the problems there. Some of them find it uneasy to visit these places because of lack of vessels or the inconvenience of crossing from the mainland to some of the big towns. I have discussed the matter with some of the Ministers and each time they would complain about this question of tides, the question of roads and all the rest of it. I am appealing to them that now that the Brass and Degema Divisions are constituted into a Province, due attention should be given to this question because more use will have to be made of the vessels and I think the Ministers will find it much more convenient during their tours to visit the various areas.

A bridge connecting Okrika to the Mainland will be of great need now that we have to go to either Yenagoa or Degema for our Provincial matters.

Mr H. U. Akpabio (Uyo Division): Mr Chairman, I want to draw the attention of the Minister of Transport to the question of two important roads in Eket Division. In the first place Eket-Oron Road was placed by the former Minister of Transport on the first list and I found that the money was available in the Estimates. What is most surprising is that all the labourers were removed and laid off

and weeds covered both sides of the road. If someone drives along the road he will not be able to see through both sides of the road. The road is very short—only about 10 miles to Abak. I would like it if these roads were tarred as soon as possible, especially the one leading from Uyo to Abak which is only ten miles. I hope the Minister will take note of this.

Chief S. J. Amachree (Degema Division): Mr Chairman, the allocation for Degema-Port Harcourt Road has been reduced. I remind the Premier that many times he came to this Division the general demand of the people was construction of a road between Degema and Port Harcourt. This figure has been a recurring decimal in the Estimates and we wish it has the last dot to the figure. I ask the Minister concerned to give me the assurance that something would be done this year so that I may so inform the people. What I mean by this year is this financial year. It will be a sort of encouragement. There are people on the other side of the place who are connected by water. I am speaking particularly to the Premier, Sir. I know the Premier understands me better than anybody else. I am only asking the Premier or the Minister concerned to give the assurance. It is £14,000—of course that is not for the whole construction of the road. I would like to crave the indulgence of the Premier and the Minister concerned that these roads be constructed. Let them be constructed during this financial year.

Mr P. N. Okeke (Onitsha Division): May I remind the Minister of Transport about the Abagana-Aguleri Road. We are happy that the road from Onitsha to Port Harcourt has been tarred but Onitsha Division is thick in population. This matter was raised last year when I saw it in the Appendix to the Estimates where that road was shown. I hope the present Minister of Transport will not change very soon so that he could fulfill the promise already made to tar the road. It will be seen that the area has a lot of natural resources to be exploited if the road were tarred.

You will see that the lives of these people are related to that of the Northern Region. There are plenty of natural resources and plenty of food to be produced in the Region and the main

difficulty is that the people have no means of transport in order to bring the food produced to feed many areas in the Region that cannot produce enough food. So, I am appealing to the Government, now that the Estimates are being prepared, not to forget this item.

Mr D. E. Akilo (Udi Division): Mr Chairman, I wish to ask that something be done for us with regard to the tarring of the road connecting the 9th Mile, Eke-Olo and Nsukka. It is very very essential. In view of the fact that there is a very good swampy area for the cultivation of rice around the Do River, Government will find this road most essential. It is also a very good ground for the cultivation of Sugar cane, and for the purposes of the economy of this Region, Government will never regret it if this all-important road is tarred from the Ninth Mile via Olo to Nsukka. It is also the only road which connects the two Divisions and it has been the intention of the District Councils of Nsukka and Udi to have this road tarred. If Government cannot tar it at present, I ask the Government to take the responsibility of maintaining this road as a trunk B road. We do not ask much because in that area there is no road that is now being maintained by the Government, and the District Councils are tired of maintaining this road. It would be welcomed if Government would consider this all-important road which connects the two Divisions.

Thank you Mr Chairman.

Mr S. T. Akpan (Eket Division): Mr Chairman, I wish to register the demand of Eket Division over the tarring of that road. Sir, I would like to say that in this Region the roads which were opened just a few years ago have now been tarred. But the Eket to Oron road has existed for over fifty years and the people of Eket Division have been paying their taxes as every other group of people, and there has been no trouble ever since for Government to say that these people have not been contributing to the general revenue of the Region. We take it that it is a studied attempt by the Government to neglect Eket Division and they have no reason for that. Sir, Eket Division was founded in 1888 and you will see that it is one of the oldest Divisions in this Region, but those new Divisions which have just come

out have received more attention from the Government.

You can clearly see that such treatment is discriminating, Sir. That road is the only link with the Atlantic Ocean, and these very people—most of them from the Treasury Bench—come from the areas where there are no crayfish. Their people come to Eket every day to buy crayfish. Really in the whole of Eastern Region, Eket Division is the only place where there are no good roads. Sir, now that the Estimates are prepared I would like to bring this matter to the notice of the Government. No doubt the Government has been inconsistent as it kept promising and promising that the roads would be tarred, but for five years nothing has been done. I have now used this opportunity to invite the attention of the Government so that the question of improving the roads should receive priority treatment.

Question, That the sum of £32,700 for Head 456—Ministry of Transport—stand part of the First Schedule, put and agreed to.

HEAD 458—ROAD MAINTENANCE

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £25,680 for Head 458—Road Maintenance—stand part of the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

HEAD—460 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £22,900 for Head 460—Community Development—stand part of the First Schedule.

Mr H. U. E. Edelduok (Eket Division): Mr Chairman, Sir, I rise to criticise this Head. I would like to say that as far as this Head is concerned, people who pay tax in the rural areas are not benefited. As happened last year, a good sum of money was voted under this Head but the money was not used. This year it has been revoted. What I am saying is that the Government should make a reasonable sum of money available to this Head, so that people who live in the rural areas might be benefited.

I am appealing to the Government that in the new Estimates up to £1,000 should be made available this year so that rural areas might be developed, and also improve the economy of the Region.

Mr Etuk: Mr Chairman, the last speaker has expressed exactly what I had wanted to say. I have no objection to Government increasing the money voted here. Last year we had about five Bailey Bridges brought into this Region through this Community Development Scheme which enabled most of the roads to be connected from one place to another and therefore helped to speed up communication. I will ask the Minister in charge of this Portfolio to endeavour in his next approach to the Executive Council to get more money for Community Development in the Eastern Region because, as my hon. Friend said, it is the only channel through which the masses who pay tax are at the moment benefited. The more community development services we get, the better for us.

Furthermore, it is not sufficient to have only one training centre. I would suggest that further training centres be opened to enable the people to get the knowledge of trades and the particular work that is required to be done.

Mr Chairman, I strongly support this additional sum.

Mr S. N. Alo (Abakaliki Division): Mr Chairman, the Nkaleke people in Abakaliki Division are trying to build two bridges at Abia and Abonyi. The people want the Minister to assist in the building of these bridges.

Question, That the sum of £22,900 for Head 460—Community Development—stand part of the First Schedule, put and agreed to.

Sitting suspended at 11.33 a.m.

Sitting resumed at 12 noon.

HEAD 462—MINISTRY OF WORKS

Question proposed: That a sum not exceeding £218,900 for Head 462—Ministry of Works—stand part of the First Schedule.

Mr D. E. Akilo (Udi Division): I have to remind this Ministry that a report has been made about the employment of some of the children from the Trade Centre, Enugu in some Departments. Many of these boys that have left there are wandering about without employment and this is very discouraging to the parents who have sent their children to this

Institution. If the Government feels that the Trade Centre is useless, the best thing to do is to wind it up instead of wasting the children's time staying there for four years and when they come out they cannot be given any employment.

In reality, many of these children are better than many of the contractors to whom work is given. Government will benefit much from the children if construction work is given to them because they know the planning; they know how to do everything. But many of the contractors just accumulate the work to themselves and these children are made to starve in the midst of plenty.

I should ask the Minister to investigate why the Government is not able to give employment to these children who have completed their course with certificates of honour from the Trade Centre. It is very discouraging, Mr Chairman, and I hope the Minister will consider the difficulty of these children who are wandering about in the Region and who are supposed to be given employment in this Department.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Mr Ukuta, M.B.E.: Mr Chairman, I think this Ministry is an important Ministry, but the delay in implementing any scheme is worrying the people's minds. I was elected into this House since November, 1951 but this Ministry has never implemented any scheme. If delays occur, how can people get water in their life time? The Minister should endeavour to see that implementation of schemes comes within a short period. If it takes two years to locate bore-holes and two years to implement the schemes, how many years will it take to order more? Sometimes the lame excuse given is that there is no pipe at Port Harcourt, or no engineer to supervise the work, simply to get rid of the genuine demands made by the people.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Mr Alo: Mr Chairman, Sir, it has just been stated that the Abakaliki Urban District Council has a deposit of £2,900 for the expansion of water supply. I request the Minister in charge of Works to speed up and get the pipe and work of the station to start immediately.

This has been causing a lot of trouble in Abakaliki urban area in that people have been paying water rate which they are prepared to discontinue if they are not provided with water.

Mr Agba: Mr Chairman, I have a little to say in connection with the Ministry of Works, that is in connection with the building of Post Offices in Ogoja and Obudu respectively. Early this year, through processes of enquiry, I got to understand that there was an allocation of the revenue for building a Post Office at Ogoja, and then at Obudu, and that these Post Offices were to start simultaneously. Now, I communicated with the Provincial Engineer at Abakaliki and he told me that early in January he received an information from Enugu that the Post Office at Obudu was to be built by direct labour, and he said he had no opportunity of doing it. After that I got no more word about it. At Ogoja, too, it was the same thing. All the staff at Ogoja were of the view, and really had got materials ready for the building of the Post Office at Ogoja and the site also had been earmarked—not only earmarked but really surveyed. Till today nothing has been done in the place.

The so-called Obudu District is being served telegraphically by way of communication only by a Postal Agency, and the Postal Agent in this place has deposited a sum of £50 in order to receive a salary of £2 10s a month.

The Regional Government, you will understand, Sir, is the Agent of the Federal Government. The building of the Post Office so far, I think, has been given as a responsibility to the Regional Government and the Chief Engineer at Enugu has personally informed me that the revenue has been allocated but that he has no staff to do efficient supervisory work. If the Regional Government is unable to provide supervisory staff for the job, I am in a position to say that I can suggest an efficient Civil Engineer who will undertake the building and will finish it within a few months. I am insisting, and I shall continue to insist, that unless that Post Office is built, as soon as possible, Government will be failing in its duty. Certain Ministers give unnecessary newspaper and radio publicity to their activities which I feel is very bad.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture (Mr D. A. Nnaji):

On point of Order, Mr Chairman, Standing Order 25 (7) :—

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

The Regional Ministers do not go out for personal advertisement. They tour the Region to see things for themselves.

Mr Agba: What I am saying is that they tour about making promises which they never fulfil. We are almost at the end of the present financial year, and the next financial year will soon come and not one of the promises made has been fulfilled. May I suggest, Sir, that the Ministry concerned should take into serious consideration the possibility of building the Post Offices in these Ogoja and Obudu areas.

Question, That the sum of £218,900 for Head 462—Ministry of Works—stand part of the First Schedule, put and agreed to.

HEAD 464—PUBLIC WORKS EXTRAORDINARY

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £24,790 for Head 464—Public Works Extraordinary—stand part of the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

HEAD 465—PUBLIC WORKS RECURRENT: MAINTENANCE SERVICES

Question, That a sum not exceeding £13,980 for Head 465—Public Works Recurrent: Maintenance Services—stand part of the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

HEAD 466—PUBLIC WORKS RECURRENT: MAINTENANCE WORKS

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £6,930 for Head 466—Public Works Recurrent: Maintenance Services—stand part of the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

Question proposed, That an increased sum of £696,015 be inserted in the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

SECOND SCHEDULE

APPENDIX F—MARINE RENEWALS
FUND

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £2,180 for Appendix F—Marine Renewals Fund—stand part of the Second Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

APPENDIX K—SCHOLARSHIP
SCHEME FUND

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £4,000 for Appendix K—Scholarship Scheme Fund—stand part of the Second Schedule.

Mr Ikoku: Mr Chairman, I would like to draw the attention of the House to activities settling around the Eastern Region Scholarship Scheme.

Firstly, Sir, I would like to say that I do not believe that our Eastern Region scholars are being given ample vote for their studies. I think Members opposite who have gone round and met some of our students will agree that the recurrent crying amongst them is that their vote is in urgent need of re-examination. I think the rise of cost of living and rise in cost of educational equipment make it necessary that the vote made to our students, particularly those who are overseas, should be reviewed and reviewed in quick time.

My second point, Sir, is to draw attention to the Report of the Director of Audit on the accounts of the Eastern Region Scholarship Fund for the year ended 31st March, 1957. It is to be regretted that this fund is not being properly administered. There has been a great deal of carelessness and inefficiency as regards the management of the funds. I will give good examples: in paragraph 2 of the Report we are told of a mistake due to misposting of the funds by the Accountant-General. It is a very serious remark to appear on the Auditor's Report. An organisation like the Accountant-General's Office should not allow itself to be accused of inefficiency to the extent of mis-posting the Scholarship funds. Of course, I venture an explanation: it may be that the mistakes made in the Accountant-General's Office are due to the mistakes made in the Scholarship Office. I have refused to believe that the Accountant-General's Office should make such a mistake in

posting. Again, Sir, in paragraph 4 we are told that the balance of advances outstanding in respect of the year and due for recovery is £1,430 3s 10d. I wonder what is being done to recover these advances. In paragraph 5 our attention is drawn to payment to students in excess of their approved allowances. How could such a thing have been that students were paid in excess of their approved allowances? If there were efficient administration of these funds, it is inconceivable that students should have been paid in excess of their approved allowances to the tune of £1,231 12s 10d, and this has continued in the previous year when the total was £113 18s. In the same paragraph our attention, Sir, is drawn to the sum of £28 and another sum of £64 16s which just cannot be accounted for, and yet they have said that this is a subject of correspondence with the Ministry of Education—another example of carelessness. In paragraph 7, the worst act of carelessness is that the payment for the year totalling £4,593 10s 11d has not yet been received. Mr Chairman, this is a very deplorable state in the administration of the Scholarship Fund and I would like the Minister responsible to take the earliest opportunity to satisfy himself as regards the administration of the Fund and we hope he will be good enough to keep the House informed. This Auditor's Report is nothing but a complete disgrace on the administration of the Scholarship Board.

Mr M. N. Onwuma (Aba Division): Mr Chairman, Sir, as before, we must be extremely very careful of the Report which the Leader of Opposition has been analysing. The Report was published as for 31st March, 1957, and since the publication of this Report the Public Accounts Committee has scrutinised very carefully the Scholarship Fund and then, the Secretary of the Board explained satisfactorily the Report which was accepted by the Public Accounts Committee and I think that the Minister has a Report on the accounts of the Scholarship Fund. The Report of that Committee has been laid on the Table of this House and all the explanation which the Leader of the Opposition has made had been accounted for. All that the students are entitled to is explained briefly in that Report.

Mr Chairman, I should also like to say that it is not true that our funds are in any way

worse than the position in other Regions. In any case, the position is not as bad as it has been painted.

Mr Ikoku: On point of information, Sir, the hon. Member has drawn attention to the fact that the report I dealt with was considered by the Public Accounts Committee and reported on. I would like to draw your attention just to two things: The Report of Public Accounts Committee is dated 16th July, 1958, and the Report which I am quoting from is dated 8th December, 1950. I do not see how this Report has been considered by that Committee.

The Minister of Education (Mr G. E. Okeke): Mr Chairman, I have to say at this stage that I will look into all the complaints.

Question, That the sum of £4,000 for Appendix K—Scholarship Scheme Fund—stand part of the Second Schedule, put and agreed to.

Postponed Clauses

Clause 1.

The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke): Mr Chairman, I beg to move to leave out the word and figure "(No. 1)" in line 2.

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Clause 1 as amended agreed to.

Clause 2.

The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke): Mr Chairman, I beg to move that in lines 4 and 5 (a) the words "six hundred and ninety-four thousand and thirty-five" be left out and insert therefor "six hundred and ninety-six thousand and fifteen", and (b) "£694,035" be left out and insert therefor "£696,015" in the marginal note to the Clause.

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Clause 2 as amended agreed to.

Clauses 3 and 4 agreed to.

Clause 5.

The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke): Mr Chairman, I beg to move that in lines 1 and 2 (a) the words "six hundred and ninety-four thousand and thirty-five" be left out and insert therefor "six hundred and ninety-six thousand and fifteen", and (b) "£694,035" be left out and insert therefor "£696,015" in the marginal note to the Clause.

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Clause 5 as amended agreed to.

Preamble agreed to.

(Mr Deputy Speaker resumed the Chair)

Bill reported with Amendments, as amended, read the Third time and passed.

(2) The Customary Courts (Amendment) Bill

Order for Second reading read.

The Minister of State Charged with Responsibility for Customary Courts and the Appointment and Recognition of Chiefs (Mr R. O. Iwuagwu): Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill for a law to amend the Customary Courts Law, 1956, be now read a Second time.

The second clause deals with section 1 of the Customary Courts Law, 1956, otherwise known as the Principal Law. This section states that the date of operation of the Principal Law shall be notified by the Governor in the *Regional Gazette*. On the 29th November, 1957, the Principal Law was amended by this hon. House, and the date of operation of the amended law (which according to the interpretation Ordinance, is deemed to be the date of operation of the Principal Law) was appointed by the Governor in the *Regional Gazette* to be the 29th day of November, 1957.

A class of people has expressed a disinclination to accept the above interpretation. To clear any possible doubt, this second clause is intended to replace and re-define section 1 of the Principal Law.

Hon. Members will agree that our legal system must keep pace with our present development. In other words, our political advancement must be reflected in our law. Uniformity is very essential in any community where law and order rule supreme.

To achieve this uniformity, clause 3 proposes to amend section 20 (2) of the Principal Law by the *deletion* of the expression "paragraphs 3 and 4" and *substitution* therefor of the expression "paragraph 3".

Accordingly, clause 4 is intended to recast the First Schedule to the Principal Law. Clause 5 is consequential on clause 3. Mr Speaker, law is not static. It changes in accordance with the progress of a society.

[MR IWUAGWU]

Amendments must be made from time to time in conformity with modern progress. Our ultimate aim is to codify our native law and custom, and this present Bill is in that direction, and I am sure the House will all support it.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

The Minister of Agriculture (Mr P. O. Nwoga): Sir, I beg to second.

Question proposed.

Mr E. O. Eyo: Mr Speaker, when the Minister for Customary Courts was moving the Second reading of this Bill he did not dwell on clause 4 of the proposed amendment. What I am trying to say, Sir, is that if any amendment is to be made to the Customary Courts Law of the Region, Government should bear in mind the decisions of the last Constitutional Conference, and the observations made by the Conference with regard to the administration of justice in our Customary Courts. In this connection, Sir, may I invite attention to the Report of the Conference page 14 paragraph 29 (a) and (c), and with your permission I read:—

- “(a) The appointment, dismissal and disciplinary control of judges of Customary and Native Courts throughout Nigeria should be divorced as far as possible from political and executive control.
- (c) 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 six months or fines of more than £50 should be exercised on the recommendation or under the supervision of the Judicial Service Commission.”

Now, Sir, the proposed amendment seeks to reduce the jurisdiction of our District Courts, Grade A. May I also draw attention to the First Schedule of the Principal Law of 1956, which lays down quite precisely the powers of these Grade A Courts. With your permission I read:—

“Criminal causes which can be adequately punished by imprisonment for six months or in the case of theft of farm produce or

livestock by imprisonment for twelve months...”

Our view is that this is an attempt to make the Grade A District Courts come within the jurisdiction of the Minister because as it stands at the moment the appointment of Judges to this very important Court in the Region would come under the supervision and jurisdiction of the Judicial Service Commission. We think, Sir, that it is wrong for political reasons to attempt to reduce or limit the jurisdiction of these very important Grade A Courts in the Region. In 1956 we gave these powers to these Courts, and I want the Minister to tell us why Government does not want the Courts to exercise the powers.

Mr M. E. Ogon (Ikom Division): Mr Speaker, I just rise to support the Motion. I have listened very attentively to my hon. Friend quoting the Constitutional Conference Report and so on. What I would like him to tell us is what is political in the amendment. If Government decides to make an amendment to an existing law, there is nothing political about it. As a matter of fact, Sir, I do not think anybody in this House can point to any one political appointment in any of these Customary Courts made in this Region unlike the position in the Western Region where all the persons appointed to the Customary Courts are Action Groupers.

I do not forget that we had passed our Customary Courts Law in this Region before the Western Region. It was a very shocking experience that in the last sitting of the Western House of Assembly, the Attorney-General said that members of the Western Customary Courts have the right to engage in active politics. This is where the Eastern Region is different. This sort of statement ought not to have been made at all. What I am now saying, Sir, is that we should not be wasting the time of the House by opposing unnecessarily. I think that the Government has the right to make the duration and power of the Courts to be one year, four years, eight years or even one day. Nobody has the right to question this appointment. The only point where there can be any right to question is when the period has been stipulated, perhaps to be four years and at the expiration of that period the stipulation is not observed.

Again, if the Minister appointed a panel of judges to sit, say for four years, or twelve months, and after that period, new ones are not appointed, then you can question. Sir, I am saying that the sooner we stop opposing unnecessarily the better.

Therefore, I beg to support the Second reading of the Bill.

Mr Nnaji: Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to add that the quotation by the Opposition Chief Whip from the Report of the Constitutional Conference, is simply to mislead the people of this Region and this hon. House. After all, it is a mere Report. It is not an Order in Council laid before Her Majesty's Government at the Buckingham Palace. All these Reports are what the people agreed upon, so that to charge the Government with trying to forestall the decision of the London Constitutional Conference, is very unfair.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a Second time.

Bill immediately considered in Committee.

(In the Committee)

Clauses 1 to 4 agreed to.

Clause 5.

Mr E. O. Eyo: I do not know whether I have got the wrong Bill. I think it begins with paragraph 3 to the First Schedule to the Law and I wonder whether I have not made a mistake.

The Attorney-General (Mr M. O. Ajegbo): May I refer, Mr Chairman, to Law No. 12 of 1957.

Mr E. O. Eyo: We are not amending the amended Law of 1956.

Mr Ajegbo: What we are now doing is amending the Customary Courts Law of 1956 and have nothing to do with the one of 1957. Mr Chairman, the main Law is 21 of 1956. An amendment was made to the Schedule of the Law in 1957. The law he has just mentioned is out of date.

Clause 5 agreed to.

Clause 6 agreed to.

(Mr Deputy Speaker resumed the Chair)

Bill reported without amendment, read the Third time and passed.

Sitting suspended at 1 p.m.

Sitting resumed at 3 p.m.

STANDING ORDER No. 25

The Premier (Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe): Mr Speaker, I rise to propose the Motion standing in my name which reads:

"That paragraph (9) of Standing Order No. 25—Rules of Debate—be amended as follows:

After the word 'House' in line two, insert a comma and the words 'Civil Servants.'

Our Standing Order 25 (9) prohibits the conduct of Her Majesty, Members of the Royal Family, the Governor-General, the Governor, Members of the House, and Judges being raised except upon a substantive Motion. Any reference to the conduct of any of these persons is out of order. My Motion aims at extending this same privilege to civil servants.

Civil Servants are at present in an unfortunate position. Members of this House may attack them or make damaging remarks about them, but civil servants can neither reply nor defend themselves. Furthermore, the proceedings of the House are privileged and therefore the civil servant cannot resort to the Court. It seems only reasonable that we should extend to civil servants a privilege which we, as Members of this House, already enjoy ourselves.

One must also remember that under our democratic system it is the Minister who takes responsibility for the actions of his Ministry and for the conduct of the civil servants in that Ministry.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

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

And pursuant to Standing Order 55 (2) the Motion stood referred to the Standing Orders Committee.

STANDING ORDER No. 18

The Premier (Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe): Mr Speaker, I rise to propose the Motion standing in my name which reads as follows:

"That paragraph (6) of Standing Order No. 18—Manner of giving Notice—be amended as follows:—

At the end of the paragraph leave out the full stop and insert a comma and the following proviso—'provided that no

[THE PREMIER]

notice of Motion shall be entered in the Order Book or published elsewhere which seeks to debate any aspect of the activities of the Public Service Commission or Judicial Service Commission or any Statutory Corporation or any matter not within the executive authority of the Regional Government, except with the written consent of the Speaker."

Hon. Members will agree with me that, of late, there has been a tendency on the part of certain petty and small-minded persons to give Notices of Motion which are not only trivial and frivolous but are calculated to besmirch the reputation of innocent people. Under this pretext certain unscrupulous people have tarnished the reputation of members and employees of Statutory Corporations.

To the Treasury Bench, this is an abuse of the Parliamentary process. We are of the considered opinion that since the Speaker is not only the arbiter of the House but, in the words of *Erskine May*, he is the executive officer by whom rules of the House are enforced, he should decide whether any Notice of Motion is calculated to bring this House into disrepute and, if so, to disallow it.

We submit that Parliamentary questions on the activities of the bodies mentioned in this motion can with tact and sense of responsibility be answered without unnecessarily impugning the integrity of those concerned. Our Standing Orders allow this. But when irresponsible people give Notice of Motion and then proceed to publicise same here and beyond the territorial waters of Nigeria as soon as it is entered in the Order Book and before it is placed on the Order Paper, hon. Members will agree that it is a definite abuse of Parliamentary privilege.

I hope that the Standing Orders Committee will have these observations under serious advisement when they consider the amendments proposed and save this House from being subjected to the shameful exhibition of irresponsibility by mischief-making sadists and professional fault-finders.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

The Minister of Local Government (Chief A. N. Onyike): Sir, I beg to second.

And pursuant to Standing Order 55 (2) the Motion stood referred to the Standing Orders Committee.

STANDING ORDER No. 68

The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke): Mr Speaker, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name: That Standing Order No. 68—Public Accounts Committee—be amended as follows:—

At the end of the second sentence, after the word "thereon" *leave* out the full stop and *insert* a semi-colon and the following words:

"the Committee shall also in particular examine cases of expenditure in excess of the limits imposed by the appropriations granted by the House or in excess of the limits imposed by the sub-heads of the Approved Estimates as amended from time to time."

As hon. Members are aware, the Standing Committee on Finance has hitherto exercised detailed financial control of expenditure on behalf of this House; this Committee authorised the issue of Special Warrants for additional expenditure required by Government during the intervening period between one budget and the other, but despite this, at the end of every financial year it was usual to find that there had been excess expenditure on various sub-heads and Heads. It has in the past been the duty of the members of the Standing Committee on Finance to examine the reasons given for these excesses and to satisfy themselves as to their justification. When this had been done I then signed the necessary Special Warrants on the Committee's authority in order to regularise the excess expenditure under sub-heads; this authority was invariably issued before any over-expenditure on Heads of the Approved Estimates was submitted for the covering approval to this House by way of a Supplementary Appropriation Bill.

It cannot, however, be said that the control so exercised has been really effective, since the House does not receive any comments made by the Finance Committee in its annual report until long after the Supplementary Appropriation Bill dealing with excesses has been passed and is therefore not in a position to direct that effective remedial action be taken. Under the Revised Constitution, the Standing Committee on Finance has no functions; therefore the procedure for dealing with excesses must be changed. Since this is so, I think hon. Members will agree that we should

make use of this opportunity to improve the effectiveness of the expenditure control exercised by the House.

The new procedure envisaged for the future is intended to ensure that, *before* hon. Members are called upon to regularise excess expenditure, there is available to the House the detailed comments and recommendations of an expert body, which has examined all cases of excess expenditure and the reasons given therefor by the Officers controlling the votes affected. This body's report would draw the attention of the House to, and make recommendations on, two particular categories of excesses:

- (a) those arising from defects in the financial or accounting procedure used by Government; and
- (b) those arising solely or mainly from negligence on the part of the Officer controlling the vote.

The report would invite the House, subject to satisfactory action being taken in accordance with recommendations of the report, to pass an Excess Votes Appropriation Law to cover the amount of the excesses.

It is considered that the Public Accounts Committee, which is appointed by this House to examine, on its behalf, the accounts of Government, would be the natural body to choose for this duty; its members become expert in such matters and have a well established procedure for examining public officers in financial and accounting questions, and in assessing their replies. They have also the advice of the Director of Audit. This additional work will not clash with the Committee's consideration of the Director of Audit's Report, which is not normally available for some time after the statement of Excess Expenditure prepared by the Accountant-General is ready. It is, however, a little doubtful whether examination of excesses in this way falls within the existing terms of reference of the Committee, as laid down in the Standing Orders of the House. We therefore propose to amend Standing Order No. 68 in such a way as to make clear beyond question the power of the Public Accounts Committee to take action on the lines now proposed. When this has been done the Committee itself will, next year, settle the detailed procedure by which they will discharge this additional responsibility.

As I have already reminded the House in moving amendments to Standing Order 66, this Motion will stand referred to the Standing Committee on Standing Orders. In addition, I propose to write to the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee explaining to him in detail the proposals, and offering the opportunity for discussion with me or with my advisers; the Director of Audit would naturally also be invited to attend any such discussions that may take place. Thus, when the Motion comes before the House again for discussion, we shall have the benefit, not only of the Standing Orders Committee's Report but also of the views of the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee.

I am sure that hon. Members will appreciate the importance of effective control of expenditure and therefore the need for this amendment, which is in conformity with the United Kingdom practice.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

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

And pursuant to Standing Order 55 (2) the Motion stood referred to the Standing Orders Committee.

ITIGIDI HOSPITAL

Mr E. O. Eyo: Mr Speaker, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name on the Order Paper which reads as follows:—

“That this House is deeply concerned over a loan of £4,000 and a grant of £10,000 from public funds to Dr the hon. S. E. Imoke, Minister of Finance, Eastern Region, for his private hospital at Itigidi, and hereby calls upon Dr the hon. S. E. Imoke, Minister of Finance, Eastern Region to resign and refund the loan of £4,000 and grant of £10,000 forthwith.”

Sir, at the risk of being abused by the Government and its supporters, may I say that this is neither the case of character assassination (*interruption—It is*), nor is it an attempt to use privileges of the House to run down the Minister of State. I say this because whatever I say in connection with this Motion, I will say it outside this House even with greater vigour.

[MR E. O. EYO]

Sir, the case against the Minister of Finance is one of grave abuse of Office. I propose to show, in the course of my speech, that the Minister of Finance has used his position of office to draw the public funds by himself. If I succeed in stating my case and the Minister is found guilty, the Minister of Finance has no alternative than to resign and refund all the amounts he has drawn from public fund.

Mr Deputy Speaker: Members will realise that this is a very important Motion and every Member who wants to take part must speak the fact. I will stop anybody who comes here to speak as a question of "hearsay".

Mr E. O. Eyo: Mr Speaker, the case is that during the financial year, 1956-57, the Minister of Finance received a loan of £4,000 and a grant of £10,000 from public funds to build a private hospital known as Eja Memorial Hospital in his home town Itigidi. In this connection, I refer to the provision in the 1956-57 Estimates, page E 82—Medical Services—sub-head 24, Grants to Private Practitioners for settlement in Rural Areas for which there is a provision of £15,000. Now, when I am called to debate this, I hope I am not being challenged to quote the Treasury Voucher on which the amount was paid. I come to this House with the expressed wish to make the Members know the facts and I hope when I am being challenged there should not be a challenge to quote the Treasury Vouchers and the dates these amounts were withdrawn. Then, again, I refer to the provision in 1956-57 Estimates page E 82 Head 450—Medical Services—sub-head 24, Grants provided for Practitioners for Settlement in Rural Areas in which there was a provision of £15,000. I therefore, wish Members of the House to know the purpose of the grant, provision of grants to private practitioners for settlement in rural areas. During the current financial year, 1958-59, the Minister of Finance has received grant totalling £6,007 19s in two instalments: the first instalment was £4,643, the second was £1,364 19s. The Minister hopes to draw a further grant of £6,837 19s which will bring his total grant to £12,845 18s. In this connection, I refer to the provision in the 1958-59 Estimates page E 71 Head 443—Medical Services—sub-head 36, Grant to Private Medical

Practitioners for Settlement in the Rural Areas, for which there is a provision of £13,000.

I repeat again that if I am going to be challenged then I will appeal to the House to ask the Government to set up a Commission of Inquiry. It is rather vague that while we are moving a proper Motion in Parliament the Speaker or the Government Bench will begin to challenge us on the question of evidence. The evidences are the vouchers in the Treasury.

Now, I wish to draw special attention to the explanatory note submitted by the Minister of Finance in the approved Estimates, 1958-59 in respect of this sub-head 36 at page E 72: It reads—

"The provision of the balance required to meet existing commitments may be approved by the Minister of Finance or the House of Assembly."

I will come back to this later on.

Hon. Members are aware that our Minister of Finance was a private Medical Practitioner until October 1954 when he became a Minister of State. From October 1954 to January, 1956 he was our Minister of Labour. He was appointed Minister of Finance in January 1956 in place of the late Mazi Mbonu Ojike. It follows therefore that from October, 1954 till today our Minister of Finance ceased to be a private medical practitioner and is therefore not qualified for Government grant set aside specifically to private medical practitioners for settlement in rural areas. I will come to this point later on.

Now, Sir, the House may wish to have a background to this Motion and at this stage may I remind the House that on the 17th of February, 1954, our Minister of Finance who was then a floor Member of the House moved a Motion in this House in the following terms:

"That a Committee be set up by this House to probe the question of bribery and corruption which appears to be rampant in all the Departments of the Civil Service including schools with a view to putting a check to it."

I am referring, Sir, to page 23, Eastern House of Assembly Debates, 3rd Session, Volume One, 16th-24th February, 1954.

May I, with your permission, read the relevant portion of the speech:

"In moving this Motion I wish to lay emphasis on the phrase 'which appears to be rampant in all the departments of the Civil Service including schools.' Like any other crime, bribery and corruption is not of course peculiar to Nigeria or to the Eastern Region at that. It is not like the black pigmentation of the skin—part of the negro race. It is certainly a crime which is world-wide, but when this ugly, ruinous, and disparaging crime becomes rampant, when it becomes prevailing and unchecked, even in the Police, Judiciary, Hospitals and in Schools, where the character of the nation is moulded, then of course in my opinion that nation is doomed for ever. Mr Chairman, it is my humble opinion that in this country today, not only the Eastern Region of Nigeria, we are heading towards that doom and so I have no doubt that this House with one voice, one loud voice, will denounce this crime. We are now on the threshold of attaining self-government, and when we do come into it, we shall be exposed to the impact of the outside world without any insulation at all, (if the Financial Secretary will allow me to use the word) we shall be less insulted, we shall be exposed fully to the impact of the outside world, and what account have we to give of our nation? A nation that has no conscience, a nation that fears no God, a nation that is without morals. Surely, it will be a disgrace!"

Sir, that is just the high standard enunciated by our Minister of Finance when a floor Member; he moved a famous Motion calling upon the Government to set up a Committee to go into the question of bribery and corruption in the Region. Sir, I had the honour of seconding the Motion. I do not want to waste the time of the House, but it is interesting to know that two important members of the House spoke on that occasion. The first was the hon. J. O. Umolu, and the second hon. M. E. Ogon, on which occasion they told the House their own views of what corruption was in public life.

Now, Sir, I have made reference to this Motion and have given the House the background leading to the appointment in 1955,

of the Bribery and Corruption Commission which was headed by Mr Chuba Ikpeazu. Before this Commission, Sir, allegations were made against two East Regional Ministers—the hon. M. C. Awgu and the late Mazi Mbonu Ojike. The allegation against Mr Awgu was that as Minister of Land, Eastern Region, he had approved a plot of land to a bakery concern at Enugu, in which Mrs Awgu had financial interest. That was then the allegation against Mr Awgu. Sir, Mr Chuba Ikpeazu, Chairman of the Bribery Commission, found Mr Awgu to be guilty of gross abuse of office and he made an announcement to this effect to the public.

The Premier of the Eastern Region called upon Mr Awgu to resign on the ground that as a Minister of State he had no alternative than to resign. Sir, the allegation against the late Mazi Mbonu Ojike was that he had demanded a commission of 1s in the £ in order to influence the award of contract to an Italian firm in connection with the construction of the Onitsha Market. Two members of the Commission believed this allegation and found the late Mazi Mbonu Ojike guilty of corruption and made an announcement to the public. Here again, the Premier of the Eastern Region demanded Ojike's resignation. The significant thing about the two resignations was that there was a division of opinion among our Ministers at the Ministers caucus. Some Ministers advised that no action be taken against the two Ministers until a report had been submitted to Government for careful study of the evidence of the findings of the Commission. The other Ministers supported the demand for the resignation of the Ministers and here is the significant point. One of those Ministers who supported the demand for late Mazi Ojike's resignation was our present Minister of Finance. As a matter of fact, Sir, he threatened to resign if late Ojike refused to resign. Eventually, late Ojike resigned and he became our Minister of Finance in succession in January, 1956 and within that same year he drew a grant of £4,000 from public funds under Head 450, Medical Services, sub-head 24, Grants to Private Medical Practitioners, for settlement in rural areas.

Now, I want to ask the following question: In 1956 was our Minister a Private Medical Practitioner? The answer is no. If he was,

[Mr E. O. Eyo]

I want an answer. I ask again, Sir, in 1956 was our Minister of Finance, while in office a Private Medical Practitioner? The answer is still no. If he was not, how did he come to qualify for this grant which was specifically voted for Private Medical Practitioners for settlement in rural areas. As far as I know, Sir, our Minister of Finance has been resident in Enugu as Minister of Finance since January 1956, and is not putting any settlement in Enugu other than his own personal affairs. Did he submit any application for this grant? If he did, to whom and who approved this grant? Did this matter go before the Executive Council? If it did, was it approved by the Executive Council? If it was, on what grounds was it approved?

This year, Sir, our Minister of Finance has drawn £6,007 19s. Is our Minister of Finance now a Private Medical Practitioner? The answer is no. If he is not, how could he come to qualify for this grant under Head 450, Medical Services, sub-head 24, Grants to Private Medical Practitioners, for settlement in rural areas.

Hon. Members should note carefully the explanatory note at page E 72 which has already been quoted. As far as I know, this matter was never submitted to the Eastern House of Assembly and I therefore ask why it was a question of the Minister of Finance approving the grants for himself, and I would like this House to know that during the past three years I know of not less than three private Medical Practitioners in the Region who have applied to Government for this grant to establish private hospitals in the rural areas but who have not received any grant up till today.

Hon. Members: Mention them.

Mr E. O. Eyo: On point of general principle, is it proper for the Minister of State to use his position to reap financial benefit from the public funds, for himself or his family or his friends or his business? This is a very serious matter. I will warn Government and their supporters to view the matter with all the seriousness that it deserves. You will appreciate, Sir, that judging from the echoes from the Government supporters that they seem to appreciate the seriousness of the matter.

I only hope, Sir, that the Government supporters will, before they decide to oppose this Motion, realise their responsibility to the

people of this Region. Are we going to allow the Minister of Finance to help himself while in office to the tune of £14,000 out of public funds on the mere pretext that he was going to build a private hospital?

Now, Sir, as far as I know, this hospital was under construction from 1956. Perhaps you would be interested to know that the Minister of Finance completed his personal building here in Enugu long long ago. How do I know that this £14,000 which the Minister of Finance has drawn from the public funds on the pretext that he was going to build a private hospital at Itigidi has not been used in erecting his personal building?

The position is that if it is N.C.N.C. policy that Ministers of State will conspire and share public funds, well let us have it on record. During the Foster-Sutton Tribunal it was a question of Government Banking Policy and was put to the test; if this is Government Financial Policy, for goodness sake, let the Premier put it to the test also. Mr Speaker, I know that the Ministers would rise to support this. As a matter of fact, Sir, I just want to emphasise that there is abundant evidence at my disposal that a third Minister of State is in for it. If it is a question of collective responsibility, let us know because I cannot understand why it is that one Minister having been accused, it looks as if every other Minister and every other Parliamentary Secretary has been accused. It sounds like collective responsibility. Well, if it is collective responsibility, let us know. Mr Speaker, the moment I gave notice of this Motion I knew what I was in for and I can assure you, Sir, that the Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries and Government Supporters can abuse me and call me all sorts of name, but I just want you to understand that those of us who are on this side of the House were elected as they were elected into this House and cannot allow them play with public funds and expect that the Members of the Opposition will just sit back doing nothing. I think they must be under misapprehension. The moment we have any evidence that there is any fiddling by the Government somewhere, it will be our duty to give notice of a Motion and we will come to this House and argue it out.

Sir, I beg to move.

Mr Ikoku: Sir, I beg to second.

Question proposed.

The Minister of Production (Dr M. I. Okpara): Mr Speaker, I oppose this Motion. Sir, it is a matter for regret that we have to come to this hon. House to engage in a very costly game of character assassination. I know that the hon. the Mover has already tried to tell this hon. House that this is not character assassination, but, Sir, it is, and unfortunately this is the third of its kind by this same person. The first was directed against the Premier over the African Continental Bank and caused a lot of confusion all over the country but we weathered the storm. The second one was against the late Mr Ernest Egbuna, the Speaker. Now the hon. Mover has come again to this hon. House to run down the Minister of Finance, Dr Imoke. I think we the hon. Members here shall be failing in our duty if we do not at the end of this debate condemn this man so that he will put an end to this kind of indulgence.

Mr Speaker, before this grant was given to Dr Imoke, the policy as enunciated in the Ministry of Health where I had the honour to be the Minister of Health at the time, was laid on the Table of this hon. House and was acclaimed. With your permission, Mr Speaker, the relevant portion reads thus:—

“In addition to this . . . general medical practitioners will be assisted to establish in suitable rural areas.”

The intention that led to the insertion in the Estimates £15,000 was to aid private practitioners to establish in rural areas. Accordingly, Sir, I called a meeting of all private practitioners in the Region and told them all what Government intended to do and said it was our aim to help them to leave the Townships to the rural areas where there was a far greater need for medical institutions and that if they agreed to do so, Government would help them by giving them suitable grants varying from £3,000 to about £10,000. At the time, Sir, we knew that for a comparable medical institution the Government would have spent nothing less than £35,000.

If the medical practitioners would agree to go and set up in the rural areas with the sum of £10,000 they would have to make up the deficit with their own funds. It was only a help, an assistance. Government was not

putting up an entire institution and giving it to the private medical practitioners.

After the announcement of this policy, applications were invited from all over the Region. Many medical practitioners applied and we had to look at the Region as a whole to see where the need was greatest at the time. We agreed that the rural areas round Enugu here were covered by an application supported by one Dr Ozo; in Awka round about the rural town there was an application supported by Dr Obiora; somewhere in Azumini, an application supported by Dr Emutche, and then there was an application by Dr Imoke. There were other applications of course. What I mean is that these were the most deserving from the point of view of the areas. We took into account places that were not served at all by any medical institution of any kind. If you look up these various places you will find that the nearest hospitals are either thirty or forty miles away or most inaccessible. There were other applications from near the townships. We refused to countenance those at that time since the amount available was rather small. When we came to look at the application of Dr Imoke we were satisfied that the area was the worst served. It was in a little town called Itigidi far away, as they say, absolutely nowhere. The distance to the nearest hospital is about forty or fifty miles and before you can even make that you have to cross a very difficult and dangerous ferry so that some people even prefer to go the other way round and before you get to the hospital you probably nearly have to do 100 miles. There was clearly, therefore, a need in this particular area. If a private practitioner did not come forward to put up this hospital in this area I am sure that Government would have been forced to put up a comparable institution. We in the Ministry, therefore, felt that this was an application deserving of consideration, especially as at that time we were advised that Dr Imoke had already made a start. The question was then asked whether a Minister should in point of fact build a private hospital. There are three points I want to bring up here.

First, at that time he had started the hospital before he became a Minister. Secondly, perhaps some of you do not know that already, a Doctor is the only professional who is allowed to carry on with his practice even though he is a Cabinet Minister. This fact

[DR OKPARA]

was brought home to me as far back as 1952 when I was a Cabinet Minister without Portfolio in hon. Eyo Ita's Cabinet—a short-lived Cabinet—and at the time Dr Endeley was a Minister in the Federal Cabinet and he was allowed to practise. The Lieutenant-Governor at the time told me that this is a practice that has grown around the British Commonwealth, because Sir Godfrey Huggins, the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, was a brilliant surgeon and he was very much in love with surgery and politics that he liked to combine both. In fact, it was said that on certain days when they held a Cabinet meeting, he often had to perform some serious operations like Partial *Gastrectomy*. So he was allowed to establish this precedent which has been followed all over the British Commonwealth. I do not think that that applies to any other profession. Of course, when you look at it, you will see the sense in that concession because if a Doctor is a Cabinet Minister and he is not allowed to practise and happens to be present where there is an accident, what does he do? He must, as a man who has taken the Hippocratic Oath, save life. So that to remove any anomaly that is why this special concession was made. That was the other question we answered and we did not think there was any difficulty about that.

The next one was whether a Minister, not necessarily a Doctor, can actually receive a loan or a grant to complete a project he has already started before he became a Minister and which is of benefit not to himself but to the community. In the Ministry, we were satisfied that it could be done, but I did not want to take any chances. So I had to go to the man who had been enjoined by the Constitution to interpret Ministerial code of conduct—Sir Clement Pleass. I told him all about the matter—how the young man has applied for a grant and what glowing tributes have been paid to him by the District Officer and the Council in that area. After discussion it was agreed that the grant should be made.

After discussion, I asked whether there was anything wrong with this. He concluded there was nothing really wrong. We agreed that the grant should be made. So I came back and made the grants to these four practitioners. I got it published in the national Press. There was no hush hush about it. I am sorry I have

not enough time to do the necessary delving. It was published in the Press and all the Newspapers of the country. The amounts were clearly stated. It is strange, Sir, that after nearly three years, Mr E. O. Eyo should now suddenly think of this grant that was made to this private practitioner and use it as a lever to reck his name. Is this the behaviour we expect of an hon. Member? (*Shouts of No! No! and Shame! Shame!*)

The next point I want to make, Sir, is that a Medical Institution is not a money making venture. It is not like trading, the bakery or running lorry transport. If you wish to be a rich man, you do not need to go to medical practice, let alone going to the rural area. It is only practitioners who have a sense of mission, who can elect to avoid all the amenities of the municipalities and go into the rural areas and slug it there, work hard with the common people to make their lives more worthwhile. I should repeat again, a medical institution is not a money making venture. Any Doctor who makes money—really if a Doctor dies a rich man—he had not been honest to the “code of *hypocritics*”.

Now, Sir, I wish to say that it is no flattery to say that Dr Imoke is one of the sincerest and honest men I have had the privilege to work with. I say this with a deep sense of responsibility. (*Hear! Hear!*)

He is an asset to the Region and, in fact, to the whole country. I assure you, Sir, that this Motion rather than detract from the man's calibre, will only enhance his prestige, and more considerably too. If I had the privilege to make that grant again, and if similar circumstances were presented now, 15th December, 1958, I would make it. (*Applause*). Probably, I would even have increased it. At that time it was £4,000, and now that the Region is better off than we used to be—in those days that the Budget used to run up to only £7 million, but now it is more than double that—I would have doubled it. What then is the purpose of this Motion? The Mover could have got all the facts by simple questioning; he could have asked any of us. What does Eyo get from this? Suppose that Dr Imoke is reduced, what does it benefit Mr Eyo? What profit does Mr Eyo derive in running down his fellow men? In everything, Dr Imoke is better than Mr E. O. Eyo. In wealth, he is richer; in

character, he is a better one. He can claim a good character and honesty. Can Mr Eyo, claim to be honest? (*Shouts of No! No!*)

We deliberately put down this Motion so that the whole world will know that neither Dr Imoke nor any of us has anything to hide. The grant was made to him in honesty to enable him complete a project he had started for the benefit of his people. He had started this before he became a Minister and after all enquiries which I made, the grant was found to be in order. I am a Doctor myself. Did I give myself any money? Other Doctors who were then Ministers—Dr Onubogu, Dr Esin—did not apply. I beg to submit, Sir, that it is very unfair that Mr Eyo should bring this type of Motion.

Now, Sir, I wish to touch this question of loan. There was no loan at all. The fellows who gave him that information, and keep on giving him these contentious bits of news so that he comes here to cause an uproar, will drag him to the grave. They keep on giving him little bits of news so that he comes and causes an uproar. There was an outright grant and what is more, Sir, as a matter of fact, some doctors refused to take the grant because of the restrictions I placed on the grant. The District Officer was made the Chairman of the Board of Governors to manage the grant so that the public funds will be properly utilised for erecting the project but some doctors refused it. Eventually, as a matter of fact, Dr Obiora returned his own £3,000; he said he was not continuing with it. Dr Ozoh returned his £4,000; Dr Obonna refused it. I begged him to take it but he refused. He said he was not taking it at all unless we took away the restrictions. Of course, I did not see eye to eye with him at that time. I refused to remove the restrictions but I think the Doctor was right; the restrictions should be removed so that people can get the money and put up hospitals for our people.

There was no loan at all. While I was there, I made a grant of £4,000. I have told you, Sir, that the purpose was to make a grant of about £10,000 more if necessary. It is impossible for anybody to build such a hospital in this country now for £10,000. A 24-bedded hospital would cost not less than about £35,000; however modest the institution, you can't build

it with that amount and for Government to give anybody £10,000 is the least we can do in the circumstances.

His name is in the *Federation of Nigeria Official Gazette*, 1958, Government Notice No. 24 as Samuel Efem Imoke, Licentiate of the School of Medicine, Nigeria, 1941. His name has not been cancelled yet. One would like to have a look at this *Gazette* and see for himself. Sir, I think it is therefore quite clear that nothing can be found in this grant made to Dr Imoke either initially or in the subsequent increase to reach a modest figure of £10,000 to be said to infringe any Ministerial code of conduct. As I said before, hon. E. O. Eyo could have got these facts quite easily without inflicting this painful duty of coming to this House to bother us.

One or two points the hon. Mover mentioned and I am done. I would say, Sir, that the story of the Ikpeazu Inquiry is completely irrelevant in this case. It has nothing to do with the Motion. The Motion is about loan and grant. This is not a case of loan, it was a grant. The grant was properly made and after consulting people who would have raised objection, the public was informed accordingly. He asked: "Was there any application?" Of course, he applied. He applied to me and it was approved. His application did not go to the Executive Council as there was no question of Executive Council in that case. You mean if I am disbursing votes in my Ministry, I have to go to Executive Council! We do not do that.

Mr Deputy Speaker: Two minutes more.

Dr Okpara: It was approved by my Ministry and was published. My Colleagues knew about it and they supported it. There is no question of reaping any financial benefit in putting up an institution of this kind. In any case the hospital is still building and we hope that when it is completed, the Minister of Finance will invite all of us to the opening. But even if he didn't go to set up his practice, his brother is a Medical Practitioner and will be able to look after the hospital. There is nothing shady about this grant. It was properly done within the rules of Ministerial conduct and etiquette as far as I know, and I think I know a bit about these things—a job a man has been doing for seven years, that is a bit of long time! It was properly done and I

[DR OKPARA]

hope this is the last time this hon. House will allow Mr E. O. Eyo to come here and point an accusing finger at anybody. If he does it next time, we shall give him no quorum to talk his nonsense.

Sir, I beg to oppose the Motion.

The Minister of Health (Mr E. P. Okoya): Mr Speaker, I rise to oppose the Motion just moved by hon. E. O. Eyo, Member for Uyo Division. I oppose the Motion on the following grounds:—(1) The Motion is an attack on Government policy. (2) There are some incorrect statements in the Motion. and (3) The fact that Dr S. E. Imoke, Minister of Finance, received a grant under this scheme is no violation of Ministerial code of conduct.

Let me take the first ground why I oppose Mr Eyo's Motion—the attack on Government policy. The Motion stated that Dr Imoke should be asked to resign and that after his resignation he should refund the money immediately. I would like to dilate on the Government policy and what has been done so far to carry out Government policy.

The facts are as follows: The policy of giving grants to Private Medical Practitioners to settle in rural areas is an integral part of the Ministry of Health's general plans for providing as soon as possible a full and integrated National Health Service for the Region and it has worked well. In the implementation of this broad policy, emphasis is being given to the development of rural areas in order that the Medical and Health facilities in these parts might be brought to a level comparable with those of the better developed towns as soon as possible. All means towards this end are being utilised. Thus rural hospitals are being built in association with Local Government Councils and local communities on a basis of equal sharing of the capital cost. In some cases these are to remain the property of the sponsoring Council or community; in other cases financial responsibility for their recurrent maintenance has been taken over by the Regional Government, and here too there has been association with Voluntary Agencies in the well-known joint association on the basis of a "shortfall" grant. In the capital construction of Rural Health Centres there has been a sharing of the capital cost of construction with Local Government Councils. So too is it the policy of the Ministry to associate with

Private Medical Practitioners in the building of rural hospitals. This policy of giving grants to Private Medical Practitioners dates back to 1954 and in a Statement Policy for Medical and Health Services issued as Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1954, it was envisaged that private Medical Practitioners would have their part to play particularly in the development of Medical and Health services in rural areas. Late in 1954 the Minister of Health held a meeting with the Association of Private Practitioners of the Eastern Region and the Association was informed of Government's intention to give assistance in the form of grants, subject to certain conditions, to any private practitioner who would establish a hospital in a rural area. Dr Imoke attended this meeting. Dr Imoke is asked not only to resign but also to refund the money. In other words, all others who have medical grants from Government might be asked to refund whatever they received. This is an attack on Government policy and so Government would resist it.

Let me now dwell on what has been done and the system of payment under this Scheme.

Three Doctors have applied for this grant and they were not given at all. I asked him who were the doctors, but he refused to mention them. As I said, in 1955-56, £15,000 was voted and allocated as follows:—

Dr S. E. Imoke	£4,000
Dr Ozoh	£4,000
Dr Emutche	£3,500
Dr Obiora	£3,500

There was no discrimination. Dr Imoke got the £4,000 and he was not then the Minister of Finance. Dr Emutche was not a Minister, but he got the amount of £4,000.

In 1957-58, a further £4,000 was voted under the Scheme. Now Dr Ozoh—Mr Eyo refused to mention names, but I will mention the names of the people who applied—did apply at that time but it was not given to him. Dr Ozoh, as the Minister of Production has rightly said, said he was not keen at getting the grant as he knew the conditions for the grant of this money were not encouraging. Moreover, building hospital in the rural area was not a profitable venture. So he decided to join the Government service and since he got into the Government service his grant was cancelled.

Now, Dr Obiora rejected the grant at that time because he maintained that it was not profitable to establish an hospital in the rural area. Finally, he withdrew and returned the money to me. The Minister of Production has mentioned this.

In 1957, the amount for Dr Emutche was increased to £7,500. Dr Emutche felt that £3,500 could not do for building an hospital and so he applied again for an increase and it was increased to £7,500. Dr Emutche is not a Minister. At that time, Dr Imoke's was increased to £10,000. Dr Emutche asked for £7,500 and he got it; Dr Imoke asked for £10,000 and he got it. The Minister did consider that, at least, such establishment would be of great help, as it would have cost Government more than £35,000.

After this, consideration was given to all other applicants. Dr Ekpo applied for a loan of £3,000 and did not get it for some reasons. The first reason is this: Dr Ekpo intended to put up an hospital at Munze—a place very close to Ajalli. There we had dumped several thousand pounds and to add more money there would not be profitable. The second reason is that Dr Ekpo has not been healthy enough to run an hospital. Afterwards, he got a job in the Government and so the question of giving him grant was allowed to drop.

In October, 1955, Dr Ene applied for a grant of £5,000 but the preliminary formalities were not completed until early in 1958 when, in fact, the grant of £5,000 was earmarked for him.

Dr Iwenofu of Port Harcourt also sought for £8,000, a loan for which he had applied several times unsuccessfully from the E.R.D.C., for the construction of an hospital in Diobu. Is Diobu a rural area?

Hon. Members: No.

Mr Okoya: It was, however, decided on professional advice that this did not fall within the scope of the Scheme. These are the Doctors in this Region who applied for this grant and I have told you the names of those who did not get any grant at all and I have given you the reasons therefor. There

remained three applicants who qualified for the grant under this scheme. Each of them got what he asked for:

Dr Imoke	£10,000
Dr Emutche	£7,500
Dr Ene	£5,000

The building work of Dr Imoke's Itigidi Hospital is at present the most advanced and is nearing completion. I may add that Dr Imoke started work on his own on the hospital before he was summoned to the meeting of 1954 where he was told of the Government policy. This shows that the sole aim of Dr Imoke was to provide medical facilities in an area which lacks medical facilities. Government readily gave him the £10,000 to assist him in putting the thirty-bedded hospital for it would have cost Government about £35,000 to put up an institution of such size. Dr Imoke came to Government's aid for it is the responsibility of Government to provide medical facilities for the people of the Region.

Now, I come to the actual payment. Hon. Eyo was trying to impute improper motives on the policy that the NCNC Ministers try to help themselves by demanding money from Government; perhaps that was what he was trying to say. It is not the policy of the NCNC Ministers to provide public funds for themselves. So I think it is necessary for me to explain the system of payment. We do not just pay anyhow. We do not do that.

Sitting suspended at 4.30 p.m.

Sitting resumed at 4.45 p.m.

Mr Okoya: Mr Speaker, I was about explaining to the House the system of payment of grants to these Medical Practitioners when the House went into recess. This money is not frittered away as was alleged by hon. Eyo. There are two systems adopted. In the first place, when a bill has been submitted by a firm or by a contractor to my Ministry, the Ministry pays the money direct to the firm or contractor concerned. That was done in the case of Dr Imoke in respect of the first £4,000 granted to him. The money was not given to him at all, it was paid to the firm who supplied equipment and also paid to the contractor who was building the hospital. In fact not a penny was given to Dr Imoke in respect of the first £4,000 handed to him. Now, the Ministry felt that this system was cumbersome and

[MR OKOYA]

adopted another method, which was applied in Dr Imoke's case and also in the case of other Medical Practitioners. The actual payment of this grant is subject to a procedure which has been worked out in consultation with the officials of the Ministry of Finance, the Accountant-General, and the Director of Audit. These officials agreed on this second system. A number of grants are made periodically on the request and on the certification by a Provincial Engineer of the P.W.D. as to the value of the building, and by a senior officer of the Medical Department as to the value of medical equipment provided. Thus the actual payment of these grants depends entirely upon the performance and rate of progress which the applicant made. When a Doctor feels that he has to put up a building, he applies to the P.W.D. and then the Provincial Engineer is sent to the spot to evaluate the building. After evaluation he will send his report to the Medical Department and on certification we pay grant to the Doctor concerned. So the money was not just paid out anyhow as alleged by hon. Eyo.

There are certain conditions attached to the granting of this money, and the conditions are designed to protect Government and also to protect the public. The conditions are as follows:

(1) The Doctor must be a private practitioner.

(2) There must be a Board of Governors composed thus:—

The District Officer, *Chairman*,

The Private Practitioner himself, *Secretary*,

The Sister working in the Hospital,

The Pharmacist,

The Hospital Secretary,

One representative of the Ministry of Health, to protect the interest of the Ministry of Health, and

Two representatives of the community to be appointed by the Minister.

(3) The land to be registered under the Lands Perpetual Succession Ordinance. Proper annual estimates must be prepared and proper accounts kept. Why should accounts be kept? The plan of the hospital and buildings must be approved by the Ministry. These conditions are unacceptable to many practising Doctors who will be required to prepare estimates and keep accounts to be scrutinised.

Now, Mr Speaker, from the above conditions you could see that the public and the Government are properly protected and Dr Imoke accepted these conditions before any part of the grant was paid to him.

Now, I come to the last point where I said that there are certain incorrect statements made by Mr Eyo.

He said that apart from the grant of £10,000 which Government has given to Dr Imoke, a loan of £4,000 was also given to Dr Imoke and when he was speaking he could not substantiate this allegation.

Mr Speaker, I have not come across anybody who could lie as much as Mr E. O. Eyo. I think he is deliberate. He knows that Dr Imoke has not taken a loan of £4,000 from anybody but he came to this House to tell this House and the world that Dr Imoke took a loan of £4,000. I ask Mr Eyo: Was it himself who gave the the loan to Dr Imoke? He would not answer, because he knows he has not the facts but he came just to cast aspersion on the good name of Dr Imoke.

He told us another big lie too. He told the House that apart from the £10,000 grant which we have already given to Dr Imoke, another £6,000 has already been earmarked for Dr Imoke. This is not correct.

Mr E. O. Eyo: I will give you the figures.

Mr Okoya: Does Mr Eyo agree that I am the Minister of Health now in that Ministry? I have not approved another £6,000 to Dr Imoke. Mr Eyo based most of his arguments on suspicion. Now he turned to 1958-59 Estimates and quoted some figures from the Estimates to show that an amount of money is earmarked for Dr Imoke.

Mr E. O. Eyo: No.

Mr Okoya: He said that £7,500 will be paid to Dr Imoke and £5,000 to Dr Ene.

If you do a simple addition, you will find that the figure there is correct. The total commitment at that time was about £18,500 and that was the amount voted there. How hon. Eyo came to this figure of £6,000 only heaven knows, nobody knows.

Mr E. O. Eyo: It is in the note.

Mr Okoya: If it is in his note-book, let him show it to me—if there is anything at all in that note-book. He is telling beg lies. Now, these are two very big lies that hon. Eyo has told just to deceive the public.

Now, Mr Speaker, I said the reasons are three. One has been disposed of by the Minister of Production—that is that what Dr Imoke did is no violation of Ministerial code of conduct. (*Hear! Hear!*).

Now, I have almost finished. I have disposed of the points raised in the Motion and I am sure all right thinking Members of this House will agree with me that this Motion is mischievous, wicked and a tendentious act, and aims at nothing but character assassination. I also urge all hon. Members to rise like one man and voice to shout “shame” on E. O. Eyo.

Hon. Members. *Shame!*

Mr Okoya: Mr Speaker, I beg to oppose the Motion.

The Attorney-General (Mr M. O. Ajegbo): I rise to oppose this Motion. I speak to the Motion with a sense of grief. A number of Motions have been brought in this hon. House which must be frowned upon by any person with any sense of decency. The main purpose of these Motions is to besmirch character and kill reputations. They have no parallel anywhere in the civilised world. They are not only an abuse of parliamentary privilege but a consistent effort to discredit the people of Eastern Nigeria. The Mover of this Motion should bow his head in shame.

We concede the fact that it is the duty of an Opposition to scrutinise the acts of the Government but it is certainly not the duty of an Opposition to be reckless. There are certain things that are just not done.

The Motion is “That this House is deeply concerned over a loan of £4,000 and a grant of £10,000 from public funds to Dr the hon. S. E. Imoke, Minister of Finance, Eastern Region, for his private hospital at Itigidi, and hereby calls upon Dr the hon. S. E. Imoke, Minister of Finance, Eastern Region, to resign and refund the loan of £4,000 and grant of £10,000 forthwith.” Some of the facts of the Motion are inaccurate and wrong. Dr Imoke never took any loan of £4,000 at all.

A hospital is private only to the extent that it is run by an individual. It is to distinguish hospitals run by individuals from those that are state-owned or run by Voluntary Agencies that we speak of “private” hospitals. Otherwise, no hospital is really “private” in a commercial sense. All hospitals, except they are badly run, serve the medical needs of humanity and, to a great extent, are philanthropic undertakings.

Up to, perhaps, 1952 medical institutions in the Region were very few and far between, and those few ones were largely concentrated in urban areas. People in rural districts bore untold hardships for lack of medical facilities. They had to travel many miles to get to a hospital and invariably the patient died before the journey was over. Life in rural areas was dull and unattractive and young Medical Practitioners were usually not inclined to live in rustic places. Those who had the inclination to establish in rural areas had no money with which to embark upon the expensive undertaking of hospital building. Pressure was brought upon the Government to do something—to find a way of relief. Government, therefore, evolved a policy about which the hon. the Minister of Production has spoken, to make grants to Medical Practitioners who wished to establish hospitals in rural areas. Dr Imoke was one of those few. He had commenced the work of the hospital before he became a Minister.

Mr Eyo's Motion implies that Dr Imoke in applying for and receiving a grant from the Government had behaved in a way unbecoming of a Minister of State and is no longer fit to remain in office. Let us examine this extraordinary and uncharitable thesis of Mr Eyo.

Dr Imoke received a grant of £10,000 to build a hospital at Itigidi. Itigidi is in a very rural and backward area. It is a village in Ogoja Province and probably some of you have heard the name for the first time in this debate. Dr Imoke has set up a hospital. He has not misused the money or appropriated it to some other ends. Any charge of misconduct on the application of the money must, therefore, fall to the ground.

Now let us examine the application for and the grant itself. Dr Imoke made an application for a grant. At the time part of the grant

[MR AJEGBO]

was being made, Dr Imoke had become a member of the Government. To make certain that the transaction was beyond reproach, the matter was referred by the then Minister of Health to the Governor (Sir Clem Pleass) who felt it was in order and approved of the grant.

Britain, has over the years, evolved certain standards of Ministerial conduct. These standards have crystallised into what are now known as "rules of obligation" the breach of which may expose a Minister to removal from office.

What are these "rules"? They were propositions made by various Prime Ministers of Britain, namely, Lord Palmerston and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman in 1906, Mr Asquith in 1913 and Mr Baldwin in 1927. Mr Asquith made the proposition that "the first . . . and the most obvious is that Ministers ought not to enter into any transaction whereby their private pecuniary interest might, even conceivably, come into conflict with their public duty . . . Again, no Minister is justified under any circumstances in using official information, information that has come to him as a Minister, for his own private profit or for that of his friends. Further, no Minister ought to allow or to put himself into a position to be tempted to use his official influence in support of any scheme or in furtherance of any contract in regard to which he has an undisclosed private interest . . . Again, no Minister ought to accept from persons who are in negotiation with or seeking to enter into contractual or proprietary or pecuniary relations with the State any kind of favour . . . I will add a further proposition, which I am not sure has been completely formulated, though it has no doubt been adumbrated in the course of these Debates, and that is that Ministers should scrupulously avoid speculative investments in securities as to which, from their special means of early or confidential information, they have or may have an advantage over other people in the anticipating market changes." (*Cabinet Government*—Jennings—2nd Ed. page 99).

These rules are summarised in the Colonial Office Despatch No. 536 published in the *Nigeria Gazette* of 20th December, 1951. May I, Mr Speaker, with your permission read the relevant paragraph of the Despatch. "There are definite rules governing Ministerial conduct which have been laid down in the

United Kingdom as a result of very long experience and which may be of assistance in the working of the new Constitution in Nigeria. In the United Kingdom, certain easily identifiable forms of misconduct, e.g., disclosure of official secrets and corruption generally, are the subject of legislation (the Official Secrets Acts and the Prevention of Corruption Acts). In addition there is a code of ethics prescribed by rules which have been laid down by successive Governments over a long period. These rules, which are summarised below, are based on custom and usage of the Constitution, and any serious infringement of them, even though not punishable by law, would incur the drastic penalty of dismissal from office.

(a) All directorships held by Ministers must be resigned except honorary directorships and directorships in connection with philanthropic undertakings.

(b) On assuming office, Ministers should cease to hold paid official positions in trades unions, and should cease from active full-time participation in their affairs.

(c) Ministers ought not to enter into any transactions whereby their private pecuniary interest might, even conceivably, come into conflict with their public duty.

(d) No Minister is justified in any circumstances in using official information which comes to him as a Minister for his own private profit or for that of his friends.

(e) No Minister ought to put himself, or allow himself to be put in a position to use his official influence in support of any scheme or in furtherance of any contract in regard to which he has an undisclosed private interest.

(f) No Minister should use his official influence to support the candidature of any person for admission to or promotion within the Civil Service except that when a candidate for first appointment is known to him personally there should be no objection to a Minister giving him a written testimonial.

(g) No Minister ought to accept any kind of favour from persons who are in negotiation with, or seeking to enter into contractual or proprietary or pecuniary relations with the Government.

(h) Ministers should scrupulously avoid speculative investments in securities in respect of which, from their position and their special means of early or confidential

information, they have, or may have, an advantage over other people in anticipating market changes.

(i) Ministers should not practise journalism while holding office. Exception may be made of works of a literary, historical, scientific, philosophical or romantic character."

Mr E. O. Eyo made the astounding proposition that a medical doctor would cease to be one on taking Ministerial office. With regard to practice as Solicitor, Mr Chamberlain as Prime Minister ruled in 1937 as follows:

"I agree with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that it would be unreasonable to require that a solicitor, on becoming a Member of the Government, should dissolve his partnership or should allow his annual practising certificate to lapse. On the other hand he should, in accordance with the principle underlying Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's rule, cease to carry on the daily routine work of the firm or to take an active part in its ordinary business, although he should not be precluded from continuing to advise in matters of family trusts, guardianships, and similar cases. A certain amount of discretion must be allowed, since it is impossible to cover every conceivable case in any rule, but I am satisfied that under the conditions I have laid down every reasonable requirement of propriety will be fulfilled."

According to *Jennings* the more important question which arises in the case of Ministers relates not to the bias which they might possibly possess through private or external influence but to their competence for their posts.

Has Dr Imoke offended against all or any of these rules? The answer must be no. The Government laid down a broad policy on grants but does not concern itself as to whom these grants are made. That is a matter for the Ministry. Dr Imoke was not and never has been a Minister of Health. There can, therefore, be no question of his putting his private interest before his public duty. He made an application like other medical practitioners and, like other medical practitioners, was considered and given a grant. Therefore "rule" (c), which is the one that can, by some stretch of the imagination be considered at all, does not in any way apply.

We have gone to this length to explain the circumstances of this grant and to explain that, in the view of the Government, receipt of a grant for medical work which was supported in principle and approved by the Governor does not and cannot constitute a breach of Ministerial rules of conduct.

The trouble, as I see it, is that Mr Eyo thinks that without him at the helm of affairs, this Region will perish. Any person who thinks so is either a lunatic or a visionary. I can assure Mr Eyo that this Region, by the grace of God, will continue to grow from strength to strength, with him, without him and in spite of him.

The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke): Mr Speaker, after a few years of close observation in and outside this House, it has become quite obvious to me that this man Eyo, who calls himself an hon. Member, apart from being a fraud is also a case of schizophrenia or split personality, an introvert whose stock-in-trade is character assassination.

Apart from its false premises this Motion is malicious and uncalled for, and coming as it does from such a nonentity, I saw no reason why I should be provoked to take such a rash decision as resigning my office before explaining the position. I had therefore, to insist, when it appeared before the Government Party, that the Motion be listed for debate before the end of this session to afford me the earliest opportunity to explain.

My conscience tells me that the only thing to do under the circumstances is to submit myself to judgment by the rest of this hon. House. I therefore like to appeal to the hon. Premier, through you, Mr Speaker, that I shall be extremely grateful if Members would be allowed to vote freely according to their conviction and not on Party lines, and, believe me, hon. Gentlemen, if after hearing me it is your verdict, even by a simple majority, I shall resign my office as Minister of Finance immediately, even before leaving this House. But what I refuse to accept is to be provoked by a nincompoop to resign. (*Laughter.*)

Mr Speaker: Order! Order! I would like hon. Members to use Parliamentary language.

Dr Imoke: Mr Eyo knows very well that even before I became a Minister I lived an honest and comfortable life as opposed to him

[DR IMOKE]

who can only subsist on dishonesty and fraud. Remove him from this House and you will soon find him behind bars.

I now go on to my case, Mr Speaker, and I start by giving a brief history of the background of this grant.

The desire to build a Clinic or Hospital to serve the people in the rural area of my village (Itigidi in Afikpo Division, Ogoja Province) and surrounding villages who have been suffering from lack of medical facilities, was born in me as far back as the days when I was a Medical Student in the Yaba School of Medicine (1934-38). Any time I came home on holidays I would witness one or more cases of loss of life from such emergencies as strangulated hernia, difficult labour, etc.—lives which could easily have been saved if there were a hospital nearby. The nearest hospital then was at Obubra, forty miles away, and the only way to get there was by canoe, which took about thirty hours.

My first attempt to carry out this mission was in 1949 when I was a Medical Officer in the Government service of Nigeria. In support of this last statement, Mr Speaker, may I tender in evidence a copy of a letter by an Administrative Officer (one of the sincere expatriates we still have in this Region) commenting on the foundation of the Hospital which was laid in that year, but which was later abandoned for a more suitable site. With your permission, Mr Speaker, I would like to read it before handing it over to you. The original is available if you want it, and, moreover, the Administrative Officer concerned is, I understand, here in Enugu now.

With your permission, Mr Speaker, I will read a letter from the office of the Native Administration, Afikpo Division dated 22nd February, 1949, and which was written by the District Officer:

“Dear Dr Imoke,

When at Itigidi this week I inspected the foundations of the Hospital you are putting up at Itigidi with the greatest interest. I am extremely sorry to have missed you, as you were away at Calabar.

2. I am particularly delighted that you are setting out on this enterprise and I wish the venture every success. If and when you come home to settle, I am very much hoping you will enter into local affairs . . .”

The rest of it is shown on this District Officer's letter. I do not intend to waste the time of the House. I have read the relevant part. Thank you.

In 1951, I decided to leave Government service and go into private practice after fourteen years of meritorious service. I was thirty-nine years old then and had to forfeit my pension rights since I had not reached the retiring age of forty-five. This was to enable me to carry out my mission. In 1952, I started seriously on the construction, at its present site, of the Hospital which I name “EJA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL” in memory of a late uncle who was very instrumental in the introduction of Missionary work in that area. But, realising fully well that the people in the area can hardly afford to pay the normal fees that private practitioners charge in urban areas and that it would be more of a charitable work, I decided to embark at the same time on putting up a small one-storey building at Abakaliki which would yield me a small but steadier income from rents with which to augment whatever income I could get from the Hospital.

This Abakaliki building is up till now still uncompleted; only the ground floor has been built. In 1954, while in the process of building this hospital and house with my meagre savings and what I could collect from private practice then, the Government of the Eastern Region announced its intention to help private practitioners, to settle in rural areas. The then Minister of Health, Dr Okpara, actually called a conference of private Medical Practitioners, at which I was present, to inform them about this policy. This was in September, 1954. Then I was a floor Member of the Eastern House of Assembly, not a Minister. Naturally, from that moment I made up my mind to take advantage of this offer by Government.

The only reason why I did not apply for this grant immediately after the conference with the Minister of Health was that I was still waiting for approval of the plan of the Hospital

by the Medical Department. As a matter of fact since I anticipated protracted delay from the usual official red-tapism, I had decided long ago, as far back as 1952—to start before even submitting the plan—to build. I have a cousin who works in the Public Works Department as Technical Assistant, now an Inspector of Works, who prepared the plan for me according to P.W.D. standards, and so I had no doubts about its being ultimately approved. Moreover it was in a rural area where building regulations do not strictly apply. However, as soon as I received information that the plan was approved, and that this would soon be confirmed in writing, I decided to apply.

In October, 1954, the following month, I was called upon by the Premier of the Eastern Region to be one of his Ministers, and was then assigned the Portfolio of Labour. On the 20th of November, 1954, that is a few weeks after the conference called by Dr Okpara of private practitioners, I addressed a letter to the Minister of Health (Dr Okpara) referring him to the policy and the conference he had with us, and applying for a grant of £5,000 to help me to complete the hospital buildings. Again, Mr Speaker, you will permit me to read and then tender a copy of my letter of application for the grant.

“Dr S. E. Imoke,
Ministry of Labour,
Enugu.
20-11-54.

The Minister of Health,
Eastern Region.

SIR,

**Grant for building of Rural Hospital—
Eja Memorial Hospital, Itigidi,
Afikpo Division (30 Beds)**

I beg to refer to paragraph 4 of section A (Curative Medicine) of your policy paper for Medical and Health Services and to your interview on 5th September, 1954, with the Association of Private Practitioners, Eastern Region, where the Association was informed of Government's intention to give assistance in the form of grants towards capital cost to any private practitioner who would wish to establish in suitable rural areas.

I wish to take this opportunity to state humbly that I have the pride to claim that I am the first and only practitioner so far in this Region to venture on building a hospital in a rural area as indicated by the relevant communications, marked A, B, C and D (attached for your information and return).

As can be seen from these letters, this scheme had its birth a long time ago and plans for the site and buildings of the Hospital have—after vigorous criticism—been approved by the Director of Medical Services and the work started. A 12-bed Male ward and theatre is nearing completion and an Administration and Out-patients' Block has been half-way built.

A glance at the plan, a copy of which can be obtained from the Director of Medical Services, will show that it is a gigantic project for one man and I now begin to doubt if I can ever complete it fully without aid from some other source. Already, I have put in the best part of my life savings into it and that has only done about one-quarter of the whole work. I shall be grateful, therefore, if the Minister will come to my aid by persuading the Eastern Regional Government to consider making a grant of £5,000 to enable me complete just the buildings at the earliest possible date. If this is done I shall be very greatly relieved and left free to find about £3,000 more for equipment on my own.

It may be argued that as a politician and particularly a Minister of State I am not now in a position to carry out this project. Against that argument I would like to assure you that I have a cousin, Dr E. E. Ecoma, Medical Officer now in charge of the General Hospital, Ogoja, whose medical training was sponsored by me with the object in view of running this Hospital as joint partners. He will be quite prepared to take it over as soon as it is completed if it should become necessary for me to remain longer in the field of politics.

The attached Appendices (A, B, C, D) show suggested estimates on how the £5,000 (five thousand pounds), will be spent and also estimates of essential equipment.

Yours faithfully,
(Signed) S. E. Imoke.”

[DR IMOKE]

One of the relevant communications, i.e., "B" referred to in this letter was written to the Resident, Ogoja, at the time of my resignation in connection with the project.

The Minister, Dr Okpara, then had discussion with the then Governor, Sir Clement Pleass, on the advisability of making such a grant to me as a Minister of State, and they arrived at a conclusion that since this was to provide social amenities where such are lacking, there should be no objection to making this grant, particularly as I had already started on the project.

This decision was communicated to me by the Minister and later, a letter was signed by him approving the grant. With your permission, Mr Speaker, I will read it:

"Ministry of Health,
Eastern Region,
Enugu.
4th February, 1955.

SIR,

Eja Memorial Hospital, Itigidi

I am directed by the hon. Minister of Health to refer to your letter dated the 20th of November, 1954, in respect of a capital grant of £5,000 to enable you complete a hospital at Itigidi.

2. I am to say that a provision is made in the draft Estimates for such assistance, but, as you know, no definite promise can be made until the Estimates are approved by the Legislature.

3. In the meantime, I am to request for evidence of your title to the land on which you propose to build. It is also advisable to have a Board of Governors with the Trustees registered under the Land (Perpetual Succession) Ordinance. This will ensure that the project does not die with the death of the proprietor. It is understood that this procedure is adopted by the Ministry of Education when making grants to private schools. The attachments to your letter are returned herewith.

I am, Sir,
Your Obedient Servant,
(Signed) J. O. Udoji."

To make assurance doubly sure I decided to discuss the matter personally with the Governor Sir Clement Pleass, who confirmed what Dr Okpara said, that he saw nothing wrong. The Premier whom I also approached later assured me that there was nothing wrong in getting this grant to enable me to complete the Hospital.

Subsequently, as the letter I have just read points out, I was granted £4,000 out of the £5,000 I asked for, and since, on account of the rising cost of building materials and labour, this could not complete even half of the buildings and equipment of the Hospital (planned for 30 beds) I had to ask for a further grant of £6,000, which was granted only this year by the present Minister of Health, hon. E. P. Okoya, making a total grant of £10,000, as distinct from Mr Eyo's figure of £14,000—£4,000 loan plus £10,000 grant.

Here I wish to emphasise that before any part of a grant was released, the Minister of Health always took the trouble to make sure that the work of construction at the site was already worth the amount to be released, and he did this by getting the Administrative Officer of the Public Works Department to inspect and value the work on the site. As a matter of fact, in my own case, the bills for all the equipment and the building materials, and even the Contractors' Agreements, were being submitted to the Ministry of Health for payment direct to the suppliers and contractors, until very recently when the Ministry of Health complained that it was getting too cumbersome for them to carry out this arrangement. The present system agreed upon by the Ministry of Health is to pay the money direct to the Doctor, once they were assured by the Public Works Department Valuer that the amount of work done was commensurate with the amount to be released. My second grant of £6,000 which was applied for on 5th August, 1957, was only released after the Public Works Department had reported to the Ministry of Health that the work done and equipment already bought was worth more than £10,000.

The hospital is still under construction and I am proud to say that when completed, it will be a show piece, and that it will be worth almost double the grant put in by Government.

I accepted the conditions and got another reply when I sent a reminder, approving the grant.

"No. MHS. 215/S.124,
Ministry of Health,
Eastern Region,
Enugu.
30th January, 1956.

I am directed by the Honourable the Minister of Health to inform you that out of the £15,000 provided in the 1955-56 Estimates of the Medical Department, Grants to Private Practitioners for settlement in Rural Areas, you are given a grant of £4,000 for the completion of the Memorial Hospital in Itigidi.

I am to remind you that the grant is made on the understanding that you adhere strictly with the conditions laid down for this grant, thus: (1) The Doctor must be a private practitioner, etc."

In order not to waste the time of the House, Mr Speaker, the hon. Minister of Health has already read these conditions.

The letter continues:—

"The Director of Medical Services has been requested to pay £4,000 to the District Officer, Afikpo, which is the nearest Government Treasury. The District Office has been authorised to pay over the amount in instalments to the contractor selected by you as the work progresses and when satisfied that work equal to the amount to be paid has been completed. I am to say that it now rests with you to initiate appropriate action to fulfill those of the conditions he has not yet been able to comply with."

Mr Speaker, I need not waste the time of the House. If you like, I will submit this whole file. I have got all the details there.

Mr Speaker, one would regard this project a humanitarian venture deserving such assistance as the Government had offered and that one was entitled to the offer, the holding of Ministerial office notwithstanding. As a matter of fact, if the grant had been withheld, I wonder if the result would not have been the resignation of my Ministerial office, as the choice would then have to be between staying on in the crusade to liberate my country—for that is all that politics mean to me today—and retiring

again to continue my original and life's mission. As I pointed out earlier, when my conscience was in doubt, I decided to approach the Governor on the issue of Ministerial conduct, and as he saw no objection, I carried on. Since then, I have maintained a free and clear conscience and, Mr Speaker, the whole thing is no secret. As you know, it has been publicised once or twice in the press that I had these grants, and Mr Eyo knew about it all along. That is why I cannot help feeling that the Motion has a malicious motive, and I dare say that it is because I succeeded at both the London Conference and Minority Commission in making it impossible for Eyo and his henchmen to realise their dream of a C.O.R. State.

To proceed, Mr Speaker, it may interest the House to know that part of the conditions of this grant is to accept that the management of the Hospital, when opened, will be in the hands of a Board of Governors in which Government nominees will serve. I have already given this assurance in writing.

Mr Speaker, I have gone to the trouble of giving the history of the background of this Hospital because I have no doubt that the Members of the Opposition know of my philanthropic nature, and they ought to know that it is this same nature that moved me to think of building a hospital in a rural area where people can ill afford Doctor's fees. If I had wanted to set up a lucrative practice, I could have decided to do so in Enugu (where my reputation as Medical Officer, 1945-49, has not been excelled by any other) or in any other urban area like Port Harcourt where I also served for some years—1941-43, and not in a rural area.

The Leader of the Opposition, who incidentally (by a well-known Ibo tradition or custom) ought not to claim Ikoku as his father, but Rev. Ejemote Ecoma, my late cousin who first married his mother, since Mr Ikoku has not refunded the dowry, knows about my philanthropy and generosity. He knows that I was financially responsible for the medical training in the United Kingdom of his senior brother, Dr Eson Ejemote Ecoma. He knows also, that I have him—Dr Ecoma—in mind as one who would run the Hospital if I am still in politics when it is completed. I am not surprised that he should be an accomplice to this—birds of the same feather must flock together.

[DR IMOKE]

I am only surprised that the sly gentleman, Mr Okoi Arikpo, should be a party to this malicious act, for when he (Arikpo) was stranded in the United Kingdom and made several appeals in writing to friends here in this country, I was the only one who came to his rescue. He probably would not be what he is today if I had not made available to him the £200 he needed so badly to complete his studies in Anthropology. In his case, I had to make him pay back the money because he proved unappreciative when he came back.

Mr Speaker, I am sorry that I should have to say these things here now, but that dishonest sadist Eyo and his henchmen have called for it and I think it is about time they are spoken to in the language they understand.

I am sure if Eyo were in my shoes today, knowing that a Hospital in a rural area was not a paying concern, he would not dare build one merely to serve the people, and if after starting one he had a grant, he would have misappropriated it in his usual dishonest way.

Hon. Members: Shame! Eyo, Shame!

Dr Imoke: And it will interest you to know that when Mr Okoi Arikpo returned with his Calabar wife from the United Kingdom in 1951 or thereabouts, they attempted running a maternity home at Ugep, his home, but when they discovered it was not lucrative enough, they quickly packed bag and baggage to Calabar, where they now settle. Is there any wonder then that he is so keen on C.O.R. State and joins in the conspiracy to malign my character just because I oppose his selling his birthright?

I want to say, Mr Speaker, that even when I was facing the threat of re-entry in 1956, into a plot at Uwani in Enugu which was leased to me by the Lands Authority in 1951 when I was still in the Medical Service, I could not attempt—as Eyo would have done—to make use of any part of this grant. I went to Barclays Bank (after failing with the African Continental Bank on the ground that I had not adequate security to offer) to raise a loan of £2,000 to enable me to build on the plot. The debt of this is still outstanding to the tune of about £1,000, and here I have a letter which I recently got from this same Bank which I would

like to read:

“Garden Avenue,
Enugu, Nigeria,
2nd December, 1958.

Personal and Private

Dr the hon. S. E. Imoke,
The Minister of Finance,
Enugu.

DEAR SIR,

Your loan facility was due for review last month and it will be appreciated if you could call on us at your earliest convenience to discuss the position.

Yours faithfully,
(Sgd.).....”

I refer anyone who is in doubt to the Enugu branch of Barclays Bank D.C.O., or if you like, Mr Speaker, I will submit my bank records for your scrutiny.

Rather than dare to pay back this debt, as Eyo would have done, by removing from this last grant of £6,000 part of which was paid direct to me, I have been putting in more out of my salary into this hospital. I invite Mr Eyo and his men to take any valuer to the site and satisfy themselves that at least £15,000 worth of work has been done already, excluding £2,000 worth of instruments and equipment which are also already bought for the Hospital. And I submit that apart from what is disclosed in my statement above, I own no other property or investment which could give any room for suspicion that any part of this grant has been misappropriated. My bank accounts as I mentioned before is balancing “minus” now.

Mr Speaker, as I said at the beginning, I will willingly submit myself to the verdict of this House rather than that of a nincompoop; and whatever the verdict may be, I am perfectly certain that I will have nothing to regret and that I can never descend to the “hon.” E. O. Eyo’s level—honourable indeed!

Mr Ogon: Mr Speaker, Members must have realised, after listening to all the speeches, that we people of Ogoja Province are very proud of Dr Imoke and what he has contributed towards our political advancement. We are glad to say, Sir, that Ogoja people are very anxious that we should never send an ex-convict to the House. Sir, we value good name in the Province and we always make sure that instead of getting lawyers and doctors who will be “Groupers” we will send ordinary honest

politicians to the House and Dr Imoke is one of them. Sir, you will notice that even my hon. Friends Mr Arikpo and Chief Morphy are not in the House now. They have kept out of the House. It is interesting to mention that the population of Ogoja Province is well over 1½ million. The people of Abakaliki with their teeming population have only one hospital.

I am looking forward, Sir, with interest to hearing what some Members of the Opposition will say—I will mention the dignified man like hon. Ita and Rev. Okon Efiang. Mr Eyo mentioned that Dr Ntebong had applied for a medical grant. The true fact is that he was about applying for a medical grant when he got into difficulty with the Government and he was suspended and did not as a matter of fact apply for a medical grant.

Dr Okpara: Certainly!

Mr Ogon: I understand that it was Mr Eyo who put him into trouble. I do not know, Sir, whether the Premeir will not consider withdrawing official recognition from the Opposition this stage.

Sir, we join others in condemning this attack on the integrity of Dr Imoke. I should also say that he is honest to a point of embarrassment. I want to congratulate him for his Christian virtues and for his honesty. I want to say that I am disgusted with this kind of character assassination. If we must lead, we must lead in truth and not by character assassination. I do not think it is fair to assassinate the character of honest men like Dr Imoke.

Mr Deputy Speaker: I hope it is the wish of the House to continue the debate after 6 p.m.

Government Bench: Yes.

Mr Ikoku: Mr Speaker, I do not catch your question but what I gather now is that you have asked whether it was the wish of the House to continue after 6 p.m. I did not follow you at all. My view is that we had moved a Motion this morning to suspend Standing Order as to hours of sitting and the times were clearly set out. We would very much like to keep to what we have all agreed upon.

Mr Deputy Speaker: The Motion which we had this morning was a Motion to suspend

Standing Order as to hours of Sitting but then the particulars were not in the Motion.

The Minister of Production (Dr M. I. Okpara): It is the Speaker who recognises that it is time. It is not for any other Member of the House. It is the Speaker that tells us whether it is 6 o'clock or 5 o'clock at any convenient time.

Mr Deputy Speaker: My ruling on this now is that we break off until 9 p.m.

Sitting suspended at 6 p.m.

Sitting resumed at 9 p.m.

Mr Ogon: Mr Speaker, as I was saying before we went on break, I think it is time, Sir, that we should call a stop to this character assassination in this House. We used to say that when one points one's finger at one's neighbour, the other three are pointing at the one. We on this side of the House want to create an atmosphere of trust, respect and sympathy for each other, it does not necessarily mean that we have not got the weapon with which to attack the Opposition. I want to know the attitude of the Leader of the Opposition to this Motion because it is unfortunate if he associates himself with it. There is a car which was involved in a night raid, and this car, as its official licence shows, belongs to my hon. Friend. This car was held up by the Police, and how it got away from there I do not know. But, Sir, my information is that about last month "Abanidimegu" made a raid with this car again and there is at the moment a police case involving this particular car. Again there is a German firm which is trading in Uyo and we are told that my hon. Friend, by dubious means, has got sums of money amounting to about £25,000 to defend them in the country. I am saying these things to show that when Mr E. O. Eyo points a finger at his neighbour the rest are pointing at him. I have made researches on the activities of some members of the Opposition and have got a dossier containing all about them, but I am not going to release them. I will keep these facts, though ugly, for the future.

Since 1951, I have been keeping copy of a letter received from Resident's Office, Ogoja, written by Dr Imoke which showed that before

[MR OGON]

1951 when he wrote of his desire, he hoped to help the people of Itigidi with this hospital. I do not want, Sir, to bother you with reading this because both the Leader of the House and the Attorney-General have spoken on this point; but I would like to read some extracts because of the interest. It is dated 16th November, 1951:

“I shall be very grateful if you would grant me interview any day between 1st December, 1951 and 15th December on the above issue. Right from my cradle in the Medical School, Yaba, it has been my ardent desire to be able to go back home one day and open a clinic or a small hospital which will serve the people of Itigidi and the districts around. I feel the time has now come to face this task, and so I have resigned my appointment in the Government service to enable me to carry my plans through. My reliever comes tomorrow and I shall be leaving for home immediately after handing over. Your reply will, therefore, reach me early if it is directed to the people of Afikpo Division and I hope to get to Ogoja.”

This is a letter from a man in the Government service who has resigned, declaring his desire to start this hospital. Sir, I am saying that the time has come to face this point. Afterwards, there is no need Mr Eyo pointing his fingers at another person, when I have seen his car which he purchased with Government advance being licensed as taxi and used to kill a night-watchman. The same car was also used in an “Abanidiegwu” raid just this month. And again, he had been connected with an arrangement concerning a German Firm and the sum of £25,000.

In winding up, I would say that the main issue which this House is called upon to decide is this: has Dr Imoke abused his office? Our reply to that is that he has not abused his office. When he makes his newspaper attacks on Imoke's character, he will be assured that Dr Imoke will come out cleaner than before and we the people of Ogoja will still repose our confidence in him now and for ever more. (*Hear! Hear!*).

I want to say, Sir, that if I happen to go to heaven and find Mr Eyo there, I must think that I have gone to the wrong place. Therefore, I oppose this Motion.

One point more: Mr Eyo, even when he was the Chairman of the E.R.D.C., formed a company and made his father the Managing Director. He instructed his father to apply for a loan when he was the Chairman and some sub-chairmen in this affair are on this side of the House. When we noticed this happening, it was hon. Okwu and myself who came to the rescue of this Region.

Mr E. O. Eyo: Name the sub-chairmen.

Mr Ogon: You know them.

What I am saying is that this Government under the leadership of Dr Azikiwe is the most democratic Government anywhere in the world. Our ardent prayer is that we appeal to the hon. Leader of the Opposition not to be misled by Mr Eyo and I can assure you that we shall never resort to character assassination, but if the Opposition Members continue in this manner and Government still recognises them, we shall be prepared to record point by point.

Mr Speaker, I oppose this Motion.

Mr Etuk: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I rise to speak on this Motion, because I feel that no one side of this House has got a monopoly of righteousness; but the majority of hon. Members who have spoken already seem to feel that we all on this side have no thinking faculty, and that we are led by the nose.

Government Bench: But you have got to prove that it is not so.

Mr Etuk: If a Motion is made, I do not think that it is necessary that everyone in the Opposition will be consulted. At least, the main thing is to lay the facts on the Table of the House and everyone with his own conscience will express his view on it.

We have gone a standard too low that it cannot be regarded as high as any in the world. For two days now, Saturday and today, we have gone a little bit down below the belt and as I said before, the Government side and the Opposition side both have got their own part, but if we, as the hon. Premier pointed out in London, can only look to the facts and try to

get out what is right and leave talking about people, we will go further. That is all I have to say.

Rev. O. Efiang, C.B.E. (Calabar Division): Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to express a view on this Motion. When I saw it in the Order Paper, I looked at it as a technical Motion, probably a fact-finding Motion. In that sense, anybody has a right to table a Motion or to ask a question. Two ways are plainly open before anybody. If one is in doubt one asks question to find out definitely the correct position. If one does not ask questions, one can put up a Motion with a view to finding out exactly what the situation is.

As I listened to the debate on this Motion I did feel that there has been no proof to my satisfaction that there was any loan (*Hear! Hear!*) and I realised that it was only a grant or grants. I felt further that it was the policy of the Government to do so. I naturally had to question to find out whether this policy was only applicable to Medical Practitioners or it was dictated by the urgency of the time or it would be a policy for all times. I do not know, but I gather that it was a policy and I have no reason whatsoever to refute that it was satisfactory. (*Hear! Hear!*).

I must say that I do not like the language that has been used in this House today. When I mentioned it outside to a friend, he said that this was the first time in the history of Parliament that any language of this sort has been so used.

I do not feel that the Motion ought to have been tabled because the explanation given is quite satisfactory. I feel that all formalities were complied with before this grant was given. Papers have been read to us by speakers on this Motion. It was a technical Motion, and I do think that when one talks about character assassination I could defend Dr Imoke's character as being 100 per cent good. But if it were approved against him, as a Minister, he has no right to receive a loan or grant. Of course the question of loan has been washed out. One of his colleagues stood up and explained the position, and I have no reason to gainsay what has been said. I should say that I would not like to associate myself with any character assassination. I cannot say that the

Motion is one of character assassination, rather it is one of technicality. If the object is not character assassination and in the light of the explanations made, I would ask that this Motion be withdrawn, so that the atmosphere might be clarified and made pure. (*Applause*).

Mr Ukuta, M.B.E.: Mr Speaker, it is high time that a Bill should be introduced in this House to the effect that dishonest criminals and ex-convicts are disallowed from contesting elections in the Eastern Region. (*Hear! Hear!*). Last time I could recollect that I suggested a Deportation Bill in this Region. (*Laughter*). Some people in this Region are trifling with democracy and interpreting it upside-down. We have known Mr E. O. Eyo for some time in this Region as one of those "American Gangsters". We have all known the history of Mr Eyo. He always comes to this House to tell falsehood. He is one who knows the truth but will never tell it. Every Motion he introduces in this House is always controversial and tinged with falsehood.

The Government must be firm if the Opposition is going just to play tricks and indulge in character assassination. What is an hon. Member? I think that an hon. Member should be a man with good intentions towards others. He cannot use hon. Members' names to soil other people and tarnish their good names. When Eyo was in the Government bench he attacked every good and bad civil servant, both Expatriates and Africans here. He liked to jam two heads together and he called it democracy.

The duty of Opposition Members is to criticise constructively and not to destroy. Sir, unless all Members of the Opposition speak their minds individually, I personally regard them all as being made of the same stuff. I know an honest and hon. Member will not support Mr Eyo's Motion. Mr Speaker, Sir, I think this House is for hon. Members and not people who want to strike newspaper headlines in this country and overseas by brewing troubles.

Mr Speaker, let a Bill be introduced to prevent ex-convicts and criminals from standing elections.

The Minister of Commerce (Mr J. U. Nwodo): Mr Speaker, this Motion is frivolous, ill-conceived, violently antagonistic and

[MR NWODO]

mischievous. When the people of the Eastern Region elected this House it was with the avowed intention of electing a democratic Parliament capable of surveying the needs of the people and evolving formulae by which these needs could be satisfied. Hence the various Ministries of the Government have put forward policies in respect of which they propose to carry out their functions. The policy of the Ministry of Health, among other things, is to bring home to the man in the rural area the advantages of medical and health facilities.

In Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1954, Government clearly stated that the ultimate aim of the Ministry of Health is a National Health Service, to bring medical facilities within the reach of all people and provide protection from the debilitating effect of diseases which seriously affect production and wealth. Three stages can be identified in our march towards this goal depending on the sphere of Government influence:—

- (a) the period of Urban Medical development,
- (b) the period of Rural Medical development,
- (c) the period of National Health Service after the second stage has reached a reasonable level.

Under category (b)—the period of rural medical development—the same Sessional Paper at paragraph 4 made it abundantly clear that Government would help private Medical Practitioners to establish in the rural areas. The pertinent paragraph I am referring to reads:

“in addition to this whole-time and part-time supervision, general medical practitioners would be assisted to establish in suitable rural areas”.

From the very inception of this policy it could be seen that Government was alive to its responsibility and felt that it was in duty bound to assist private medical practitioners who would like to establish in the rural areas. This is so because, hospitals, like schools, are charitable institutions which, by their very nature are the ultimate responsibility of the Government to provide. Hospitals are no limited liability companies and their very essence is to

serve the well-being of the community. It is true, therefore, to say that any group or any individual who elects to provide this service to the community is doing a yeoman service and should therefore be encouraged.

As we all know, Ministerial system of Government is something new in this country and what we might regard as a violation of code of etiquette could be something entirely outside the prescription. As a matter of fact, we have no precedent to quote and the only means of diagnosis is the ability of the individual here to interpret rightly the theory as enunciated by the Secretary of State in his Despatch dated 1st December, 1951, and I suppose the learned Attorney-General has given the credence to this enunciation.

My submission, Mr Speaker, is that there has been no contravention of this provision. Dr Imoke at the time of his appointment declared his private interest to the Governor. Right from the time of Dr Imoke's appointment it was known that he was owning a hospital. When he applied for a grant the District Officer, Afikpo, who so to say, was the eye and ear of the Governor and the Government, recommended and the Governor approved. The Governor is the custodian of this code of etiquette and, in fact, the sole arbiter in the event of contravention. Assuming that he was not consulted, what could have prevented His Excellency from calling the attention of Dr Imoke to this anomaly since the grant was made and published.

As I said earlier, the Motion is mischievous. Our Opposition is factious and irresponsible. They know that they cannot form an alternative Government. They cannot even form the quorum to carry on the business of the House. I suppose that it is by the courtesy of the Government and the Party in power that Mr Eyo has been given the latitude to waste the time and money of the Region by moving silly and frivolous Motions. His Motions in this House have always been one of mischief-making and character assassination. In 1956 it was a Motion against the person of the Premier and the request for an inquiry into the affairs of the African Continental Bank. We were subjected to a sort of Spanish Inquisition and the conduct of the Premier was investigated from the apex to the base. We were exonerated

both by the Tribunal and the Nigerian electorate. Is this not a mischievous Motion? Then this year, there is the Motion against the person of the late Speaker, Mr Ernest Egbuna, calling on the House to lose confidence in him and request him to resign. Is this also not mischievous? In this Session the Motions are varied but all aim at the same mischief-making. There is one by the Leader of Opposition calling on the House to urge the Government to re-introduce Free Primary Education up to Standard VI with effect from January, 1959. Another by Mr Eyo calling on the Government to lay on the Table of the House the report of Messrs Mennell and Waterhouse and Company on the Assets and Liabilities of the African Continental Bank, and a third on Dr Imoke, as usual, calling on the House to ask him to resign his appointment because a grant has been made for the building of a hospital to serve the community at Itigidi in Afikpo Division.

There were such obstructive Motions such as refusal to allow Parliamentary Secretaries to spend their leave abroad and the purchase of a Rolls Royce car for the Premier. Both the offices of the Premier and the Parliamentary Secretaries are State Institutions and discussion on them should be approached with as an impartial motive as latitude could permit. But there, these persons of vindictive and questionable character were personal and antagonistic.

In my view, the time has come when the Government should not only withdraw recognition from the Opposition but also refuse to co-operate with them when such cantankerous Motions and attitudes aimed at painting the good name of the Region in lurid colours to the outside world are put forward by them. I am sure that the whole Nigerian public opinion will see with our line of action if we decide not to fraternise with these people. They should be regarded as evil men.

Mr Speaker, I oppose the Motion. (*Applause*).

Mr Ikoku: Mr Speaker, Sir, I have listened with great patience to all that has been said in this House and I assure Members opposite that I am very delighted with all they have said and I am very happy with the

compliments they have paid. I can assure them that the Opposition is not at all bothered by Government recognition or no recognition. We are here as representatives of our constituencies (nothing more, nothing less) and we are not going to stand for any carefully feigned dealing. What is Government recognition? Look, when Members have a lot to say, Mr Speaker, let them say.

The Motion before us, Sir, is an interesting one and in fact, of all the people who have spoken here today, it is only the Minister of Finance who evoked my sympathy, even though he tried to spoil his case by losing control of himself. It is a fact, Sir, that the Minister of Finance has said very many interesting things—I regard them as very interesting. As for example, Sir, I never knew that my father did not pay dowry on my mother. (*Tumultuous Laughter*). This is very interesting but at the same time, I know that there is a marriage certificate—the marriage was solemnised in the Church and there is the confusion that I do not know who is right—my father or Dr Imoke. It may be that the certificate could have been forged!

The Government case on the Motion before us here is based, I think, on two things. The first is that it is Government Policy to try to do with £10,000 through private practitioners what Government cannot directly achieve at less than £35,000. The second point is whether Dr Imoke, at the time he took this money, was a practising Medical Practitioner. Now, there has been no attempt to deny the fact that the grant was made. The second point I am going to make is to bring out very clearly the lines of the argument I regard as important. I would like to commend the Government for the rather frank way they have tried to approach this matter—a subject which is rather novel as far as this House is concerned. But there was only one thing on which the Government has not been very frank to this House and that is the question of the consultation with the Governor. We were told by the Leader of the House that he consulted the Governor.

Dr Okpara: Certainly.

Mr Ikoku: Many letters have been read here, but it is very interesting to note that no letter has been read to the effect that the Governor

[MR IKOKU]

gave his approval, and even the Leader of the House, when he spoke, had admitted—and I do not know whether he said it out of temper—that he did not take the matter to the Executive Council. The position now, Sir, is that at the material time, the Governor was the President of the Executive Council. He did take it up to the Governor, but he did not take it up to the Executive Council. He said that he had some doubt in his mind and as a result of this doubt, he did consult the Governor. Why consult the Governor in the way he did; why did he not go to the Governor in a direct way? The position, Mr Speaker, is that it is quite probable that the Leader of the House did consult the Governor but unofficially and the only evidence he can call upon in this House is that we should take it as true, counting on his own personal integrity. This is not a weighty reason he can adduce in this House. I am not a judge and I am not prepared to say the last word in this matter. In the first instance, there is the fact that in 1955–56 financial year a grant of £4,000 was made to Dr Imoke, and the second fact is that in 1958–59 financial year another grant of £6,007 19s was made to Dr Imoke. In effect, both grants were made towards Eja Hospital.

He attended the meeting called by the Minister of Health as a floor Member in this House, but when he did in fact apply for the loan he was holding the portfolio of Labour in the Eastern Region. The fifth fact is that another Minister, the Minister of Health, at that time approved the grant. The sixth fact is that the approving Minister—the Minister who approved the grant in his own statement here in the House—did not bother to refer the matter to the Executive Council. The seventh fact is that the first grant of £4,000 was paid over while Dr Imoke was Minister of Labour and the eighth fact is that the second grant was paid over while Dr Imoke was Minister of Finance. Beyond this point I cannot be very certain because a very material point has been raised by the Leader of the House as to consultation with the Governor and frankly, Sir, you just have to take it or lump it, because there is no evidence before the House. Another doubtful point is whether, even though in law according to the *Gazette*, we have been shown the Register of Medical Practitioners, Dr Imoke was and is still a Medical Practitioner in Nigeria duly registered.

There is no absolute certainty as to whether he was at the material time a practising doctor—he was a Minister at the time and it is now a matter of interpretation. You are a lawyer, Mr Speaker; it is a whole question of *de facto* and *de jure*. *De jure* he was a doctor; *de facto*, was he a doctor at the time? I have said early that I cannot go beyond these eight facts with certainty and I am not prepared to go beyond, because I consider the matter sufficiently serious to warrant our being very sure of our grounds before recording anything as a fact.

In winding up, Sir, I would like to make this clear that the conduct of affairs of the Opposition is a matter for the Opposition. It is not our business to come here and be schooled by the Government. We will decide what matter we will take up and how we are going to take it up; that is our prerogative.

In replying to those who have decided to leave the facts of the case and to use abusive language, all I will tell them is that frankly I am happy. The second thing I will tell them is that those who live in glass houses should not throw stones. Mr Speaker, Sir, I am making it clear that in a few months time we will be back in this House. It is my intention, Sir, to give this hon. House an opportunity to note and record, digest all questionable characters in this House. I do not know how I am going to do it but probably the best thing is to introduce a Motion calling on the House to take note of all questionable characters in this House.

I am not prepared to answer these Members today, but I am assuring them that within three months there will be ample opportunity here to single ourselves out one by one for attack on our characters, provided the Leader of the House does not use the big stick to stop it. Those who have a lot to say about Ikoku and the rest of us should better go and get ready; they will have the time for a full dress debate. I, too, am going to get ready for them.

Finally, Sir, my advice to the Government Bench is that when a matter comes up before the House, they should regard it as a duty to this House, and to the Region, to make all the facts available to us in as simple a way as possible. After that, they can abuse us to their hearts satisfaction. We are only imploring you, Sir, to prevail on them to produce

the facts first; they should not make any attempt at substituting abuse for debate. An interesting point is the citation made by the Minister of Production with reference to the man in Southern Rhodesia who was a Surgeon and a Minister.

Dr Okpara: So you do not know Sir Godfrey Huggins?

Mr Ikoku: You as a Doctor should know him. All the facts about this man have not been made known to us. When he was practising as a Doctor, was he taking grants to build a hospital? That is the question. When he was practising, what was happening to his emoluments? All these facts are not known to us.

I would like to appeal to the Government Bench that we should establish the best traditions of parliamentary practice in this House.

But at the same time, in accordance with hon. the Minister of Commerce, we are prepared for a "free for all", you know, "a rough and tumble affair" in this House. I would like to make it clear that the Opposition is not going to be pushed about and that we will raise matters in this House whenever we consider them necessary and shall do it in our own light and the Government should govern in their own light.

Chief Amachree: Mr Speaker, Sir, despite the threat of the Government Chief Whip, I would still like to say that we are all reasonable. I have always one principle and that principle is that if anybody tells me anything about somebody, I will never conclude until I have heard from the other person. I have said that I have no knowledge of this Motion until I came here. It would not have been out of place to say that it would have been wrong for a Minister to take a loan, but still I expected to hear both sides and to form my own opinion.

As for character which some hon. Members have been destroying in this House, I have taken it as base. I have always held my character above anything else and have tried to maintain this character for thirty-six years as a Government Official and with Government Officials who worked with me. I was the only man who

refused to take a penny from anybody. I was a Resettlement Officer and could make about £100 to £200 a day but I decided to remain poor only to maintain my character. So this character they have been destroying means a lot. Therefore, whenever they are referring to the Opposition, they should know to whom they are referring. I hold my character as above anything else in the world. My heart was almost burning when they were saying Opposition, Opposition, every time.

Well, Dr Imoke has given his explanation. The reason why I have accepted his explanation is because of the circumstances behind the move. I am satisfied with Dr Imoke's explanation as he has presented it. He had the mind of a humanitarian and even though as a Minister, that spirit was still with him. Not that any Minister can simply take any loan like that but the motive behind it is excellent. I still repeat that this does not mean that any Minister can take a loan and go away with it but in the case of Dr Imoke, he was doing it not for himself only but for the whole community.

We must respect at the same time, men who have held responsible posts for some time and must have to say that anybody dealing with us on this side must realise that there are people who have really had responsible posts. There are certain things which we must have to realise because responsibility means carefulness; by being too careful we must have to make mistakes. That is why we must have to give regard to the Ministers too and that is why as regards this, I have had no views but I am satisfied so far as I am concerned. (*Applause*).

Mr Agba: Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not intend to make any statement on this Motion partly because I am one of the persons interested in the Motion and partly because I consider it an attack not only on individual persons but as an attack on Ogoja Province as a whole. (*Laughter*).

I have another point to say. Somebody made an allusion to particular individuals on the Opposition side being absent because of the Motion; that I say is not true. One really went away because of personal interest, the other person on question of his profession, having been called by somebody elsewhere. I

[MR AGBA]

do not think that imputing such a motive or such intention is true on any particular individual as being a line of argument in this House.

Now, in the morning, and you remember last Saturday when I was talking on the Ministry of Health, I gave the House to understand how poorly Ogoja Province as a whole, and in particular Obudu Division, is ill-fed medically and I am really afraid and I feel it rather out of place to say anything contrary to any amenities that should be given to Ogoja Province as a whole and more so in the line of medical treatment. That is why I say really that I am an interested person and I should have held my peace.

Now, another point I would like to comment on is that type of argument that quite a lot of Members on the Government Side, and particularly certain Ministers, adopt in speaking to the Opposition Members. I would say, Mr Speaker, in my own way of thinking, that it is really irrelevant to a point of debate for Members to abuse one another and completely out of decorum, not only out of decorum of the House but also out of social decorum. I think such respected persons as Ministers of State should never for any one moment come into a public place like this and particularly in an hon. House to assassinate characters, that very same thing which they themselves abominably detest. They are guilty of the same crime, the very same crime which they seek strongly to eradicate. I do not think for any one moment that any worthy gentleman would, in order to wipe out the sense of murder from any particular area, come out himself to murder other people and I do not think, speaking from the line of logic, from my sense of argument, anybody can convincingly present his points to people by mere intimidation or by mere threat and by mere assassination of characters as some people have done.

I do not think that is the proper way of behaving and unless we are adopting a new method of arguing in this House, I fail to understand why anybody in coming here to defend his point should rain any amount of abusive words on his neighbour, and worst still, to intimidate him. I think some of the

Parliamentarians here are quite old enough to understand the duty the Opposition owes to the Government and what duty the Government owes to the State and to itself. Really, the Leader of the Opposition has put this in a nutshell, and I think it will be doing perhaps a lot of injustice wasting other people's time by dwelling on that sort of thing again. I will only put it briefly that the people concerned are trying to tell the Opposition that if they consider it necessary to bring forward a point to be debated in this hon. House, they should be afraid to do so. I think it is a pure waste of time and energy and they just can't do that. We definitely say that we do not come here to please anybody; we come here to do the business of Opposition, and that business must be done provided it is in the interest of the State and in the interest of the people concerned.

Finally, Sir, some Members of the Opposition filed Motions which touched Parliamentary Secretaries, certain Ministers and a lot of other Members. I think that is no reason why another Motion which a particular individual in the Opposition Bench thought necessary to present to the House should not come up. All I consider is that some Members are using what perhaps may sound too strange to some people—*argumentum ad hominem*—that certain arguments should not have to be used. It is authority argument really. The sense of abusing people is used as a means of winning a point. When a Motion is filed in the House, it is open to debate, and anybody who feels that he could speak and could present his case well could quite easily do so, and in a most laudable way. He could put it in a gentlemanly way and every reasonable man in the House can understand him. Some Opposition Members may see with him. That is why I, personally, have refrained from speaking on this Motion. I do honestly say that those men who perhaps have no reputation to defend, who have no honours themselves to defend, who have no other things to concern themselves with, except politics, come to this House to besmirch as many characters as possible, are grossly mistaken, be they what they are. (*Hear! Hear! from Government Supporters*). It is really a strange thing that some people whom I might call upstarts and who never in their lives dreamt of securing high position in any public office but suddenly find themselves in a big office have the audacity to rain abusive words on people.

I appeal to you, Sir, and to anybody who holds the reign of Government, to please desist from making these abusive statements. I think that whatever is said in this House is recorded and this record lasts for many years to come, and is read all over the world. We receive records of debates from Parliamentary Association and we send out our books as they do to us. The outside world will see the standard of debate in this House, and we have people who are supposed to have reputation overseas and men who are supposed to set good example. Our children will come to read these records, and how strange they will sound to them. I am quite in sympathy with the man who has been the subject of this Motion and I say it concerns me. I do not want to dwell on the Motion, but I merely want to touch the broad aspects of the debate that has arisen in this House.

The Premier: Mr Speaker, I think that it would be right for me to say that if all our struggles in order to rule ourselves are just a blind imitation of partisan politics abroad so that the have-nots could use any method, no matter how trivial, in order to embarrass the House, to enable them to form the Government of the day, then some of us have been fighting for the wrong ideal all these years. I had thought that our goal was not necessarily to replace British imperialism with African imperialism, but that we felt perfectly justified, for moral reasons, that the British have no right to impose their rule upon us and that it is our birthright. That is what I have been fighting for, and I am sure that is what other Members have been fighting for. But ours are not those of power politics; and it hurts my feelings a great deal to be exposed to the type of debate we have experienced today, particularly after listening to the Mover of this Motion. I have not come here to assail him or to impugn his integrity but I want him to realise that if he is really fighting for the freedom of Nigeria, then the statements made both from inside and from outside the House should be a lesson to him, to realise that even if he were acting in good faith, the harm he does is not only to Nigeria but to the black race in general. I am not saying that evil should be condoned; I am not saying that if the Opposition feels that the Government of the day is not doing the right thing they are not entitled, through the usual channels, to get the facts and embarrass the Government. But what I am saying is that

it is most iniquitous for anybody who calls himself a nationalist to come before this House time and again and use the platform of this House to give the impression to the outside world that although we say we are going to be independent in 1960, we are going to abuse it. And that is the sole purpose of this Motion. I hope I have been fair to him because it is not my intention to hit below the belt.

Now, I want to thank those Members of the Opposition who were convinced to point out what they thought was wrong. I feel that in a parliamentary democracy the essence of it is free discussion to enable any individual to say what people think should be done in order to have good Government.

Believe me, Mr Speaker, when I look at Eyo from here, I will say that if I were to have my choice, I think I would have this way: that if for the past twenty-four years one has fought the British to a standstill and I know that up till now so many of them hate me simply because I want my birthright, I would have had no other choice, Mr Speaker, but to shoot him down. Not because I love to commit murder but because he has given the outside world the poor impression of the African politician; that is the reason and nothing else.

Mr E. O. Eyo: Mr Speaker, I hope I am protected.

The Premier: The case made by the Leader of the Opposition on behalf of his side was that they acted in good faith. I wish I could believe my hon. Friend but I may say too that I am extremely disappointed at the stand taken by the Leader of Opposition. He has not given me the impression of maturity at all. Not because I am trying to shield the Minister of Finance but certainly we all know that in this game of politics, if we do not behave according to the rules, we must go and give others the chance; but for anyone to come here and say that he acted in good faith and then to support a Motion which I will soon dissect, I think, is giving an impression that he is not serious whatsoever.

Could we take Mr Eyo seriously that he had acted in good faith? What does the Motion say?

"That this House is deeply concerned over a loan of £4,000 and a grant of £10,000 from

[THE PREMIER]

public funds to Dr the hon. S. E. Imoke, Minister of Finance, Eastern Region for his private hospital at Itigidi, and hereby calls upon Dr the hon. S. E. Imoke, Minister of Finance, Eastern Region, to resign and refund the loan of £4,000 and grant of £10,000 forthwith."

Was there a loan? Throughout the debate I thought that Mr Eyo would have been able to put the strength of his conviction to justify this allegation but he failed to do so and he has refused to withdraw the Motion. Instead of that he has given the impression that he felt he was right and would continue to press this point to a logical conclusion. But that is wrong. If the Minister of Finance will get up in this House and point out that it is not so, and the Leader of the House will tell him so, and the other Government Front Benchers will tell him so, and he is not in a position to prove it to the hilt, why, if he had acted in good faith could he not admit that he has been given a wrong information and that will end it? That will definitely show that he has acted in good faith; that will show that he had no animus; that will show that he is not trying to be mischievous; it will show that he really meant that if a Minister abuses his office, that Minister should resign. He did not do that and he did not think that that has lowered him in the estimation of those who look forward to seeing Africans rule themselves. So that, on this point alone, Mr Speaker, his Motion is not only defective, but also contains falsehood and this falsehood has been used as a premise to come to an unjustified conclusion, only to attack unfairly an innocent man.

This is one side of the Motion. The other side of the Motion is to the effect that a grant of £10,000 from public funds was made to the Minister of Finance for a private hospital, etc., and calls upon him to refund it forthwith. The statement is correct. When he made his introduction of the Motion he stated the facts, and they were admitted by the Government side, but then the policy of the Government was outlined. He was on the Government side at the time and I am sure he will not profess ignorance of the Scheme. He knew that was the policy of the Government. The Minister of Health at the material time explained why this grant was given. The Minister of Health who succeeded him explained how the other

£6,000 was given. Instead of that what did we hear: a sort of collected conspiracy to dupe the public. I did not expect that from the Opposition Chief Whip. He is not a Back Bencher but a Front Bencher. Now, the point is that if Mr Eyo was really sincere, instead of getting his information from dubious sources and then come here not only to embarrass this Region, his country and the black race, but also to embarrass himself and his side, he surely, could get the correct facts from right quarters; by having the correct facts his arguments will be intelligent and reasonable and I am quite sure, I could speak on behalf of my own side of the House, that if the Opposition could get their facts straight and be reasonable, I do not see why there should be any bad blood. Some Members have spoken from the other side that they are unhappy that some Members of the Government side should get up and point accusing fingers on the Opposition. Mr Speaker, we are all human beings; nobody will dare to sit down and allow somebody else to make a statement which is false and then build up arguments which are based on faulty premises to form a conclusion which will only affect adversely the reputation of everybody and keep quiet. The other Members of the Opposition have kept quiet not once, not twice, so that the natural tendency will be that Members of the Opposition have been consulted in their caucus and they have agreed to embarrass the Government in this way. But from the way they spoke, in fairness to them, we have to admit that this has not been the case. I would like to apologise to those Members of the Opposition who felt crossed when accusing fingers were pointed at them because they have pointed out that they knew nothing about this Motion and that they do not believe in the contents of this Motion—at least they have preserved an open mind. So I would suggest, Mr Speaker, to the Mover of this Motion that if he really wants to do his job efficiently as the Opposition Chief Whip, he should get his facts straight either from the Ministers or from the Officials. I do not see why the Leader of the Opposition or the Opposition Chief Whip should not write to the Permanent Secretary of any Ministry and get his facts. Surely, anybody could get the facts; I do not see why he should not get his facts straight instead of getting them from some dubious sources and feel that he has a duty to put his facts to suit his own purpose. That is not fair at all

and that is not cricket. It is on this basis that I feel that we have to doubt the good intentions of the Mover of the Motion. The fact that his Motion contains fundamental errors, and not only that, when he presented his Motion he made certain speeches which showed definitely that he has animus against certain individuals on the Government Bench, makes it quite clear, therefore, that he is irresponsible and it is on these grounds that some Members of the Government Party had to use certain language in attacking him—not that they relish in attacking his person. I say that no loan was granted to Dr Imoke. On the other hand, a grant of £10,000 was made to him lawfully and legitimately. Not only that, it was consistent with the Policy of the Ministry of Health.

With reference to the question of his conduct, Mr Speaker, I have to state that as a matter of fact, when this matter began in 1954, the Minister of Finance came to me as the Premier and told me his plans and I told him that I would consult the Governor and that I would let him know the position. I did consult the Governor and the Governor said that he would think over it and let me know later. Later, he told me that as far as he was concerned, he saw nothing wrong. I told Dr Imoke that this was what the Governor told me but I would suggest that he saw the Governor himself and talk it over with him. He saw the Governor as well who told him that no harm was done. I am saying all this because I do not expect the Leader of the Opposition to say that there was no evidence. When matters of such a nature are discussed they are not by correspondence. It is a matter of discussion between the Governor and the Premier or between the Minister concerned unless the issues are highly involved to make writing necessary. So that I can say that I am perfectly satisfied with the circumstance. Dr Imoke was right as far as I knew and I supported him after consulting the former Governor and the statements of Dr Imoke and the Minister of Production were quite correct.

When this Motion was brought up for discussion in the Executive Council I felt that if the Leader of the Opposition had asked me in the first instance, I would have given the facts to them without prejudice to their right. As a matter of fact, had the hon. the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. the Opposition

Chief Whip had the courage to ask whether I knew all about this policy or whether I approved of the grant or whether there was some subterfuge, I could have answered them. This is why I refuse to accept that the Motion is made in good faith; but if the Mover of the Motion feels he brought it in good faith, I will offer him a challenge. If he has acted in good faith, he should withdraw his Motion since all he wanted was to get the facts and I will co-operate with him.

There is no need coming here to expose ourselves in such a way that the outside world will begin to feel that Africans are incapable of managing their own affairs or that they are power-drunk and want to take the place of Europeans and to displace their fellowmen.

I would not like us to allow the seeds of discord to germinate. In fact, we have set a standard, a high standard indeed of good parliamentary procedure. Our debates here had always been featured in good humours. We face each other in a parliamentary fashion. Why should we come out here to speak as everybody likes? I support the Minister of Production for if he had more money he could have given Dr Imoke. We feel that those who live in rural areas should have medical facilities and our medical practitioners should go to rural areas.

That was why, in London, I saw His Lordship the Bishop on the Niger. We discussed the African interest. Very few Nigerians are offering themselves for missionary services simply because they want to make money—although I do not blame anybody who wants to make money. Some of the Europeans have been serving us faithfully but the point is that there are very few Nigerians willing to come and serve as missionaries. I appeal to all Members of this House to allow factions to go down. If we accept the statement that the Motion was made in good faith, I challenge Mr E. O. Eyo to behave like a gentleman. Some of us do not like the idea of coming to the Legislature to expose ourselves to the outside world. I do not see why anybody should come into this House to abuse parliamentary privilege. Mr Speaker, the thing is that if the Opposition acted in good faith, let them prove themselves to be gentlemen and let the gentleman who moved the Motion prove himself honourable.

Sir, I beg to oppose the Motion.

Mr E. O. Eyo: The Premier has been rather mild towards me tonight than he was last Saturday, but he has spoilt it by saying to you that if he had a revolver he would not hesitate to shoot me. I hope that if he had a revolver he would not shoot me. Now, Sir, you heard last Saturday when I merely demanded an assurance from the Government that we would have a report on the ACB, and the next thing of course was that I was accused of being a murderer. Sir, I have been called all sorts of names, and I do not know when it will be clear to Members on the Government side that I have a thick skin, that I can stand all this, so that they are just wasting their time and the time of the House in these concentrated attacks because I even do not take any notice of them at all. Perhaps if Members on the side of the Government will get down to real work—hard work—each time I bring a Motion they would discuss the Motion more intelligently. I am really in sympathy with the Premier and I have taken to heart all that he has said, but does it all not hinge on this main point that I am attempting to make when Dr Imoke informed him of his desire to have this grant in 1954, that he the Premier consulted the Governor? I just want to emphasise that point because we heard this very story from the Leader of the House. I was not there when the Premier consulted the Governor. My question at the moment is this: if it was all that straightforward, why was it necessary for the Premier to consult the Governor; why was it necessary for the Leader of the House to consult the Governor? Both the Premier and the Leader of the House did consult the Governor and from what we are told the Governor saw nothing wrong with a Minister of State taking a loan to build a private hospital. Unfortunately, Sir Clem is not here. He has retired. All we can do is to accept the words of the Premier and the Leader of the House.

Now, Sir, I do not see any point at all in asking me to withdraw the Motion, and I just want to say that the Premier made this other point, that when I was the Government Chief Whip I did know of these affairs. I do not think it is fair to say that to me. Dr Imoke himself did say that the Ministry of Finance gave approval to his first grant of £4,000 in January 1956, if I have got him right.

The approval was given to the Minister on 30th June, 1956. How did I know about this

transaction. Sir, this information has only come to me of late and I am doing my duty which is to spotlight this aspect of Government policy, and to subject it to a full dress debate on the floor of this House. Much has been made of the point that I have not brought any evidence to prove this loan of £4,000, and that all the Government has made is the grant of £10,000.

Sir, you have heard all the speakers in this House, and it is only Dr Imoke who has made an honest attempt to defend himself. All I can assure Dr Imoke is that I have no animosity against him. As a matter of fact, I have no animosity against anybody on the Government Bench. There is no point to suggest any element of animosity in reply to any Motion moved by me. As a matter of fact, I happen to be a Christian, Sir (*Laughter*) and in our Church we do not practice animosity. What I am trying to do is to perform my duty not only to my constituency but also to the Region as a whole. You heard some Members suggesting deportation, Sir. Well, I am sure that it will not come until after independence, and independence is on 1st October, 1960. So I have all that period between now and 1st October to remain in the country. And you also heard the suggestion that Government should withdraw recognition from the Opposition. I know, of course, that the Premier will not do that.

As far as we are concerned, Sir, whether there is recognition or not, we will still remain on the Opposition Side. What does it bother us if the Government withdraws its recognition? What is this their recognition? If they withdraw this recognition, I will still be sitting here and Sam. Ikoku will be sitting here and whether or not recognition is withdrawn, we will continue. I want to make it clear to my hon. Friends that I am not here to please anybody or to show my sheets to headmaster. I am older than most of them—with due respect to my few seniors and friends. (*Laughter*).

Dr Okpara: Who are your friends?

Mr E. O. Eyo: I call all of them my friends. I will continue any time I have any information that something has gone wrong and I will still come here with a Motion and whether the Government wants to debate it or not, I don't care. I still maintain that it is wrong

that a sum of £10,000 should be made to the Minister of Finance and the Government has a duty to explain to the Region the correctness of this act. I still feel that it is not good for a Minister while in office to take a loan of £10,000 to build such a project. With this, I think the Premier will be satisfied and I hope he will not carry out his threat to shoot me.

Mr Deputy Speaker: Hon. E. O. Eyo, is there any aspect of the Motion you would wish to withdraw?

Mr E. O. Eyo: I do not think there is. The Motion is one.

Question put.

There were shouts of Aye and No.

Mr Deputy Speaker: I must draw hon. Members' attention to Standing Order 36 (3) which reads as follows:—

“When the question has been put by Mr Speaker or the Chairman at the conclusion of the debate the votes shall be taken by voices Aye and No and the result shall be declared by Mr Speaker or the Chairman; provided that a Member may challenge the opinion of Mr Speaker or the Chairman by claiming a division.”

Let the *Ayes* and the *Noes* appoint their tellers.

Mr Ogon: Mr Speaker, the tellers for the *Noes* are Messrs K. Kiri and W. Abengowe.

Mr Deputy Speaker: Who are the tellers for the *Ayes*?

No response.

Mr Deputy Speaker: Standing Order 37 (3) reads as follows:—

“If no tellers or less than two tellers are appointed by one side, Mr Speaker or the Chairman shall state the fact and declare the question in favour of that side which has appointed tellers.”

Mr Deputy Speaker then declared that the Noes had it.

ASSETS AND LIABILITIES OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENTAL BANK

Mr E. O. Eyo: Mr Speaker, I wish to say that we of the Opposition consider this Motion on the assets and liabilities of the African Continental Bank and the remaining two Motions on the Order Paper as being very important but we are not prepared to sit at this time of the night to debate them. I have therefore been instructed by the Leader of the Opposition that the Motions should not be debated now until the next Budget Session. In the circumstances, I am not prepared to go ahead with the Motion standing in my name.

Mr Deputy Speaker: Under Standing Orders, the Motion is before the House. All you can do now is to ask the permission of the House to withdraw it.

The Minister of Production (Dr M. I. Okpara): Under Standing Order 22, Mr Speaker, I do not think the hon. Mover of the Motion has a right now without the unanimous consent of the House to withdraw. As far as this Side is concerned, we do not agree to a withdrawal; we want to proceed with the Opposition's Motions right away so that they may be struck off entirely.

Mr E. O. Eyo: May I draw your attention to the fact, that that is after the question has been proposed; the question has not yet been proposed.

Mr Deputy Speaker: Unfortunately, the proposed Mover of one of the Motions is not in the House. I think we shall proceed; it is in order; I think we have to go on; proper notice has been given.

Mr E. O. Eyo: I appreciate that, Sir.

Mr Deputy Speaker: We will get on with the Independence Motion.

NIGERIAN INDEPENDENCE

Mr W. Abengowe (Aba Division): I rise to move the Motion standing in my name: “That this House welcomes the gesture of the British Government to grant Independence to Nigeria on 1st October, 1960.” The fight for Nigerian Independence has been protracted. In the later twenties and early thirties, a number of Nigerians had the vision and put in efforts

[MR ABENGOWE]

towards the liberation of Nigeria. The individuals connected with this crusade centred round Lagos. One thing is admittedly true, and that is that the desire for independence is inborn in human beings. History has a record of some of these wars for liberation :—

- (1) American War of Independence.
- (2) South African War.
- (3) English Revolt against the Romans.
- (4) The struggle of the Israelites against the Egyptians.

In 1934, Zik returned to the Gold Coast and became Editor of the *Morning Post*. His influence and desire for the liberation of the African race from the clutches of imperialism were felt in Nigeria. After his persecution in the Gold Coast, he returned to Nigeria in 1937. He spread the desire for self-determination throughout the country. He showed the light, through newspapers and lectures. All the people, now measuring themselves equal to Zik were nonentities in the country. In fact, some were newsvendors for Zik's newspapers.

The Zikist Movement took over the militant wing of the NCNC. For fourteen years, NCNC had championed this cause of independence for one Nigeria. The Zikist Movement boys were persecuted, prosecuted, imprisoned for all sorts of offences. The British did everything to thwart the strength of the Movement. At that time, some Nigerians joined Britishers and called Zikists irresponsible and insane boys. Though their methods at that time were wrong, yet they had one clear purpose—to free Nigeria from British exploitation.

From 1937 to 1947 Zik fought imperialism single-handed. He is not known now because he is a Premier, but because he awakened Nigerians from deep political slumber.

Nigerian independence is necessary in order to enhance the respect and dignity of Nigeria in the Comity of Nations. Nigeria is perhaps the only country of the negroes that commands enough man-power to lead the rest of the countries of the African Continent to freedom. Nigerian independence will favourably influence Africa economically.

I want to refer very briefly to the Resumed Constitutional Conference. I wish to pay tribute to the part which the NCNC, NPC and

NEPU delegates played during the Conference. Before these delegations left here, they gave an undertaking that Nigerian independence was foremost on their programme. Instead of the saying "Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven and all the rest shall be added unto you", they chose "Seek ye first Nigerian independence and all the rest shall be added unto you". But what did the Action Group delegation do? The Premier, Chief Awolowo told the whole world that there would be no independence except States were created. In other words, the Action Group were definitely opposed to Nigerian independence. The British granted independence to Nigeria because of the impressions of the NCNC, the NPC and the NEPU delegations. But now the Action Group, like a dog with its tail between its legs, joins to claim contributions towards Nigerian Independence.

I also want to praise the British for their gesture in granting independence to Nigeria. Nigeria is one of the British administered areas where independence is being won without bloodshed and loss of lives.

I wish to pay tribute to our great grand fathers who fought against imperialism at all levels and also to the youths and nationalists of this country who contributed to this fight. I wish also to pay tribute to the Missionaries and British civil servants who tolerated our barbarism and crudeness, the British traders and individuals whose contact and association with our people enlightened and broadened their horizon.

Independence is only the beginning of our task of nation building. The future is pregnant with hope, and it is for all Nigerian citizens to live up to the hope.

Finally, I congratulate the NCNC, NPC, and the NEPU delegations and trust that in order to ensure stable, progressive and democratic government for the Federation, these three parties should be elected in office to run the affairs of the Government of the Federation when Nigeria attains independence in 1960.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

Mr Ogon: Mr Speaker, in rising to second this Motion, the first point I want to make, Sir, is that which the hon. Premier has just stressed.

It is true, Sir, that the British have granted us independence. But let there be no mistake about it—if by any chance the people of this

country make the mistake of voting the Action Group into power, there will be no independence for Nigeria in 1960. While in London the Leader of the Action Group published in the *London Times* that his Party would not support Nigeria's independence unless States were created. The Colonial Secretary warned that if in 1960 the question of States was raised by the Federal Government then he would consider the promise to grant Nigeria independence in 1960 not binding.

So, I want to emphasise it to the people of this country, as far as NCNC is concerned, that Dr Zik has led this country for twenty-four years in a march toward independence. It is left to the people to give their votes to the NCNC to put the finishing touch to a job that has already been done. That is one point I want to establish because there can be no question of our swallowing our right to independence to satisfy the ambition of a few greedy individuals.

The second point I want to raise, Sir, is that it is wrong for any one Party to impute that because Nigeria is getting independence therefore there shall be class personality in West Africa. The people in Ghana, Liberia and all over the West Coast of Africa are very proud of what our Premier has done for all African people. Well over two years our Premier has constantly called upon the whole country to unite and get independence for Nigeria, no matter who rules the country; some people thought that he was not sincere. It has happened that the hon. Abubakar Tafawa Balewa has led this country and I think he has done it to the best of his ability and we are grateful for what he has done so far.

Thirdly, and this is the last point I want to raise. I think, Sir, that independence will mean for our different people a higher standard of living and we cannot for one moment hope that we can get higher standard of living by attaching ourselves to the apron-strings of the Commonwealth. I am a firm believer myself in the spirit of Commonwealth. I must say that Nigeria must have a different attitude towards what is happening in Kenya, in South Africa, in America and all over the globe because injustice and discrimination should never be supported by anybody from our country.

Finally, Sir, I want very much to thank the Eastern Region Government on behalf of Ogoja people for the excellent struggle they put to stop the Action Group by the non-creation of the COR State.

Sir, I beg to second.

Question proposed.

The Minister of Production (Dr M. I. Okpara): Mr Speaker, I wish only to say a few words. I spoke on an earlier occasion when we were debating a Motion on Self-government in the Eastern Region at length. I think what I said on that occasion will apply quite properly on this occasion also, but there is a new note which one should add. First of all, at the London Conference when Mr Lennox Boyd announced on the 27th October that on 1st October, 1960 Nigeria as a whole will be a free country, some of us almost wept because it meant the end of a very long struggle. If some of us had come into the struggle comparatively new, others had nearly given almost all their life's time to it. Many have died in the struggle and it seems to us that what a few years ago looked almost impossible of attainment, now is within reach.

We have achieved this firm promise of self-government without bloodshed and without strife. The British officials have played an important part in bringing us to our present stage of development and we have elected to remain within the British Commonwealth of Nations after independence, not because of any other reason but because we feel that it is right and proper that we should continue our association with those who have contributed so much to our progress.

I like, however, Mr Speaker, to say a few words about how the last Constitutional Conference was able to achieve any success. In this respect I must pay tribute to our leaders, especially to our leader, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe and the Sardana of Sokoto without whose efforts and Statesmanship the Conference could not have been a success. It was the understanding between these two leaders that forced the British Government to give a firm date without the usual statement that we should go home and co-operate as was the case in 1947. It is very rare in the British History that they give firm date for granting independence. We all know that the Americans had to fight out

[DR OKPARA]

their independence and there are various other states that have only achieved theirs after long strife; but in our case, by sheer statesmanship, we have been able to achieve it by the understanding of our two leaders who probably both have entirely different political views, but who together have put this one thing supreme above all others.

It is a matter for regret, Sir, that the third leader unfortunately did not rise up to expectation. He went to the Conference with incessant demand for this state and that state and all sorts of obstructions which were placed in the way of our independence. I think if the Action Group should win the next Federal Elections this independence may be postponed, but I do not for one moment take the Action Group seriously and I am looking forward to celebrating the independence on the 1st day of October, 1960. Therefore I take it, and I myself am planning to celebrate independence in my own way on the 1st of October, 1960, that nothing will stop it. All that we want to do now is to really plan for the celebration. As the Prime Minister has said already those who have to take part in this independence are in and outside this country. I am making a suggestion since we have not celebrated Regional Self-government, that we need money to celebrate independence in the Eastern Region. We are now sure of independence for the whole country. We should make arrangements a little before the final celebration which will take place on the 1st of October, 1960. I hope, Sir, that from now on there will be no more diffidence. Sensible Members of the Opposition, some of them, have abandoned their seats, I think, should now work towards a stable Nigeria. If you want COR State really badly, convince the authority at the time and the people will get it.

We, on this side, sincerely believe in more states but we do not want states to come before independence, and they will not come. I implore Members that the time has now come for us to work together, to know what is happening in other parts of the world and what is happening in Africa—the Continent filled with minerals and yet the poorest. I appeal to all, especially the younger people, to work together and to erase animosity from their minds.

Sir, I beg to support.

Mr Etuk: Mr Speaker, I rise as a Member of the Opposition to associate myself with this Motion. In doing so I want to state one thing. I am not here to campaign for the next elections but we could insist on what has become the principle which made this promise of independence popular. As the Leader of the House stated, many other countries have achieved independence through bloodshed but we have our own through round table conference. There was one factor which made it possible. Some of us had the privilege of being nearer during the Conference, having first-hand information on what was going on in the Conference Room. I have come to realise that it was just because we insisted on getting at what is right and not who is right. That was the cardinal principle which made this independence possible.

In the Conference of the Trusteeship Commission in which Nigeria was included, there were promises regarding nations on their way to independence in 1960. The delegation from Southern Ireland emphasised one thing to the United Nations that the beginning of independence is the beginning of trouble for that State. He had the knowledge after thirty-five years of what Southern Ireland was suffering; and so, Nigeria would have to experience the same thing. We must have trained politicians, some economists, and the United Nations should not forget us but should continue to assist those young nations with technical and financial aid to develop themselves. If we will continue to fight for what is right we should forget who is right or who is wrong not only in this House but also when we have independence. We should show progress on the right lines.

Mr Speaker, I associate myself with the Mover of this Motion.

Chief Amachree: Mr Speaker, I wish to associate myself with the Mover of this Motion. We all want independence because without independence we are still inferior to all other independent nations. Nobody would sacrifice that for any other minor thing. In London we helped in a small way to advise our leaders and everybody to agree to independence. One warning I would give is that if we want to get independence we must work hard.

Nobody in Africa will say that our Premier has not fought the battle of emancipation. We must be true to ourselves but at the same time

there are things which may not be directly his fault but which we feel should be our right. This is the only difference between him and us—not that there is anything he has done against us but there is always the fear of man. We have been under the British for a long time. They are now going and they are handing us over to our fellow Africans who do not know how to rule. I am talking the truth; that is our fear. We have no quarrel with anybody—it is only to secure our identity. We do not want our identity to get lost amongst the big crowd. So, if we talk of State or anything we are not just quarrelling with anybody. It is a thing natural with anybody to be free but we feel something which perhaps nobody can explain. There is no quarrel. One thing I have to say is that the Mover of the Motion made an accusation which is not correct.

The Mover of the Motion made an incorrect statement against Chief Awolowo. I want to make it clear to everyone that Chief Awolowo did not hinder independence for Nigeria. In fact the Secretary of State warned that nobody should accuse Chief Awolowo of hindering independence for Nigeria.

Government Supporters: Why did he not warn people about the Sardauna?

Chief Amachree: I am not trying to defend Chief Awolowo. I am trying to speak the fact.

I would like to make it known to everyone that if we are going to get on in this Region, it will depend on how we approach one another. I am one of those who want Nigeria to be a free nation, but I will have to fight for my identity. I associate myself with the Mover of the Motion.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Town Planning (Chief S. E. Onukogu): Mr Speaker, I want to seize this opportunity to say one or two things in support of this Motion, and to speak to my hon. Friends on the opposite side. The last speaker was there at the Conference and he observed what happened. I disagree with him that Chief Awolowo was not against the granting of independence to Nigeria. I want to tell my Friends that the time has come when we should tell the people exactly what happened at the Conference because I know some Members have been going round their constituencies

deceiving the people that States would be created today or tomorrow which is not true. Those who were present at the Constitutional Conference will be able to state the facts to their people that there can be no C.O.R. State now. I also want to make it clear that there is no hope of getting a separate state in Nigeria in the next ten years.

Opposition Bench: Have you read the Report?

Chief Onukogu: I say this because people have been going about collecting money from the poor, deceiving them, misusing their money; so that is the reason why I rise to say this and my hon. Friend, the last speaker, can bear me out that I am telling the truth.

Opposition Bench: Where is the truth?

Chief Onukogu: Therefore, Mr Speaker, I think we shall go home and tell our people the truth. Not that this Government does not like Opposition—no Government will like to stay without Opposition—but we want an Opposition that can tell the truth; Opposition that will not mislead the people.

Mr Speaker, with these few words, I beg to support.

Mr S. O. Achara (Okigwi Division): Mr Speaker, Sir, it is my greatest pleasure to contribute to this Motion. I can speak with joy on this particular Motion. As far back as twelve years ago the active struggle for the independence, which is now around the corner, started. Sir, you will appreciate the fact that I have never hesitated to disagree with anybody on any issue on which I can reasonably do so and that has never degenerated to personal animosity.

We should as a measure of thankfulness to Almighty God pay tribute to those who have contributed to this independence which is now around the corner. In this connection, let me, perhaps for the first time, pay tribute to one who deserves it in this particular respect.

An hon. Member: Who is that?

Mr Achara: I refer here to the Premier of the Eastern Region, whose inspiration, no doubt, helped to accelerate the speed with

[MR ACHARA]

which we are about to gain our independence. I pay this tribute to him because he has laid a good foundation, and in paying this tribute I do hope that I reserve the right, as before, to disagree with him on any issue now and in the future that might arise. But I want to take this opportunity to say that in considering the independence of this country we shall also consider all other political leaders of the various political parties in this country. I think it is consistent with honesty that one should pay deserving tribute to whom it is due. I also say that it is honest to remember those who died in the struggle for independence. In this connection, I wish to refer to the late Herbert Macaulay, who also died in the struggle.

Also I wish to remember with gratitude to God and reverence to the first Central Minister of Commerce and Industries, in the history of our country, who made very favourable impressions in the minds of the British public men and the world at large, the late A. C. Nwapa. The Trade Union Movement of this country should be paid deserving tribute for the contributions its leaders and members made towards our independence.

Mr Speaker, it was in February, 1946 that the most militant Youths Organisation in this country was formed; that was the Zikist Movement which was banned in May, 1950. This Movement contained militant young men throughout the whole length and breadth of this country who gave up themselves and the question of personal convenience only to liberate their country. As a matter of fact, when the Zikist Movement was formed by the young men representative of the country, not one of us knew that we shall be spared the life to witness the day of independence of this country. We never thought it would be our privilege to witness the coming into operation of the Local Government Councils which have been formed for about four years now and it is in this particular respect that I shall remember all of them. Those of them who are still in this service I shall remember and in this House there are roughly four of them. I also remember those of them who are now in the Action Group and those of them who are now in the NPC and others who are in the DPNC (*laughter*) and I say that it is really a great pleasure to witness this day.

I only wish to sound this note of warning to those here and others outside that we should now begin to learn and digest those qualities which have made other great nations of the world.

As we have reached independence, we should begin to build up so that we can make our nation one of the strongest in the world—strong in moral value, strong in man-power, strong in other respects—and I hope with the co-operation of all sides it will be possible for us to enter independence with great satisfaction, so that we shall not let down those who have fought and died. I fully associate myself with this Motion and pray the Almighty God that we shall all be spared to witness Saturday, 1st October, 1960.

Hon. Members: How do you know it is a Saturday?

Mr Achara: Look up in your calendar and count; you will see that it is correct.

The question now is not who has won independence and through whom it has come. We must all close ranks together, the North, the East and the West, and then march on to that great day with confidence in ourselves and faith and hope in God Almighty.

Mr Speaker, I beg to support.

The Minister of Commerce (Mr J. U. Nwodo): Mr Speaker, I rise to support the Motion. On 1st October, 1960, Nigeria shall be self-governing. This will be a historic day, a day of great rejoicing, and a day that will go down into record in the annals of Nigerian history. It reminds us of the saying that the Englishman's word is his bond. All along we have been told that the ultimate aim of the British Government is to tutor us in the art of self-government. I think it is the present Prime Minister of Great Britain and Northern Ireland who said that Britain offered an example of a society which by tolerance and compromise had shown that progress could be peaceably achieved without resort to violence or dictatorship. Yes, we have won freedom on a platter of gold without shedding any jot of blood. Freedom means hard work, increased responsibility, sincerity of purpose, and honesty and faithfulness towards one another.

By attaining independence on 1st October, 1960, Nigeria has reached the goal of its political ambition. But it is not Nigeria as such that is to be congratulated, it is the people of Nigeria who have fought relentlessly for freedom that our thanks should go to. Foremost in the battle was Herbert Macaulay of blessed memory. Then came the indefatigable Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, National President of our great Party. I think it was in the opinion of Plato that everyone should do the one work for which he has the gift and aptitude. That is why it is pertinent to recollect that at the time of his installation to the Premiership of this Region, Dr Azikiwe did say, Mr Speaker, with your permission I beg to quote:

"I count it a great honour to be alive at this stage of contemporary Nigerian history. I regard it as an immortal privilege to be an instrument of social change for the rehabilitation of my people. But I realise how puny I am at the hands of fate and I know how insignificant I am for this historic role. Therefore I must be humble, I must be God-fearing, I must be self-effacing, if I must prove equal to this rare opportunity" !

Yet another quotation, Mr Speaker, from Dr Azikiwe:—

"So let it be, Creator mine
Whose skilful hands and thought divine
Did mould my frame without a blame,
And gave to me this fleeting flame:

That in this span of strife and hate,
Buttressed by irony of fate,
Grant that I live to love mankind
And thoughtless prejudice rescind;

And may I live to help the weak,
And learn to serve the poor and meek,
That when death wins, I should not miss
The path-way to eternal bliss."

Dr Azikiwe fought for freedom when the mere asking for it has brought him untold hardships and all sorts of sufferings and privations. His press was banned in 1945 for daring to champion the cause of Nigerian

workers, and he himself called all sorts of names—six feet, ebony black, self-appointed leader and all sorts of nonsense. He also fought relentlessly for the Nigerianisation of the Civil Service, and in the long run served in the Commission of 1948, which drew up programme for Nigerianisation of the Civil Service. Previous to this, Mr Speaker, it will be remembered that there were several Government institutions which went by the names "European Hospital", "European Club", "European Reservation" and European every nonsense.

When in 1947 he led the Nigerian Delegation to the United Kingdom to demand our independence from the Colonial Secretary, the answer he received was a rebuff in precisely these four words: "Go home and co-operate." This was an injunction from the British Government requiring Dr Azikiwe to co-operate with imperialism, asking him to smoke the pipe of peace, sell his birthright and talk no more of freeing his people from the shackles of imperialism. But Zik pressed on. Now that the goal is almost reached, Zik should be congratulated.

One great tragedy has, however, happened in our march to freedom. This is that among us are some people who feel that except all the intricate problems of human beings are solved, independence should not be granted. These people are the Action Group. The behaviour of the Action Group in this regard is nothing short of the revelation of a concocted and ill-conceived plan to sentence Nigeria to perpetual servitude and political bondage. They even said that self-government cannot be granted in a vacuum—we cannot take it. The Action Group like the Pharisees mounted the high places at the eve of the Conference and asked to be greeted for fighting for Nigerian independence. They moved thousand and one Motions on this particular subject which as we all know was a talking point between housewives and boys in the pantry. They mounted public galleries to seek for ovation and acclamation from market women; yet when the time came they were found wanting. They should have the courage and heart to acknowledge before the Nigerian public that they were guilty of political fraud and hypocrisy. They continue even now to intensify their campaign for tribal hatred and animosity; to urge the country to

[MR NWODO]

divide into units made up of tribes so that in a self-governing Nigeria an Efik and an Ibo are two distinct persons apart, ready to war and revive all inter-tribal acrimony and sanguinary fighting, and that the Igala is at variance with the Fulani of the North. They go under the pretext that they are preaching the gospel of liberal democracy, but in actual fact are busy planting seeds of discord, inciting son against father, brother against brother and all sorts of evils you can think of are their immediate concern.

I hope that when the time comes for Nigerians to choose between the attractions of temporary and ephemeral power and the more difficult task of welding our people together, between the love of self and love of the nation, between the survival of the individual and the continued existence of the race, between tribal hate and national unity, they will choose aright. Surely, that is the time the people of Nigeria should think in terms of our leaders as statesmen rather than politicians, for Zik said that in order to salvage Nigeria from imperial yoke and political bondage the delegates to the Nigerian Constitutional Conference should think and act like statesmen and not like politicians who have their eyes on the next election.

Mr Speaker, I beg to support.

Question put and agreed to nemine contradicente.

Resolved: That this House welcomes the gesture of the British Government to grant Independence to Nigeria on 1st October, 1960.

ADJOURNMENT

The Minister of Production (Dr M. I. Okpara): Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the House do now adjourn *sine die*.

The Minister of Transport (Mr P. O. Ururuka): Sir, I beg to second.

Question proposed.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATES

(1) Appointment and Recognition of Chiefs

Mr P. N. Okeke: Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to seize this opportunity to touch on what I consider to be a very important issue.

It is in relation to this morning and one very important to who for a long time referring, Mr Speaker extract from the influence and Eastern Region. A paragraph 40, this is

"The Eze of I himself in the rev doubtful if the Eze authority in the past primarily a ritual one and power derived from it that was used by the Nri priests and doctors visiting Ibo and other communities on both sides of the Niger for removing abominations, for nullifying the dangers attendant on the breach of a tabu, and for rendering harmful medicines innocuous."

Mr Speaker, this is the opinion of Professor Jones. I am also quoting a statement made by the Premier of this Region in April, 1956:

"Thirty years ago, Dr P. Amaury Talbot gave a lot of reliable information about the Aro Theocracy and the spiritual potentates of Agukwu Nri whose civil supremacy was acknowledged in Awka and Udi Divisions, and which was a holy city that was comparable to Ile Ife in its hey day. From this remarkable ethnographer, we glean authoritative date about kings and chiefs who exercised spiritual and temporal powers throughout the Eastern Region, just as their opposite numbers did in the North and the West. It is remarkable that whilst the Oni of Ife was recognised as the spiritual head of the Yoruba-speaking peoples, and the Sultan of Sokoto was highly respected among the Muslims of the North, the role of Eze Nri was not only minimised but was officially ignored. Therefore the present Government cannot be blamed for snubbing the chiefs of the East. The saving grace is that we are now engaged in the herculean task of restoring the prestige and dignity of our chiefs wherever such tradition exists, and we hope that we shall be given a fair chance to find satisfactory solution."

This statement was made by the Premier in 1956. Mr Speaker, I would like to say that of all the seventeen first-class Chiefs who are to be

Members of the House of Chiefs automatically, there are only two of them from the Ibo land and yet the people from C.O.R. State area did not complain and in the Eastern Region, Sir, with a population of eight million the Ibos are about five million.

I have to point this out that the Government at least will consider the influence and position of Eze Nri, the most influential ruler in Ibo land, whose authority extended beyond the clan or division. I have to point this out because it would appear to me that it was an omission and I hope that the Government will consider the references made of this important traditional ruler of Ibo land and also consider it in the light of the statement made by the Premier of the Region in 1956. I think the Eze Nri deserves special position among the traditional rulers of the Eastern Region.

Mr Speaker, thank you very much for this opportunity.

(2) Loans from the African Continental Bank

Mr Achara: I have watched keenly the trend of the debates here and therefore feel very much concerned. I would not have bothered, Mr Speaker, to raise this matter because I feel that if any Member of this House refers to me I can take good care of myself but as the Premier did point out in the Motion he made this morning, I think that every Member of this House must realise that it is unfair, very very unfair to attack personalities who are not Members of this House and who have no opportunity to reply to those people who attack them. Mr Speaker, I refer to the speech made here last Saturday by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture. I refer to a portion of his speech and with your permission, Mr Speaker, I read:

“Dr Mbadiwe himself collected over £14,000.”

Mr Speaker, it is not my intention to hold brief for Dr Mbadiwe because I know nothing of the transaction he made with the African Continental Bank, but I think the Motion to which the hon. Member was speaking did not in any way refer to any Member outside this

House. I think it was unfair for this gentleman to attack the personality and the calibre of the Dr the hon. K. O. Mbadiwe.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture (Mr D. A. Nnaji): Yes, Mr Speaker, he collected £14,000. I am still saying it; he collected £14,000 fraudulently under the guise of launching the African Academy of Arts and Research.

Mr Achara: Alright. Mr Speaker, that does not worry me. What I am referring to is that if the gentleman were here he would take good care of himself.

Hon. Members: He can't come into this House again.

Mr Achara: Mr Speaker, there is no disgrace whatever for anybody in this country to have a loan or an overdraft from any bank in so far as the terms of the loan or overdraft are fulfilled. Mr Speaker, Sir, when the hon. gentleman spoke on Saturday he said that I took a loan of £1,000 from the African Continental Bank. He knew nothing about the transaction. If he quoted the right figure there would have been no trouble.

Hon. Members: Shame, shame. How much was it? Tell us.

Mr Achara: Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to say that the overdraft was £900.

Hon. Members: Shame, shame. It is nearer £1,000.

Mr Achara: The overdraft was due to be fully paid off in February, 1958 but it was completely paid in the middle of July last year.

When a man of the type of Mr Nnaji refers to Members of the Opposition as men of questionable character and ex-convicts, Mr Speaker, it beats my imagination. Here is a man who spent his best part of six months in Enugu Prison.

Question put and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at five minutes to twelve o'clock midnight pursuant to the Resolution of the House this day.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Monday, 15th December, 1958

Port Harcourt-Ogoni Road

154. **Mr O. B. Nalelo** asked the Minister of Transport, when will the completed section of the tarred road between Umukoroshe and Eleme be opened to traffic.

The Minister of Transport: I am happy to inform the hon. Member that the construction of a level crossing at Umukoroshe which was the cause of the delay has now been completed and was opened to traffic on 22nd of November, 1958.

The construction of this level crossing was the responsibility of the Nigerian Railway Corporation and although Eastern Region funds were made available to the Corporation in February of this year the Corporation were unable to complete the necessary signalling arrangements until November and prohibited the use of the crossing until permanent signalling arrangements were made in view of several fatal accidents that had occurred on ungated level crossings.

Tarring of the Umukoroshe-Kono Road

228. **Mr M. N. Yowika** asked the Minister of Transport, if it is true that the tarring of the Umukoroshe-Kono Road will stop at Kono School, instead of at Kono Waterside; if so, was this an agreed term in the contract agreement; is the Minister aware that the tarring from Bori to Kono is inefficiently carried out; if so, will he arrange an inspection of the work before payment of the full contract price is made to the contractor.

The Minister of Transport: The present contract for the reconstruction and tarring of the Umukoroshe-Kono Roads ends at the junction by the Kono Rest House. From here there are two roads leading to the Waterside and the question of tarring one or other of these branches will have to be considered together with a landing stage when the incidence of waterway traffic using the Kono Waterside is ascertained.

I have had no adverse reports of the tarring of the road from Bori to Kono and I personally inspected the road on the 6th of September,

1958 but there have been difficulties due to the heavy rains of the last few months. My hon. Friend may not be aware that in all road construction contracts entered into by this Government there is a Maintenance Clause which provides that the contractor must satisfactorily maintain the road for a year after the Resident Engineer has certified that the contract has been satisfactorily completed. A percentage of the full contract price is always withheld until this maintenance period has been completed and any defects that have arisen repaired at the contractor's expense.

Tarring of Umuahia-Ikot Ekpene-Abak Road

236. **Mr I. U. Imeh** asked the Minister of Transport, when the contract for tarring the Umuahia-Ikot Ekpene-Abak Road was signed and the tarring stipulated to be completed; how many miles have so far been completed and when is the work expected to be finished.

The Minister of Transport: The contract for reconstruction and tarring of the Umuahia-Ikot Ekpene-Abak Road was signed on the 22nd of December, 1956, and accordingly the contract should be completed by January, 1959. However the contractors started slowly and it is unlikely that the work will now be finished until the 31st March, 1959. Tarring has now reached Ikot Ekpene, so some 34 miles have been completed, whilst earth works have proceeded beyond Ikot Ekpene on the Abak Road. Government recently increased the provision for this project from £150,000 to £188,000 to enable the work to be completed this financial year.

Tourist Corporation—Catering Rest House Adviser

238. **Mr I. U. Imeh** asked the Minister of Commerce, what are the duties of the Catering Rest House Adviser employed by the Tourist Corporation; is the Minister aware that the presence of the Adviser is detrimental to the progress of the Corporation, and will the Minister, in the interest of economy, consider the non-renewal of the Adviser's contract when it expires.

The Minister of Commerce: The Eastern Nigerian Tourist Corporation does not at the moment employ a Catering Adviser. The Corporation did employ one in the past but the officer had since been assigned the duties of General Manager. As General Manager he is in charge of the routine administration of the affairs of the Corporation.

I am not aware that the presence of the "Adviser", in brackets, is detrimental to the progress of the Corporation.

The hon. Member will agree with me that not all the Members of the Board of the Corporation have experience of the Catering business or of the needs of Tourists, and as such, they will require guidance on a number of technical matters. With regard to economy, I am at the moment carrying out a review of the recurrent expenditure of the Corporation with a view to reducing them.

So far I have been able to make a reduction of £2,592 from personal emoluments. I can assure the hon. Gentleman that in this review all posts, including that of the Catering Adviser, again in brackets, are being examined with a view to further economies.

I look forward, however, to the support of the hon. Gentleman in carrying out the proposed economy measures.

Tourist Corporation

239. **Mr I. U. Imeh** asked the Minister of Commerce, whether in view of the fact that the mass of the people feel that there is racketeering amongst the members of the Tourist Corporation, he will consider removing them from office.

The Minister of Commerce: I am sure the hon. Gentleman wants me to give the ordinary dictionary meaning of the word "racket". In that case he is accusing the members of the Corporation with organising a scheme for obtaining money by illegal means. If that is so, he is making a very serious charge and I wish

the hon. Member had been less vague and general, and more specific and particular in his accusation.

If the hon. Member will refer me to particular and specific instances of the racket, I promise prompt and swift Ministerial action in investigating and dealing with the matter. He should also give information to the Police.

Tarring of Ikot Ekpene-Itu-Uyo Road

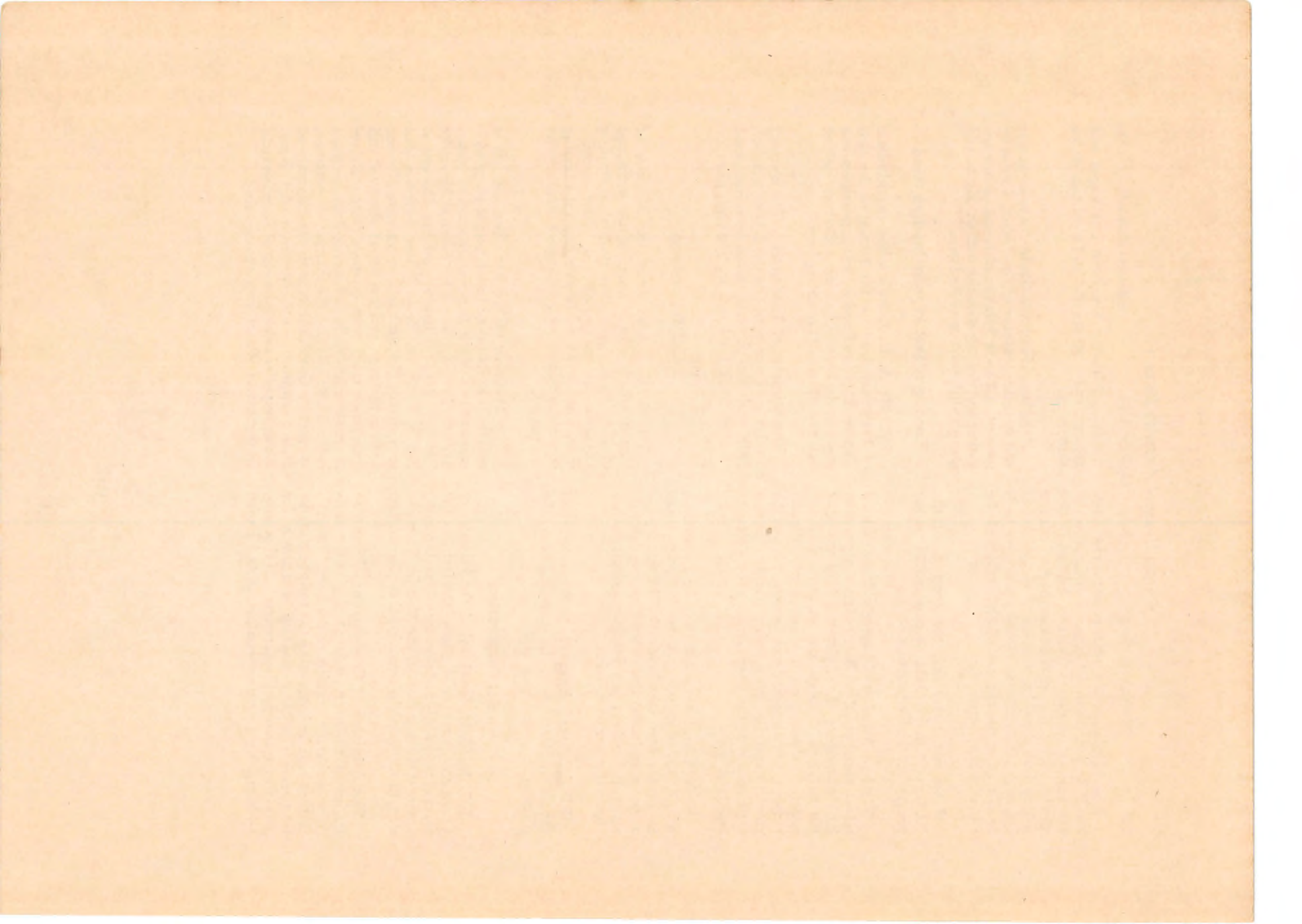
240. **Mr A. G. Umoh** asked the Minister of Transport, why has the tarring of the Ikot Ekpene-Itu-Uyo Road for which provision was made in the current Estimates not been carried out, and when will the tarring begin.

The Minister of Transport: The contract for this work was signed on the 27th of October, 1958, and the contractors have been instructed to start work forthwith on the Ikot Ekpene-Itu section.

Rural Water Supply

241. **A. G. Umoh** asked the Minister of Works, whether he is aware of the sufferings of the Ibiono and Itam people of Enyong Division due to insufficient water supply; if so, when will the Minister begin the sinking of wells to relieve the sufferings of these regular tax-payers.

The Minister of Works: Yes, Sir. It is realised that Ibiono and Itam people along with many others in the Region, are short of water. My hon. Friend will now have seen at Appendix "A" of Eastern Region Official Document No. 5, 1958, on Rural Water Supplies that provision of £15,300 has been made for fifty-one wells in this area, and it is hoped that work will commence early next financial year. Delays in constructing wells and spring improvements in the Eastern Region should now be overcome, as recently Government, with the Secretary of State's approval, has increased the Rural Water Supplies establishment of Engineers and Inspectors of Works very considerably.



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 J. U. Nwodo

Rev. M. D. Opara
Mr E. W. Udonkim
Mr 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 J. E. Eyo

Sub-head 21.—State Car for Premier

Mr E. O. Eyo: Mr Chairman, I am moving that this House should leave out Sub-head 21. The proposal is to spend some £4,600 to buy a State Car for the Premier. Sometime ago, we read in the newspaper publication that Government has decided to buy a Rolls Royce car for the Premier.

We understand that at the moment the Premier has three cars at his disposal. He has a Chrysler, he has a Cadillac and he has a third State Car.

An hon. Member: Who told you?

Mr E. O. Eyo: It is an information.

In any case, our objection is to the fact that the Government proposes to spend £4,600 to purchase a second-hand Rolls Royce for the Premier. We appreciate the fact that the Premier himself is a very rich man and can afford to purchase a new Rolls Royce if he wanted to, but, is it fair that the people of the Region should be called upon to expend £4,600 on a second-hand Rolls Royce?

Well, we do not see anything very spectacular about riding a Rolls Royce; anybody who has got money can buy a Rolls Royce but I do not think it is fair to expend £4,600 in order to buy a State Car for the Premier. After all, the Premier is always regarded as a very humble servant of the Region and I do not think it is fair if he insists on having a State Car costing £4,600. Take, for instance, the case of Mr Nehru in India. I understand he rides an auto-bike. I think Nehru is a nationalist and our Premier is also a nationalist.

The Minister of Production (Dr M. I. Okpara): Do not be personal; argue your point well.

Mr E. O. Eyo: If we want to accord the Premier the dignity to which he is entitled, I think all we have to do is to provide him with a State Car but not one which is to cost £4,600. Our view is that what the Premier has at the moment is good enough for him and if it is not true that he has three cars now at his disposal, well the Region should provide him with a car comparable with his dignity but surely not to the tune of £4,600 to purchase a Rolls Royce. I mean that we would like the Region to buy another brand of car the cost of which should not exceed £2,000.

Dr Okpara: Say what you like, we are going to buy a Rolls Royce.

Mr E. O. Eyo: We are opposed to providing the Premier with a Rolls Royce.

Mr Chairman, Sir, I beg to move.

The Minister of Production (Dr M. I. Okpara): I beg to oppose everything the last speaker has said. It is well enough known, Sir, that in other Regions, the Heads of the various Governments are provided with cars befitting their dignity—Rolls Royce. This Region is not the poorest Region in the Federation. As a matter of fact, Mr Chairman, some of the Rolls Royce cars provided for Heads of other Regional Governments are air-conditioned. It is not proper for our own Premier to be going, on a state occasion, in an ordinary Chev. with other Premiers flowing in big Rolls Royces.

Mr Chairman, the Chief Whip of the Opposition has made a number of allegations and, as usual, they are all false. He said that the Premier has three cars. He mentioned a Chrysler. Unfortunately the Chrysler was

[DR OKPARA]

boarded in 1956. It is no longer in existence as far as the Premier is concerned. Then he mentioned a Chev.; it is his personal car—a car whose name he did not know. This was a personal car. He mentioned Cadillac. This is also a personal car. Therefore, the Premier has no State Car. I strongly support that the car should be a Rolls Royce (*Applause*).

Hon. Members: A new one. We want a brand new one.

Dr Okpara: Let us not come here to waste useful time of this House. I am going to recommend to Government it is important we have three Rolls Royces. In the other Regions they provide such cars. These cars will be used for important personalities. We allow people still to think that we are so poor; we are not so poor. We have got to show that, in point of fact, this is not a poor Region. From now, we must try to erase the idea that this Region is a poor one. It is befitting, Sir, to provide such a car for the Premier and I am going to urge this hon. House not to listen to what the Opposition Chief Whip has said; I am urging the House to refuse his suggestion. In the near future, Government may even consider providing one or two more Rolls Royces.

Sir, I beg to oppose.

Mr M. E. Ogon (Ikom Division): Mr Chairman, Sir, I am speaking for this section of the House. Here we want to know why new Rolls Royces should not be bought. The hon. Premier has not got any State Car which will suit his dignity. I propose that an air-conditioned Rolls Royce be provided for the Premier. We will vote for the provision of Rolls Royces for even the Ministers. The Opposition's attitude has not convinced me why we should not vote for the Rolls Royce. We need not continue to make sacrifices after sacrifices for people who do not appreciate sacrifices. No matter how poor a country is—even in Russia—there is provision for important visitors to get comparable treatment. We are stating that there should be provision for visitors who come to this Region to be given V.I.P. reception. We should not present ourselves to the outside world the appearance of a poor Region. We are going to support strongly,

Sir, that there should be provision for important visitors to this Region. For instance, important Ambassadors should not be driven in Vauxhall cars. Therefore, we are asking that there should be provision for a second car.

Finally, before I sit down, we want a guarantee from the Minister of Finance that he will amend this to read: "the new air-conditioned Rolls Royce". If that guarantee is not given to us, we will take a stubborn stand.

The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke): Mr Chairman, I have taken note of the wishes of the floor Members of this hon. House and I think some of the Opposition Members are also convinced that the Premier of this Region, of all Premiers in this country, definitely deserves a No. 1 treatment. I want to assure Members of this House that Government will definitely take into consideration all the points made and once we can pass the Estimates the necessary steps will be taken.

The Minister of Production (Dr M. I. Okpara): Mr Chairman, on a point of order. With your permission I beg to read from Sir T. Erskine May's *Parliamentary Practice*, 16th Edition, page 250. This particular section, of course, we have gone through in this House, but it is not recorded in our Standing Orders. In any case of doubt our Standing Orders should be interpreted in the light of the relevant practice of the Commons House of Parliament of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. In any matter for which these Standing Orders do not provide, the said practice shall be followed by this House. I now quote, Sir, as follows:—

"Various powers have been given to the Speaker to prevent obstruction in the proceedings of the House. He has the power to select the amendments which may be proposed on consideration of a motion or bill, and to accept and put a motion for the closure of a question when it has been adequately debated. He checks irrelevance or repetition by ordering a Member to discontinue his speech, and has the power to refuse a motion for the adjournment of the House or of the debate. He prevents a division which in his opinion is unnecessarily claimed." (*Applause*).

Sir, this division is unnecessarily claimed. The hon. Member of the Opposition is wasting

the time of this House. He knows the terms of his amendment are frivolous and unnecessary.

The Chairman: I thank the Leader of the House for drawing my attention to this particular provision. I never thought it was a

waste of time and I feel the Opposition are entitled to a division if they wish.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*.

Ayes 12. Noes 49.

Division No. 4

10.20 a.m.

Ayes

Mr S. O. Achara
Mr J. A. Agba
Mr S. T. Akpan
Mr S. J. Amachree
Mr O. Arikpo

Mr H. U. E. Edelduok
Rev. O. Efiog, C.B.E.
Mr E. O. Eyo
Mr S. G. Ikoku
Mr O. O. Ita

Tellers for the Ayes :

Mr A. J. Ekpe
Chief I. I. Morphy

Noes

Mr W. Abengowe
Mr O. U. Afiah
Chief G. N. Agbasiere
Mr D. S. A. Agim
Mr D. E. Akilo
Mr H. U. Akpabio
Mr D. O. Aligwekwe
Mr S. N. Alo
Mr J. W. E. Anaba
Mr R. O. Anoke
Mr E. Chidolue
Mr A. O. Chikwendu
Mr E. A. Chime
Mr E. Emole
Mr E. U. Eronini
Mr I. U. Imeh
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 J. U. Nwodo
Mr P. O. Nwoga

Mr J. H. E. Nwuke
Mr M. U. Obayi
Dr A. N. Obonna
Mr M. E. Ogim
Mr C. A. Okafor
Mr J. O. Okeh
Mr G. E. Okeke
Mr G. C. Okeya
Mr E. P. Okoya
Dr M. I. Okpara
Mr K. J. N. Okpokam
Mr B. C. Okwu
Chief S. E. Onukogu
Mr P. A. Onwe
Mr N. O. Onwudiwe
Mr M. N. Onwuma
Chief A. N. Onyiuke
Rev. M. D. Opara
Mr E. W. Udonkim
Mr 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 J. E. Eyo

The Chairman: I would like to remind hon. Members that any debate must be done at this moment and not when the question is put. A debate on policy must be done when we are going item by item.

Question, That the sum of £24,470, for Head 421—Premier's Office—stand part of the First Schedule, put and agreed to.

HEAD 423—CLERICAL TRAINING SCHOOL

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £200 for Head 423—Clerical Training School—stand part of the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

HEAD 424—COMMISSIONER IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £11,150 for Head 424—Commissioner in the United Kingdom—stand part of the First Schedule.

Mr Ikoku: Mr Chairman, Sir, I want to speak generally on this Head. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Commissioner for Eastern Nigeria in the United Kingdom and his staff for what I consider an excellent arrangement made by that office for the Eastern Nigeria Delegates and Advisers to the Resumed Constitutional Conference. (*Hear! Hear!*). I am aware of the fact that the provisions made this year would be much better than those of last year. Of course, I am not blaming anybody for what happened last year.

It was the experience gained last year which helped to make this arrangement such a success but I think you would like to know, Sir, and this hon. House would also like to know too, that the arrangements made for the Advisers and Delegates reflect credit to the Commissioner and his staff who were able to effect these arrangements and I would like this hon. House to record our thanks for their charming activities.

Question, That the sum of £11,150 for Head 424—Commissioner in the United Kingdom—stand part of the First Schedule, put and agreed to.

HEAD 426—HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £8,560 for Head 426—House of Assembly—stand part of the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

HEAD 427—JUDICIAL

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £7,770 for Head 427—Judicial—stand part of the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

HEAD 428—PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £810 for Head 428—Public Service Commission—stand part of the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

HEAD 429—MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £700 for Head 429—Ministry of Agriculture—stand part of the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

HEAD 430—AGRICULTURE

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £32,280 for Head 430—Agriculture—stand part of the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

HEAD 431—FISHERIES

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £21,890 for Head 431—Fisheries—stand part of the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

HEAD 432—FORESTRY

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £8,380 for Head 432—Forestry—stand part of the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

HEAD 433—VETERINARY

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £70 for Head 433—Veterinary—stand part of the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

HEAD 435—MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £4,500 for Head 435—Ministry of Education—stand part of the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

HEAD 437—MINISTRY OF FINANCE

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £3,750 for Head 437—Ministry of Finance—stand part of the First Schedule.

Sub-head 16—Cost of Examination of the Assets and Liabilities of the African Continental Bank Limited

Mr E. O. Eyo: I do not propose to move a reduction of this item but I just want to have an assurance from the Government that this report will be made available to the House. We have nothing to quarrel with the Government. The Government has a right to appoint any expert to conduct an examination of the Assets and Liabilities of the A.C.B. and to that extent the Region has been called upon to pay £3,750. Our point of view, Sir, is that having paid for this examination then this House is entitled to have a Report of this expert. I just want to make that point, and I would like to know what Government has got to say.

The Premier: Mr Chairman, it is true that in formulating a policy the Executive Council of any Government depends upon the Legislature for its funds, but it is not true that because the Legislature votes funds therefore it is entitled to receive every report published in the interest of the Executive Council. I say this because when we discuss banking we deal with things of a secret nature. No one is interested in knowing what money you may have to your credit in the B.W.A. or Barclays. I am not interested, and it is not in the interest of any person to know really the secrets of the individuals who deposit funds in the Bank, and to invite an expert from abroad to come and assist it and advise it on how to nationalise the Bank does not in any way permit the Government to expose the secrets of that Bank. And I want to say that I am not very much surprised that Mr Eyo should continue to do his havoc on this particular bank. In the last ten years I do not recollect of any bank whether Expatriate or African, which had been so maligned as the African Continental Bank. Therefore, I feel that Mr Eyo should confine his activities really to something constructive. If he wants the

bank to be nationalised, he should allow the Government to make use of the advice from the experts to make up its mind and nationalise the bank. What is he worrying for? If he wants the assets of any bank, he knows what to do. The assets and liabilities are always available; they are all published. They are statutorily required and they are bound and guided by law as any other Limited Liability Company to publish their balance sheets every year. If that is what he requires it is not for the Government to give him that. All he has to do is to go to the Registrar of Companies and pay a shilling and he will be able to get all the facts he wants. Why does he want to know the secret report or confidential report of this particular bank? I am not surprised. We know that he is interested in character assassination. He killed the Speaker by his character assassination and we are not going to allow him to kill individuals who have interests in that particular bank. We, as the Government, are not going to allow that. What we know we will do is that we will respect the will of this House to get all the information and expert advice available. We are not going to satisfy his seductive instinct by placing before him secret documents about individuals who may belong to this Government and who may not belong to this Government. The report of the experts concerns the shareholders of the African Continental Bank. He has done a lot of harm to that Bank already and we do not think that in other parts of the world he would have done that and got away with it.

As far as I am concerned now, this Government will not place that report before him to enable him to carry out his insidious attempts and we shall not do that even if he gives notice of a motion of no confidence in the Government.

Mr E. O. Eyo: Point of Order, Mr Chairman. May I, Sir, call upon you to ask the Premier to withdraw the remark that I killed the Speaker of the House. It is a very serious statement by the Head of a Government. It is a very dangerous statement.

Several hon. Members: No.

The Premier: I cannot attempt to be disrespectful to this hon. House. Mr Eyo got up in this House and moved a motion which had not

[THE PREMIER]

been moved anywhere in any Legislature which enjoys the tradition of British Parliamentary Democracy. He killed the Speaker—he attacked and impugned his integrity and said that he was partial.

Mr Chairman, I will say this publicly: since then, the late Speaker was no longer himself. He saw me almost in tears and told me that he could not stand it after serving so faithfully all these years for some one to make such a motion. But I told him we would use any parliamentary device to stop the motion from being debated. He refused my suggestion and insisted that the motion should be debated. He could not be present and so left the Chair.

We debated the motion on 23rd May, and it was three months later that the Speaker died. That is why I made that statement. I made it with all sense of responsibility.

Mr O. Arikpo (Obubra Division): Mr Chairman, when the Premier made a statement in respect of the steps so far taken by the Government to nationalise the African Continental Bank—I am referring to the fact that Government sought the advice of experts on the methods by which the bank will be nationalised...

Several hon. Members: Speak out; we do not hear you.

Mr Arikpo: I am addressing the Chairman; you can get out.

Government Bench: Speak out, we cannot have this any longer.

Mr Arikpo: What I mean is that the Premier did not refer to the fact that the information given by the experts included secret information bearing on shareholders of the Bank. I think, Sir, that nobody in this House—on this side of the House—would ask the Government to reveal information referring to individual holdings in the Bank but the Premier's statement says that Government has engaged experts to advise it on the methods of nationalisation of the Bank. It is only fair to say that we should like to know what advice these experts gave on the methods of nationalising the Bank.

Mr E. O. Eyo: Read out Dr Imoke's statement on the matter.

Mr Arikpo: Sir, I just want to read that side of the statement.

The Chairman: Order! Order! I do not know whether Members know that there is no Motion before the House. I only allowed Mr Eyo to make a statement on that particular point. Unless there is a Motion before the House in future, I will disallow any further statements. (*Hear! Hear!*).

Mr Arikpo: What I am saying is that in view of the fact that the Government has set up a Committee of Experts to advise it on methods of nationalising the Bank, we ought to know what advice these experts gave. Now, that is very different from saying that this implies that the Government should disclose secret information about the holdings of individuals or groups in the Bank. That is not done anywhere else and that is of no interest to any person except to the shareholders or depositors. All that this statement implies is that Government should place before the House at the earliest possible opportunity the advice of the experts on how to nationalise the Bank. I think that is a very legitimate request.

The Premier: Mr Chairman, I only wish to make it clear to the Member from Obubra Division that there is no reason why patience should not be exercised until the Bill on the nationalisation of the African Continental Bank comes before the House. I agree with him but the point is that the hon. Member from Uyo is fond of character assassination.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture (Mr D. A. Nnaji): There is one thing I wish to add. The point is, Mr Chairman, that the African Continental Bank has been figuring for so many years both outside and inside this House. I remember in 1956 it was Eyo who caused a lot of trouble and he has come back to begin again. There is B.W.A. in this country. Nobody brings B.W.A. into this House. Awolowo has a bank and nobody has talked about any other bank in any Legislature but the A.C.B. comes up here for debate every time.

I remember an hon. Member who took a loan of £1,000 from this bank. That man was Mr Achara. Mr Achara took a loan of £1,000 from that bank and without that bank Achara could not have lived. Mr Chairman, the man who had no money and ran to the A.C.B. and took a loan of £1,000 to build a house, is the man talking about the A.C.B. contemptuously.

Dr Mbadiwe himself collected over £14,000. from various people by fraud.

Mr Chairman, we are tired of coming here and giving the Opposition more privilege than they deserve. I am appealing to you, Mr Chairman and the Premier, to minimise the privilege given to the Opposition. Now, the hon. Eyo who is a man of questionable character like the Leader of the Opposition, comes here to assassinate people's character. We are tired of these irresponsible ex-convicts coming here to trouble this hon. House.

Mr S. T. Akpan (Eket Division): Mr Chairman, it is very strange to hear from the Premier in this mood simply because Eyo made a statement in the House. He forgot that he himself killed Ojike. I say this with all sense of responsibility.

An hon. Member: Are you responsible?

Mr Akpan: I say this, Mr Chairman—I was in the Dayspring when Ojike one day came and told me that it was the Premier (*Interruption*) before the report of the Bribery Commission . . .

The Chairman: Order! Order! I consider this aspect of your speech irrelevant to the motion. If you want to continue, speak on the relevant matter.

Mr Akpan: We quite appreciate the difficulties of the Government and we are prepared to help them overcome certain difficulties. But if the House is called upon to pay for some jobs . . .

The Minister of Commerce (Mr J. U. Nwodo): On point of Order, Sir, Standing Order 34. It reads:

“Mr Speaker in the House and the Chairman in any Committee shall be responsible for the observance of the Rules of Order in the House and Committee respectively and their decision upon any point of order shall not be open to appeal and shall not be reviewed by the House except upon a substantive motion made after notice.”

I thought we have had a ruling on this question of the nationalisation of the Continental Bank since there is no motion on it before the House. But the Opposition had delighted in getting on it by other means and at the same time insulting the integrity of this House.

The Chairman: I did not give a ruling on that particular item. The particular item comes under the Ministry of Finance and the debate on the general principle may be allowed.

Mr Akpan: The point I am trying to make is that if we pay from the public fund for something, we should be entitled to have an idea of what is going on; we would like Government to tell us how far they have gone in the nationalisation of this Bank. It is over two years since this nationalisation started and we do not know how far they have gone. We do not want oral statements. What we want is, “Here is a piece of job done by the firm”. We would like to have the views of the Government. The Minister of Finance told us the other day that the Government was studying the report. We quite appreciate all that, but the Government should come out with a statement that this is what they have found and this is what the people have said. As things stand, the report is probably not good.

Hon. Members: Who told you?

Mr Akpan: I know you never like to wash your dirty linens in the street, but what I would like you to do is this: because we are paying for this, let us know what is happening.

The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke): Mr Chairman, I want to bring it to the notice of this House that I do not intend to make any more statements on this subject until, when and if necessary.

Mr Ogon: I just wanted to make it realised that in spite of the repeated attempts of the Opposition to drag the Government into hasty action, this Government was elected into power for a period of five years, and that when and in what manner, to execute any of their programmes is the absolute prerogative of the Government.

I would not advise Government to take any action that will be injurious to any individual person in this Region. Nationalisation or not, the question is that the Western Region Government invested more than £2½ million in the National Bank. A lot of money has been frittered away from the Bank, yet that Government persistently refuse to submit to a Commission of Inquiry, or the strength of a motion made in the Western House of Assembly by the late Leader of the Opposition. Why then must we come to this House to talk of Commission of Inquiry and nationalisation of the African Continental Bank? I must say that the power to nationalise the African Continental Bank is within the province of the Regional Government.

Question, That the sum of £3,750 for Head 437—Ministry of Finance—stand part of the First Schedule, put and agreed to.

HEAD 438—ACCOUNTANT-GENERAL

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £55,270 for Head 438—Accountant-General—stand part of the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

HEAD 439—BOARD OF INTERNAL REVENUE

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £22,410 for Head 439—Board of Internal Revenue—stand part of the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

HEAD 440—PENSIONS AND GRATUITIES

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £9,500 for Head 440—Pensions and Gratuities—stand part of the First Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

HEAD 442—MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Question proposed, That a sum not exceeding £1,790 for Head 442—Ministry of Health—stand part of the First Schedule.

Mr J. A. Agba (Ogoja Division): Mr Chairman, Sir, while I wish to make a few observations, I do not intend to make the House divide.

The Chairman: Are you moving?

Mr Agba: I am moving really. I have very special reasons in saying here that there should be a reduction of £120 from this Head.

The Chairman: But move it properly!

Mr Agba: I rise to move, Mr Chairman, that £120 be reduced from Head 442. My reason for doing this is that perhaps the Government might be very courteous and decorous in admitting that they are guilty of squandermania. My reason for saying this is that in many cases we have discovered that the Ministry of Health undertakes a gigantic programme not minding the finances of the Region.

When the Government gives out something for the establishment of an hospital or for the equipment of an hospital, the Minister concerned does not seem to make efforts to go there and see really what is happening in the hospital. Under this point, perhaps I hope you will not mind if I become personal and a bit circumscribed. I want to say something about Obudu hospital. I have been to the Ministry of Health to enquire from the Permanent Secretary whether something is being given by Government to that hospital, and the constant answer has always been "yes". But since Dr Okpara opened that hospital in 1954 I do not think any Minister of Health has ever been to that area to see what is happening there. I think if the Government invests money in any project, it is the duty of the Ministry concerned to see that the project is being carried out and the money spent on it.

The Minister of Welfare (Mr E. A. Chime): When I was acting Minister of Health, I wired the hon. Member that I would be visiting the hospital, and I did visit the hospital.

Mr Agba: Mr Speaker, Sir, I thank the Minister for saying that he sent me a telegram that he was coming. I would like the Minister to understand that if he sent me a telegram that he would be coming today and he came the following day instead he would not expect me to be there, unless he notified me of the change.

Index to the Eastern House of Assembly Debates

SECOND SESSION, FOURTH MEETING

10th to 15th December, 1958

ABBREVIATIONS

(Adj. Deb.) = Adjournment Debate
 1R = First Reading
 2R = Second Reading
 3R = Third Reading

Com. = Committee
 E.R. = Eastern Region
 Q = Question

	Column	Column
ABAK:		
Tarring of Umuahia-Ikot Ekpene-Abak Road	320Q	
ABAKALIKI:		
Loans for Rice Production	4Q	
Road Tarring	70Q	
Sports Stadium	70Q	
Tarring of Amike-Effium Road	115-6Q	
ABENGOWE, MR W.:		
Local Purchase Orders	39Q	
Nigerian Independence: <i>Motion</i>	302-4	
ACHARA, MR S. O.:		
Eastern Nigeria Information Service	72-4Q	
Insect Pests	43Q	
Loans from the African Continental Bank (Adj. Deb.)	317-8	
London Constitutional Conference	48-9Q	
Nigerian Independence: <i>Motion</i>	310-312	
University of Nigeria	168	
ADJOURNMENT DEBATES:		
Appointment and Recognition of Chiefs	315-7	
Circulation of Ministerial Statements	163-6	
Compensation for Damages during U.P.E. Disturbances	111-2	
Highway Robbers	112-3	
House Rent Profiteering	169	
Loans from the African Continental Bank	317-8	
Outbreak of Fire in Onitsha	113-4	
Radio Masts and Roads in Calabar	200-202	
AFIAH, MR O. U., Minister of Works:		
Radio Masts and Roads in Calabar (Adj. Deb.)	202	
AFIKPO:		
Itigidi Hospital: <i>Motion</i>	242-301	
Okpoha Bridge	70Q	
AFRICAN CONTINENTAL BANK:		
Loans from (Adj. Deb.)	317-8	
Nationalisation of	7-10	
AGBA, MR J. A.:		
Goldsmiths Bill: Com.	97-8	
Itigidi Hospital: <i>Motion</i>	290-293	
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: Com. Head 442	192-3	
Com. Head 449	196-8	
Com. Head 462	228-9	
U.P.E. Modification	204Q	
AGBASIERE, CHIEF G. N.:		
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: 2R	154-5	
AGRICULTURAL (AMENDMENT) BILL:		
Presented and 1R	13	
2R	21	
Com and 3R	21	
AHOADA:		
Rural Water Scheme	47-8Q	
Tarring of Umukoroshe-Kono Road	319-320Q	
AJEGBO, MR M. O., Attorney-General and Minister of Justice:		
Customary Courts (Amendment) Bill: Com.	237	
E.R. Development Corporation (Amendment) Bill: 2R	28	
Goldsmiths Bill: Com.	96, 98, 100-102	
Itigidi Hospital: <i>Motion</i>	261-6	
Oaths and Affirmations (Amendment) Bill: 2R	20	
AKILO, MR D. E.:		
Executive Post: Government Technical Institute and Trade Centre	206Q	
Exodus of Teachers from the East to the North	205-6Q	
Highway Robbers (Adj. Deb.)	112-3	
Missing Employee of the Co-operative Department	207-9Q	
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: Com. Head 456	160-161	
Com. Head 462	225	
Com. Head 462	227-8	
AKPABIO, MR H. U.:		
Accounting Officers	50-53Q	
Care of the Sick and Homeless	46Q	
Farmers	45-6Q	
Naturalised Citizens	46Q	
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: Com. Head 456	223-4	
AKPAN, MR S. T.:		
E.R. Development Corporation (Amendment) Bill: 2R	31-2	

	<i>Column</i>
Ifuho Women's Technical Centre ..	205Q
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: 2R ..	160-161
Com. Head 437	189-190
Com. Head 456	225-6
Teacher Training Institutions	204-5Q
ALO, Mr S. N.:	
Abakaliki Sports Stadium	70Q
Loans for Rice Production	4Q
Okpoha Bridge	4Q
Road Tarring	70Q
Supplementary Appropriation Bill:	
Com. Head 449	198
Com. Head 460	227
Com. Head 462	228-9
AMACHREE, CHIEF S. J.:	
Itigidi Hospital: <i>Motion</i>	289-290
Nigerian Independence: <i>Motion</i>	308-9
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: 2R ..	151
Com. Head 456	224
ANABA, MR J. W. E.:	
Local Government Staff and Politics ..	75-6Q
Secondary School for Obubra Division ..	67Q
Tarring of Ediba-Obubra Road	209Q
APREALA, MR N. L. P.:	
Compensation to U.P.E. Agitation Victims	43-4Q
ARIKPO, MR O.:	
Circulation of Ministerial Statements (Adj. Deb.)	163-4
Customary Courts (Amendment) Bill: 2R ..	105
E.R. Development Corporation (Amend- ment) Bill: 2R	28-9
Goldsmiths Bill: Com.	98-9,
	101-2
Loans to Farmers	73Q
Purchase Tax on Produce (Amendment) Bill: 2R	19
Supplementary Appropriation Bill:	
Com. Head 437	187-8
AZIKIWE, DR N., Premier:	
Circulation of Ministerial Statements (Adj. Deb.)	164-6
Compensation for Damages during U.P.E. Disturbances (Adj. Deb.)	111-2
Customary Courts (Amendment) Bill: 2R ..	106
E.R. Development Corporation (Amend- ment) Bill: 2R	34-6
Goldsmiths Bill: Com.	97, 99-
	100
House of Chiefs	211-3
Itigidi Hospital: <i>Motion</i>	293-8
Nationalisation of the African Continental Bank	10
Provincial Administration	117-123
Standing Order No. 18: <i>Motion</i>	238-9
Standing Order No. 25: <i>Motion</i>	238
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: 2R ..	132
Com. Head 421	171, 173-
	5
Com. Head 437	185-8
Com. Head 453	221
University of Nigeria	167-170

B

BENDE:	
Tarring of Umuahia-Ikot Ekpene-Abak Road	320Q

	<i>Column</i>
BOARD OF INTERNAL REVENUE:	
Staff Salaries	44-5Q
Students Vacation Work and Tax	45Q
Tax Defaulters	49-50Q
Tax Payment by Apprentices	65-6Q
Tax Payment by married and unmarried persons	65Q
BOARDS AND CORPORATIONS ..	
60-66Q	
BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE:	
Exemption from Standing Order	11-12,
	214
<i>Other Statements:</i>	
Education Grants-in-aid	76-8
Election Regulations—Local Government	78-81
House of Chiefs	211-3
Nationalisation of the African Continental Bank	7-10
Provincial Administration	117-123
University of Nigeria	167-170
Adjournment <i>Sine die</i>	214, 318
BYRON, MR J. O.:	
Presentation of water-colour portrait of Mr E. N. Egbuna, late Speaker	1

C

CALABAR:	
Radio Masts and Roads (Adj. Deb.)	200-202
CHIDOLUE, MR E.:	
Outbreak of Fire in Onitsha (Adj. Deb.)	113-4
Ozubulu-Atani New Road	72Q
CHIKWENDU, MR A. O.:	
Supplementary Appropriation Bill:	
Com. Head 443	194
CHIME, MR E. A., Minister of Welfare:	
Supplementary Appropriation Bill:	
Com. Head 442	192
CIVIL SERVICE:	
Accounting Officers	50-53Q
Clerical Assistants	39-40Q
Provincial Administration	117-123
COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT AND WELFARE ..	
53-8Q	
CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE ..	
48-9Q	
CO-OPERATIVE DEPARTMENT:	
Loans to Co-operative Societies	207Q
Missing Employee	207-9Q
CUSTOMARY COURTS (AMENDMENT) BILL:	
Presented and 1R	81-2
2R	105-6,
	234-7
Com. and 3R	237

E

EASTERN REGION DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION:	
Pioneer Oil Mill	4-6Q
EASTERN REGION DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL:	
Presented and 1R	13
2R	24-36
Com.	36-7
3R	37

	Column
EDELDUOK, MR H. U. E.:	
Supplementary Appropriation Bill:	
Com. Head 460	226
EDUCATION:	
Compensation to U.P.E. Agitation Victims	43-4Q
(Adj. Deb.)	111-2
Exodus of Teachers from the East to the	
North	205-6Q
Grants-in-aid	40-42Q,
	76-8
Ifuho Women's Technical Centre ..	205Q
Secondary School for Obubra Division ..	67Q
Teacher Training Institutions	204-5Q
U.P.E. Modification	203-4Q
Voluntary Agency Teachers	67Q
EFIONG, C.B.E., REV. O.:	
Itigidi Hospital: <i>Motion</i>	281-2
Radio Masts and Roads in Calabar (Adj.	
Deb.)	200-201
EGBUNA, MR E. N. (LATE SPEAKER):	
Message of sympathy from the House of	
Representatives, Sierra Leone <i>re</i> his	
death	1
Presentation of water-colour portrait to	
the Eastern House of Assembly by	
J. O. Byron	1
EKPE, MR A. J.:	
E.R. Development Corporation (Amend-	
ment) Bill: 2R	28
Report from a Special Committee ..	4
EMOLE, MR E., Minister of Town Planning:	
Supplementary Appropriation Bill:	
Com. Head 453	220
ENYONG:	
Rural Water Supply	322Q
Tarring of Ikot Ekpen-Itu-Uyo Road ..	322Q
ERONINI, MR E. U.:	
Purchase Tax on Produce (Amendment)	
Bill: 2R	19-20
Reports of Parliamentary Committees ..	74-5Q
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: 2R ..	132-6
Tourist Corporation	69Q
ETUK, MR M. U.:	
Itigidi Hospital: <i>Motion</i>	280-281
Nigerian Independence: <i>Motion</i>	308
Supplementary Appropriation Bill:	
Com. Head 456	222-3
Com. Head 460	227
Tarring of Uyo-Etinan-Ekparaqua Road	71Q
EYO, MR E. O.:	
Assets and Liabilities of the African Con-	
tinental Bank: <i>Motion</i>	302
Customary Courts (Amendment) Bill: 2R	105-6,
	235-6
Com.	237
E.R. Development Corporation (Amend-	
ment) Bill: 2R	26-7, 36
Exemption from Standing Order: <i>Motion</i>	11-12
Goldsmiths Bill: Com.	96-7,
	99-101
Itigidi Hospital: <i>Motion</i>	242-8,
	260, 261,
	280, 294,
	299-301
Local Government (Amendment) Bill:	
Com.	90

	Column
Publications (Amendment) Bill:	
Com.	23-4
Purchase Tax on Produce (Amendment)	
Bill: 2R	19
Supplementary Appropriation Bill:	
Com. Head 421	171-3,
	175,
	177-8
Com. Head 437	185-6,
	188
F	
FARMERS	45-6Q
G	
GOLDSMITHS BILL:	
Presented and 1R	13
2R	90-95
Com.	96-105
3R	105
H	
HIGHWAY ROBBERS (Adj. Deb.) ..	112-3
HOSPITALS:	
Itigidi Hospital: <i>Motion</i>	242-301
New Hospital at Mbanjo	68-9Q
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY:	
Presentation of water-colour portrait of	
late Speaker by Mr Byron	1
Message of sympathy from the Sierra	
Leone House of Representatives <i>re</i>	
death of late Speaker	1
Standing Order No. 18: <i>Motion</i>	238-9
Standing Order No. 25: <i>Motion</i>	238
Standing Order No. 66: <i>Motion</i>	108-110
Standing Order No. 68: <i>Motion</i>	240-242
HOUSE OF CHIEFS:	
Appointment and Recognition of Chiefs	
(Adj. Deb.)	315-7
Ministerial Statement by the hon. Premier	211-3
HOUSING:	
House Rent Profiteering (Adj. Deb.) ..	166
Senior Staff Quarters	43Q
I	
IHEKWOABA, MR J. O.:	
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: 2R ..	142-4
IKOKU, MR S. G.:	
Compensation for Damages during U.P.E.	
disturbances (Adj. Deb.)	111
Customary Courts (Amendment) Bill: 2R	106
E.R. Development Corporation (Amend-	
ment) Bill: 2R	25-6, 32
Goldsmiths Bill: 2R	92-5
Com.	101-2
Itigidi Hospital: <i>Motion</i>	277-8,
	285-290
Local Government (Amendment) Bill: 2R	87-9
Nationalisation of the African Continental	
Bank	10, 11
Publications (Amendment) Bill: 2R ..	22-3
Purchase Tax on Produce (Amendment)	
Bill: 2R	18

	Column
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: 2R ..	123-131, 161
Com. Appendix K	231-3
Com. Head 421	174-6
Com. Head 424	183
Com. Head 449	217-9
Com. Head 453	220
IKOT EKPENE:	
Ifuho Women's Technical Centre ..	205Q
Loans	71-2Q
Tarring of Ikot Ekpene-Itu-Uyo Road ..	322Q
Tarring of Umuahia-Ikot Ekpene-Abak Road	320Q
ILLITERATES PROTECTION ORDINANCE (AMENDMENT) BILL:	
Presented and 1R	82
2R	106-7
Com. and 3R	108
IMEH, MR I. U.:	
Members of the Tourist Corporation ..	321-2Q
Tarring of Umuahia-Ikot Ekpene-Abak Road	320Q
Tourist Corporation—Catering Rest House Adviser	320-321Q
IMOKE, DR S. E., Minister of Finance:	
Goldsmiths Bill: 2R	90-92,95
Com.	96-7
Itigidi Hospital: <i>Motion</i>	266-276
Nationalisation of the African Continental Bank	7-10
Purchase Tax on Produce (Amendment) Bill: 2R	16-18,19
Standing Order No. 66: <i>Motion</i>	108-110
Standing Order No. 68: <i>Motion</i>	240-242
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: 2R ..	13-16, 126, 161
Com. Clause 1	-3
Com. Clause 2	233
Com. Clause 5	233
Com. Head 421	180
Com. Head 437	190
INFORMATION SERVICES	72-4Q
ITA, MR E.:	
Radio Masts and Roads in Calabar (Adj. Deb.)	202
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: 2R ..	136-7
Com. Head 449	219
ITA, MR O. O.:	
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: 2R ..	144-7
ITO, MR J. M.:	
Loans to people from Ikot Ekpene Division	71-2Q
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: 2R ..	155-6
IWUAGWU, MR R. O.: Minister of State charged with responsibility for Customary Courts and the Appointment and Recognition of Chiefs:	
Customary Courts (Amendment) Bill: 2R	105, 234-5
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: Com. Head 445	194-6
K	
KIRI, MR K.:	
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: 2R ..	158-160
Com. Head 456	223

	Column
L	
LAND:	
Niger Land Transfer Agreements ..	206-7Q
LOANS:	
Loans from the African Continental Bank (Adj. Deb.)	317-8
Loans to Co-operative Societies	207Q
Loans to Farmers	73-4Q
Loans to people from Ikot Ekpene Division	71-2Q
Loans to people from Ogoni Division ..	7Q
Rice Production	4Q
LOCAL GOVERNMENT:	
Election Regulations—Local Government	78-81
Local Government Staff and Politics ..	75-6Q
LOCAL GOVERNMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL:	
Presented and 1R	13
2R	82-9
Com.	89-90
3R	90
LOCAL PURCHASE ORDERS	39Q
M	
MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS:	
Circulation of Ministerial Statements (Adj. Deb.)	163-6
Education Grants-in-aid	76-8
Election Regulations—Local Government	78-81
House of Chiefs	211-3
Nationalisation of the African Continental Bank	7-11
Provincial Administration	117-123
University of Nigeria	167-170
N	
NALELO, MR O. B.:	
Port Harcourt—Ogoni Road	319Q
Tax Defaulters	49-50Q
Tax payment by Apprentices	65-6Q
Tax payment by married and unmarried persons	65Q
NNAJI, MR D. A., Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture:	
Customary Courts (Amendment) Bill: 2R	237
Loans from the African Continental Bank (Adj. Deb.)	318
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: Com. Head 437	188-9
Com. Head 462	230
NSUKKA:	
Tarring of Obolo/Eha-Amufu Road ..	75Q
NWODO, MR J. U., Minister of Commerce:	
Exemption from Standing Order: <i>Motion</i>	11-12
Itigidi Hospital: <i>Motion</i>	282-5
Nigerian Independence: <i>Motion</i>	312-5
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: 2R ..	130
Com. Head 437	189-190
NWOGA, Mr P. O., Minister of Agriculture:	
Agricultural (Amendment) Bill: 2R ..	21
E.R. Development Corporation (Amendment) Bill: 2R	24-5, 27

	Column
NWUKE, MR J. H. E., <i>Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Internal Affairs:</i>	
Illiterates Protection Ordinance (Amendment) Bill: 2R	106-7

O

OATHS AND AFFIRMATIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL:

Presented and 1R	13
2R	20
Com.	20
3R	21

OBONNA, DR A. N.:	
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: 2R ..	151-4
U.P.E. Modification	203-4

OBUBRA:	
Secondary Schools	67Q
Tarring of Ediba-Obubra Road	209Q

OGON, MR M. E.:	
Customary Courts (Amendment) Bill: 2R	236-7
E.R. Development Corporation (Amendment) Bill: 2R	32-3
House Rent Profiteering (Adj. Deb.) ..	166
Itigidi Hospital: <i>Motion</i>	276-280, 301
Nigerian Independence: <i>Motion</i>	304-6
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: 2R ..	131-2
Com. Head 421	179-180
Com. Head 437	191

OGONI:	
Loans	7Q
Port Harcourt-Ogoni Road	319Q
Tarring of Umokoroshe-Kono Road ..	319-320Q

OKEH, MR J. O.:	
Pioneer Oil Mills	4-6Q
Rural Water Scheme—Ahoada Division	47-8Q

OKEKE, MR G. E. <i>Minister of Education:</i>	
Education Grants-in-aid	76-8
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: Com. Appendix K	233

OKEKE, MR P. N.:	
Appointment and Recognition of Chiefs (Adj. Deb.)	315-7
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: 2R ..	138-142
Com. Head 456	224-5

OKEYA, MR G. C.:	
Grants-in-aid	40-42Q
Teachers—Retirement	74Q
Telecommunications	69-70Q
Tourist Centres	46-7Q
Voluntary Agency Teachers	67Q

OKIGWI:	
Water Supplies	67-8Q

OKO, M.B.E., MR G. I.:	
Boards and Corporations	60-66Q
Colonial Development and Welfare Fund	53-8Q
Industrial Development	59-60Q
Loans to Farmers	73-4Q
Provision for Widows, Paupers and Orphans	49Q

OKOYA, MR E. P., <i>Minister of Health:</i>	
Itigidi Hospital: <i>Motion</i>	255-261

	Column
OKPARA, DR M. I., <i>Minister of Production:</i>	
Adjournment <i>sine die: Motion</i>	214
Assets and Liabilities of the African Continental Bank: <i>Motion</i>	302
Film show for hon. Members	163
Itigidi Hospital: <i>Motion</i>	249-255, 277-8, 286, 289, 300
Nigerian Independence: <i>Motion</i>	306-7
Sittings of the House	213-4
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: 2R	127,162
Com. Head 421	177-181
Com. Head 456	223

OKPOKAM, MR K. J. N.:	
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: Com. Head 449	198-9

OKWU, MR B. C., <i>Minister of Information:</i>	
E.R. Development Corporation (Amendment) Bill: 2R	29-31
Publications (Amendment) Bill: 2R ..	21-2, 23

ONITSHA:	
Outbreak of Fire (Adj. Deb.)	113-4
Ozubulu-Atani New Road	72Q
Telecommunications	69-70Q

ONUBOGU, DR W. N.:	
E.R. Development Corporation (Amendment) Bill: 2R	29-30
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: 2R ..	147-9

ONUKOGU, CHIEF S. E., <i>Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Town Planning:</i>	
Nigerian Independence: <i>Motion</i>	309-310

ONWE, MR P. A.:	
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: Com. Head 449	199-200, 215-7
Tarring of Amike-Effium Road	115-6Q

ONWUDIWE, MR N. O.:	
New Hospital at Mbano	68-9Q
Water Supplies	67-8Q

ONWUMA, MR M. N.:	
E.R. Development Corporation (Amendment) Bill: 2R	33
Senior Staff Quarters	43Q
Students Vacation Work and Tax	45Q
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: 2R ..	149-151
Com. Appendix K	232-3

ONYIUKÉ, CHIEF A. N., <i>Minister of Local Government:</i>	
Local Government (Amendment) Bill: 2R	82-7
Com.	89, 90
Local Government Election Regulations	78-81

OPOBO:	
Tarring of Uyo-Etinan-Ekparaqua Road	71Q

ORPHANS:	
Provision for	49Q

OWERRI:	
New Hospital at Mbano	68-9Q
Telecommunications	69-70Q

P

PAPERS:

Delivered to the House and distributed to Members during Adjournment ended 9th December, 1958	2
Delivered to the House and distributed to Members during the sitting of the House Presented	203 3,71,117, 203

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES:

Reports	74-5Q
-----------------	-------

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE:

Debate on Ministerial Statement not allowed	11
Declaration of question if no tellers appointed by one side in a debate	301
Members should use Parliamentary language	266
Motion for the amendment of Standing Orders of the House after secondment, shall stand referred, without any question being proposed thereon, to the Standing Orders Committee	110, 238, 239, 242
Relevancy in Debate	189
Supplementary Appropriation Bill—Notice of Amendment	171
Time limit of Speeches	129, 254

PAUPERS:

Provision for	49Q
-----------------------	-----

PORT HARCOURT:

Port Harcourt—Ogoni Road	319Q
----------------------------------	------

POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS:

Telecommunications	69-70C
----------------------------	--------

PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION .. 117-123

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE:

Report	4
----------------	---

PUBLICATIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL:

Presented and 1R	13
2R	21-3
Com.	23-4
3R	24

PURCHASE TAX ON PRODUCE (AMENDMENT) BILL:

Presented and 1R	13
2R	16-20
Com. and 3R	20

R

RADIO MASTS (Adj. Deb.) 200-202

RICE PRODUCTION:

Loans for	4Q
-------------------	----

ROADS AND BRIDGES:

Okpoha Bridge	4Q
Ozubulu—Atani New Road	72Q
Port Harcourt—Ogoni Road	319Q
Road Tarring	70Q
Roads in Calabar (Adj. Deb.)	200-202
Tarring of Amike—Effium Road	115-6Q
Tarring of Ediba—Obubra Road	209Q
Tarring of Ikot Ekpene—Itu—Uyo Road	322Q
Tarring of Obolo—Eha—Amufu Road	75Q

Tarring of Umuahia—Ikot Ekpene—Abak Road	320Q
Tarring of Umukoroshe—Kono Road	319Q
Tarring of Uyo—Etinan—Ekparaqua Road	71Q

S

SALARIES:

Board of Internal Revenue—Staff Salaries	44-5Q
--	-------

SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES:

Grants-in-aid	40-42Q
Secondary School for Obubra Division	67Q

SHELL B.P. COMPANY:

Radio Masts and Roads in Calabar (Adj. Deb.)	200-202
--	---------

SIERRA LEONE:

Message of sympathy from the House of Representatives, Sierra Leone <i>re</i> the death of Mr Egbuna, late Speaker of the House	1
---	---

SPEAKER'S OR CHAIRMAN'S RULINGS:

Customary Courts (Amendment) Bill: 2R	105-6
Debate on Ministerial Statement not allowed	11
Members should speak facts	243
Members should use parliamentary language	266
Motion in order	302
Opposition Members entitled to a Division	181-2
Relevancy in Debate	189
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: Notice of Amendment	171
Suspension of sitting	278
Time limit of speeches	149, 254

SPORTS STADIUM:

Abakaliki	70Q
-------------------	-----

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL (1958/59):

Presented and 1R	12
2R	13-16, 123-163
Com. Appendix F	231
Com. Appendix K	231-3
Com. Clause 1	233
Com. Clause 2	233
Com. Clause 3	233
Com. Clause 4	233
Com. Clause 5	233-4
Com. Head 421	170-183
Com. Head 423	183
Com. Head 424	183
Com. Head 426	184
Com. Head 427	184
Com. Head 428	184
Com. Head 429	184
Com. Head 430	184
Com. Head 431	184
Com. Head 432	184
Com. Head 433	184
Com. Head 434	185
Com. Head 437	185-191
Com. Head 438	191
Com. Head 439	191
Com. Head 440	191
Com. Head 442	191-3
Com. Head 443	194
Com. Head 444	194

	<i>Column</i>
Com. Head 445	194-6
Com. Head 446	196
Com. Head 449	196-200, 215-9
Com. Head 452	220
Com. Head 453	220-221
Com. Head 454	221
Com. Head 455	221
Com. Head 456	221-6
Com. Head 458	226
Com. Head 460	226-7
Com. Head 462	227-230
Com. Head 464	230
Com. Head 465	230
Com. Head 466	230
3R	234

T

TAX:

Defaulters	49-50Q
Students Vacation Work and Tax	45Q
Tax payment by Apprentices	65-6Q
Tax payment by married and unmarried persons	65Q

TEACHERS:

Exodus of Teachers from the East to the North	205-6Q
Retirement	74Q
Training Institutions	204-5Q
Voluntary Agency	67Q

TECHNICAL INSTITUTE AND TRADE

CENTRE: Executive Post	206Q
--	------

TOURIST CORPORATION:

Catering Rest House Adviser	320-321Q
Members of the Tourist Corporation	321-322Q
Tourist Centres	46-7Q
Tourist Corporation—Investigation Committee	69Q

TOWN PLANNING:

Niger Land Transfer Agreements	206-7Q
--------------------------------------	--------

U

UDI:

Highway Robbers (Adj. Deb.)	112-3
-----------------------------------	-------

UKUTA, M.B.E. Mr R. O.:

Board of Internal Revenue—Staff salaries	44-5Q
Clerical Assistants	39-40Q

	<i>Column</i>
Itigidi Hospital: <i>Motion</i>	282
Loans to Co-operative Societies	207Q
Niger Land Transfer Agreements	206-7Q
Rural Water Supply	209-210Q
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: 2R	137-8
Com. Head 453	220
Com. Head 456	222
Com. Head 462	228
Tarring of Obolo/Eha-Amufu Road	75Q

UMOH, MR A. G.:

E.R. Development Corporation (Amendment) Bill: 2R	33-4
Rural Water Supply	322Q
Supplementary Appropriation Bill: 2R	142, 156-8

Tarring of Ikot Ekpene-Itu-Uyo Road	322Q
---	------

UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION:

Compensation for Damages	43-4Q
(Adj. Deb.)	111-2
Modifications	203-4Q

URURUKA, MR P. O., *Minister of Trans-*

<i>port:</i> Supplementary Appropriation Bill: Com. Head 456	222
--	-----

UYO:

Tarring of Ikot Ekpene-Itu-Uyo Road	322Q
Tarring of Uyo-Etinan-Ekparaqua Road	71Q

V

VACATION WORK:

Students and Tax	45Q
------------------------	-----

W

WATER SUPPLIES:

Okigwi Division	67Q
Rural Water Scheme—Ahoada Division	47-8Q
Rural Water Supply—Enyong Division	322Q
Rural Water Supply—Nsukka Division	209-210Q

WIDOWS:

Provision for	49Q
---------------------	-----

Y

YOWIKA, MR M. N.:

Loans	7Q
Tarring of Umukoroshe-Kono Road	319-320Q

