



EASTERN



REGION

NIGERIA

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

OFFICIAL REPORT

THIRD SESSION

FIRST MEETING

VOLUME I

31st March to 22nd April, 1959

S15

MISSOURI

1850

MISSOURI

MISSOURI

MISSOURI

MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MISSOURI

MISSOURI

MISSOURI



EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS

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

A

Abangwu, Mr C. A.	...	...	...	...	Nsukka Division.
Abengowe, Mr W.	...	...	...	...	Aba Division.
Achara, Mr S. O.	...	...	...	...	Okigwi Division.
Afiyah, Mr O. U.	...	...	...	...	Abak Division.
Agba, Mr J. A.	...	...	...	...	Ogoja Division.
Agbasiere, Chief G. N.	...	...	...	...	Orlu Division.
Agim, Mr D. S. A.	...	...	...	...	Orlu Division.
*Ajegbo, Mr M. O.	...	...	...	...	(Attorney-General).
Akilo, Mr D. E.	...	...	...	...	Udi Division.
Akpabio, Mr H. U.	...	...	...	...	Uyo Division.
Akpabio, Mr I. U.	...	...	...	...	Ikot Ekpene Division.
Akpan, Mr S. T.	...	...	...	...	Eket Division.
Aligwekwe, Mr D. O.	...	...	...	...	Okigwi Division.
Alo, Mr S. N.	...	...	...	...	Abakaliki Division.
Amachree, Chief S. J.	...	...	...	...	Degema Division.
Amaefunah, Mr P. U.	...	...	...	...	Awka Division.
Anaba, Mr J. W. E.	...	...	...	...	Obubra Division.
Anoke, Mr R. O.	...	...	...	...	Afikpo Division.
Apreala, Mr N. L. P.	...	...	...	...	Brass Division.
Arikpo, Mr O.	...	...	...	...	Obubra Division.
Awgu, Mr M. C.	...	...	...	...	Awka Division.
Azikiwe, Dr N.	...	...	...	...	Onitsha Division.

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

C

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

E

Edelduok, Mr H. U. E.	...	...	...	...	Eket Division.
Efiang, Rev. O., C.B.E.	...	...	...	...	Calabar Division.
Ekpe, Mr A. J.	...	...	...	...	Opobo Division.
Emole, Mr E.	...	...	...	...	Bende Division.
Enyi, Mr U.	...	...	...	...	Afikpo Division.
Eronini, Mr E. U.	...	...	...	...	Owerri Division.
Etuhube, Mr J. A.	...	...	...	...	Ikot Ekpene Division.
Etuk, Mr M. U.	...	...	...	...	Uyo Division.
Eyo, Mr E. O.	...	...	...	...	Uyo Division.
Eyo Mr J. E.	...	...	...	...	Abak Division.

I

Ihekwoaba, Mr J. O.	...	...	...	...	Orlu Division.
Ikoku, Mr S. G.	...	...	...	...	Enyong Division.
Imeh, Mr I. U.	...	...	...	...	Abak Division.
Imoke, Dr S. E.	...	...	...	...	Afikpo Division.
Ita, Mr E.	...	...	...	...	Calabar Division.
Ita, Mr O. O.	...	...	...	...	Eket Division.
Ito, Mr J. M.	...	...	...	...	Ikot Ekpene Division.
Iwuagwu, Mr R. O.	...	...	...	...	Okigwi Division.
Iwueke, Mr S. E. K.	...	...	...	...	Okigwi Division.

K

Kiri, Mr K. Degema Division.

M

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

N

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

O

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

U

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

Y

Yowika, Mr M. N. Ogoni Division.

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 THE 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).

Leader of the House: Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara.
Leader of the Opposition: The hon. S. G. Ikoku.
Government Chief Whip: The hon. M. E. Ogon.
Government Whips: The hon. W. Abengowe.
The hon. N. L. P. Apreala.

COMMITTEES**Committee of Selection**

The Premier (<i>Chairman</i>).	The Minister of Agriculture.
The Minister of Production.	The Minister of Education.
The Minister of Internal Affairs.	The Minister of Health.
The Minister of Finance.	The Minister of Welfare.
The Minister of Town Planning.	The Minister of Works.
The Minister of Transport.	The Attorney-General and Minister of
The Minister of Information.	Justice.
The Minister of Local Government.	Mr M. E. Ogon.
The Minister of State charged with responsibility for Customary Courts and the Appointment and Recognition of Chiefs.	Mr K. J. N. Okpokam.
The Minister of Commerce.	Mr N. O. Onwudiwe.
	Chief I. I. Morphy.
	Mr S. O. Achara.

Standing Orders Committee

Mr Speaker (<i>Chairman</i>).	Mr C. A. Abangwu.
Mr Okoi Arikpo.	Mr M. E. Ogon.
Mr O. O. Ita.	

House Committee

The Minister of Internal Affairs (<i>Chairman</i>).	Chief G. N. Agbasiere.
Chief I. I. Morphy.	Mr J. M. Ito.
Mr V. K. Onyeri.	Mr S. N. Alo.
	Mr J. O. Okeh.

Committee of Privileges

The Minister of Town Planning (<i>Chairman</i>).	Mr O. B. Nalelo.
Mr Eyo Ita.	Mr P. N. Okeke.
Rev. O. Efiang, C.B.E.	Mr O. Oketa.
Mr K. Kiri.	Mr P. U. Amaefunah.
Mr M. C. Awgu.	

Public Petitions Committee

The Minister of Health (*Chairman*).
Chief I. I. Morphy.
Chief S. J. Amachree.

Dr A. N. Obonna.
Mr D. E. Akilo.
Mr R. O. Ukuta, M.B.E.
Mr J. O. Okeh.

Statutory Corporations Committee

The Minister of Commerce (*Chairman*).
Mr Okoi Arikpo.
Mr A. J. Ekpe.
Mr G. C. Okeya.

Mr N. O. Onwudiwe.
Rev. M. D. Opara.
Mr P. A. Onwe.

Public Accounts Committee

Mr M. U. Etuk (*Chairman*).
Mr S. O. Achara.
Mr A. J. Ekpe.

Mr J. W. E. Anaba.
Mr S. E. K. Iwueke.
Mr M. N. Onwuma.

OFFICERS OF THE HOUSE

The Speaker: Hon. D. E. Okereke.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. C. A. Abangwu.

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

First Clerk Assistant: Mr L. O. Okoro.

Second Clerks Assistant: (Vacant).

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

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

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

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY
5800 S. UNIVERSITY AVENUE
CHICAGO, ILL. 60637
TEL. 773-707-3000

RECEIVED BY THE DIRECTOR
OF THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20540

NOV 15 1960
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20540

NOV 15 1960
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20540

EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 31st March, 1959

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

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr Speaker: As hon. Members are aware, His Excellency the Governor will shortly be arriving for the official opening of the Third Session of the Fourth Eastern House of Assembly. Sitting is therefore suspended pending His Excellency's arrival.

Sitting suspended at 10.10 a.m.

Sitting resumed at 10.20 a.m.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

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

Mr Speaker and hon. Members, the last twelve months have been important and eventful in the history of the Eastern Region of Nigeria. Among distinguished visitors too numerous to identify individually on this occasion, special mention falls to be made of Dr the hon. Kwame Nkrumah, Prime Minister of Ghana, who was recently the guest of my Government.

Of all the year's events the most significant was the Resumed Constitutional Conference held in London; its successful outcome gave widespread satisfaction.

Looking to the immediate future I know we all anticipate with keen pleasure the forthcoming visit of Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester.

THE CABINET

In the interests both of economy and of the efficient despatch of business, the Ministries of my Government are to be reorganised and reduced in number to ten.

THE LEGISLATURE

Pursuant to the decisions reached at the Constitutional Conferences of 1957 and 1958, my Government intends to set up a House of Chiefs. A White Paper detailing the relevant considera-

tions has been published and laid on the table of the House, and a Bill for a Law to provide for the classification of Chiefs will be introduced at this meeting.

My Government has decided, furthermore, that this is an appropriate time to revise the Eastern House of Assembly Law, 1955, and a Bill entitled "The Eastern Region Legislative Houses Law" will be introduced at this meeting. It will seek to provide for a House of Chiefs and to revise the prevailing House of Assembly legislation.

PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

In conformity with the policy which was enunciated in a White Paper laid on the table of this House as a Sessional Paper in November, 1957, it is intended as soon as legislation has been enacted, to devolve certain powers upon Provinces. Following consultation with interested parties, my Government has now decided to establish twelve Provinces in this Region, believing that this decision will enable those who live in geographically contiguous territory, and who have similar characteristics of language and culture, to associate themselves more closely in smaller units for ease of administration.

A Bill will be introduced at this meeting to provide for the creation of these Provinces and for the establishment of Provincial Assemblies. The Bill will define the Assemblies' composition and functions and will provide for the appointment of Provincial Commissioners whose responsibilities will include the duty of presiding over meetings of the Provincial Assemblies and the task of acting as a medium for making known to Government the wishes of the people.

The functions of Provincial Commissioners will be so defined as to ensure that they do not encroach upon those executive powers which must continue to rest upon Ministers charged with responsibility for certain portfolios, in respect of which they are answerable to this House.

THE PUBLIC SERVICE

The total number of established officers in the Eastern Region Public Service is about 7,000. In the Administrative, Professional and Super-scale grades there are 368 African officers and 195 overseas officers, fifty-seven of whom are on contract. In the Executive and Higher

Technical grades there are 352 African officers and eighty-five overseas officers, of whom sixty-seven are on contract. The total number of overseas officers is thus about 300, of whom less than half are on pensionable terms.

During the eighteen months since the scheme was introduced which permits overseas pensionable officers to retire with compensation, about eighty such officers have in fact left, leaving a balance of 138. My Government hopes that as many as possible of these officers will stay on in this Region, where their experience and expert services will continue to be needed for some time to come.

There are 117 vacancies for Scale A officers. These unfilled vacancies, taken together with the loss of much experience through retirements, have placed an exceptionally heavy burden on Civil Servants, especially, those in positions of responsibility. My Government wishes to pay tribute to their hard work and devotion to duty, often under difficult conditions, and I am happy to associate myself with that tribute.

The policy of Nigerianisation is being steadily pursued and with increasing success. A Standing Committee on Training has been set up to advise my Government on the training of Nigerians to meet the needs of the Public Service. There are now very many Nigerians in training for higher posts in universities in West Africa and overseas. In addition, over and above the awards made by the Scholarship Board, there are now 113 Nigerian Civil Servants on various courses of instruction which are designed to fit them for higher posts.

My Government is reviewing the training facilities within the Region with the object of extending them. It is proposed to set up an Institute of Administration in which courses of training can be run for Administrative Officers, Secretary-Typists, Clerical Staff, Local Government Treasurers and Co-operative Inspectors.

In order to prevent a situation arising in which the services of qualified Nigerians returning from abroad may be lost to this Region, my Government has approved the creation of a "pool" of unestablished officers. In this way it is hoped that Nigerians can be appointed on temporary terms immediately they return from overseas, pending the processing of their applications or the creation of new posts.

My Government also proposes to increase the pace and efficiency of recruitment. To that end a branch is being opened in the office of the Commissioner in London which will make it possible for this Government to recruit direct rather than through the Colonial Office or the Crown Agents.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION

The Report on the General Election to this House, which took place in March, 1957, referred to the intentions of my Government to establish a Regional Electoral Commission to be responsible for the compilation of a common Electoral Roll for each single-member constituency based on Local Government wards. It is proposed to establish a Regional Electoral Commission in accordance with the conclusions of the Resumed Constitutional Conference.

My Government has co-operated fully with the Federal Government in respect of the recent registration of electors, and it is proposed to use the Federal Electoral Register as the permanent Electoral Roll for all future elections in this Region, be they the local government, the provincial, the Regional or the Federal level. It is a matter for satisfaction that more than two and half million voters registered in January as against only 1,767,008 who registered in 1957.

UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

In my speech last year I gave hon. Members a progress report on the preliminary arrangements made for the establishment of the University of Nigeria. Since then the report of the Anglo-American experts who surveyed the situation at the request of my Government has been published.

After appraising the position, the experts were of the opinion that the establishment of a university in the Eastern Region is desirable. They recognised, however, that although some of the conditions for developing a good university are present, yet some difficult basic problems must be considered. They, therefore, recommended that a high quality provisional Council of Technical Advisers should be appointed to define and determine the philosophy and development of the University.

The Anglo-American experts discovered, in discussion with numerous people throughout Nigeria, that few had accurate information about

the proposed university and even fewer knew about the philosophy of higher education expressed by those who conceived the idea of a university for the Eastern Region. They suggested that more sources of information and knowledge should be used to popularise the aims and objectives of the proposed university.

They recommended that the hon. the Premier and certain advisers should study at first hand the administration and organisation of British universities, and should pay a visit to Michigan State University and other land-grant universities in the United States in order to observe the application of the principles of higher education to the problems and needs of the areas which such higher institutions serve.

The report also recommended that an intensive analysis of the social and economic problems of the Eastern Region should be undertaken by a group of educational experts whose findings should be employed to define specifically what should be the functions of the University of Nigeria especially in the Sciences, Agriculture, Engineering, Domestic Science, Business, Finance and Architectural Planning.

The report ends with the comment that, on the basis of their limited experience in Nigeria and the Eastern Region, the authors believed 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".

My Government has accepted the proposals contained in that report and will implement them. Hon. Members will remember that the Report of the Economic Mission of my Government to Europe and North America was laid on the Table of this House as Sessional Paper No. 6 of 1955. In Chapter IX the members of that Mission expounded the philosophy of education which formed the basis of their recommendation for the establishment of the University of Nigeria.

They advocated that the University should be established in order to afford opportunity to Nigerians to play a useful role in the development of their country. They recommended that the curricula of the proposed University should be related to the day to day life of the people of

Nigeria, and that the University itself should be so organised as to relate its Mission to the social and economic needs of the Region just as the land-grant colleges had fostered the broadening of the base of higher education in the United States.

A Bill will be introduced to amend the University of Nigeria (Provisional Council) Law, 1958, so as to empower the Minister concerned to give to the Provisional Council directions of a general or specific character as to the exercise and performance of their functions, and conferring upon the Council powers to co-opt any person from whom it desires to obtain advice.

The members of the Provisional Council of the University of Nigeria have been appointed in accordance with section 4 of the Law establishing it. They include representatives of the Inter-University Council and of the International Co-operation Administration. It is proposed that the Council will begin to function as a body corporate immediately after the enactment of the amending Law.

INFORMATION

During the last twelve months the Eastern Region Information Service issued over 2,500 press releases, distributed over 500,000 overseas publications and increased the circulation of the "Eastern Outlook" by 4,000 copies a week. In the course of the year my Government set up an enquiry into the affairs of the Information Service following allegations of irregularities. The report of this enquiry is still awaited.

The Agreement of the Development of Public Libraries in Africa which my Government signed with U.N.E.S.C.O. to cover the five years between 1957 and 1961 has been of incalculable benefit to the reading public of this Region. By the terms of the Agreement U.N.E.S.C.O. has provided the Region with the services of one of its experts and has supplied equipment to our Regional Library to the value of £10,000. It awarded a scholarship to an Eastern Nigerian and has also made a gift of a Mobile Library which is said to be the first of its type on the Continent of Africa. On its side my Government has now constructed suitable premises for this library pilot project at a cost of £45,000. The Library Board has received valuable book gifts from various sources. The Regional Central Library, which is designed to

serve as the headquarters of the Library Service, was declared open by the hon. the Premier on the 9th of this month. My Government will continue to encourage the Library Board in discharging its important duties.

Serious consideration is now being given to the possibility of establishing Regional Broadcasting and Television Services and an announcement may be expected shortly on this subject.

AGRICULTURE

During the financial year now ending it is estimated that 250,000 oil palm seedlings, 25,000 citrus budded seedlings, 45,000 coffee seedlings and 25,000 cocoa pods have been distributed. Public demand for this sort of assistance continues to grow. Other distribution figures during the year include 10,000 packets of vegetable seeds, 3,000 lb. of improved rice paddy seed and over 1,000 head of poultry.

Great progress has been made with the establishment of the Agricultural Station at Abobiri in the Rivers area. The Station was formerly opened in November. In the same area the acreage of rice sub-stations has greatly increased. In the Region as a whole it is now estimated that the land under rice cultivation is of the order of 100,000 acres. At Umudike the Research Station has been completed one year ahead of schedule and the new station at Nekede in Owerri Division is progressing steadily. A start was made during the year in carrying out a soil and land use survey in the Do-Anambra area; it is hoped that this is the forerunner of a complete survey of the Region.

A slight improvement in the staff position enabled the Fishery Division schemes to be pushed ahead. Five batches of six fishermen each have been trained in modern methods of fishing at Mkpatak and Finitasingi. With the help of the newly established Fishpond Advisory Service eleven privately owned fishponds are now in production, together with two ponds run by the Fisheries Division. A third fishing station on the sea coast at Okomitta in Eket Division will be established this year to continue the study of improved fishing methods by canoe. An experimental fishing unit is to be started which will have at its disposal a 55-foot deep sea-powered vessel and a 30-foot powered inshore vessel. A small

ice plant is to be established at Opobo which will study problems connected with the marketing of frozen fish so as to improve its distribution from coast to inland market centres. At the Umuna Fishculture Station it is intended to introduce the breeding of carp, a type of fish which has proved to be well adapted to the needs of this country.

The Forest Division has continued with its planting and rehabilitation programme. The staff position improved considerably with the recruitment of five Forestry Assistants, including the first fully qualified Nigerian to be appointed to this branch of the Service in the Eastern Region. This enabled greater attention to be paid to the preparation of working plans for reserves which are in production with a view to ensuring the maximum productivity of our forests in perpetuity. Over 1,500,000 cubic feet of timber to the value of more than £300,000 were exported from the Region during the year.

The Veterinary Service suffered more than ever from the world wide shortage of Veterinarians and for most of the year there was only one qualified Veterinary Officer in the Region. Nevertheless work continued on the establishment of a Research Station at Examgbo. Over 30,000 animals received treatment each month from the field staff of this Division. There has been some improvement in the production of hides and skins for export; more centres were opened during the year, during which a total of approximately 40,000 hides were produced in the Region.

A new system adopted by the Eastern Region Produce Inspection Service for the testing of special grade palm oil has now been in operation for a year. During that time 320,000 drums of oil have been tested and there are encouraging signs of improvement in the quality of the oil. Figures of produce graded during the year show that there has been a general increase in tonnages. This increase is of the order of 15,000 tons in the case of palm kernels, while production of graded palm oil has risen by about 6,000 tons, and cocoa by 800 tons.

The operations of the Eastern Regional Marketing Board for the calendar year 1958 revealed a gross trading surplus of £1,600,000. As a result of this favourable trading position the Board was able to meet heavy commitments

into which it had entered in previous years. It loaned a sum of £500,000 to the Eastern Region Development Corporation. A further grant at the rate of £100,000 per annum over the five years beginning January, 1958 is for the purpose of enabling the Development Corporation to carry on major development work originally initiated by the Nigeria Oil Palm Produce Marketing Board. These transactions are in addition to arrangements entered into to make available the sum of £1,000,000 to the Provisional Council of the University of Nigeria.

The past year has been a period of steady consolidation in all projects for which the Eastern Region Development Corporation is responsible. Ninety-five Pioneer Oil Mills are in production as against ninety-three in the previous year. Well over 100,000 tons of fruits were milled, from which 18,000 tons of palm oil and 10,000 tons of kernels were produced. Work has been proceeding steadily in the two palm oil estates at Calaro and Kwa Falls. At Calaro a new major mill has been completed to handle the yield anticipated from over 3,000 acres of oil palms. The cocoa industry has continued to receive attention and at Ikom work has begun on an additional 500 acres. Investigation continues to be made as to the suitability of the Bonny area for the further planting of coco-nut. The three cashew plantations at Oji, Ajalli and Mballa are progressing well and over thirty-three tons of nuts have been harvested. The Boat Yard at Opobo executed many orders for 42-foot passenger launches and a new design for a 14-foot "runabout", which was on display in the "Made in Nigeria Exhibition" held in Lagos, has proved very popular.

No new loans were considered during the year but outstanding repayments were collected. Negotiations are in train to acquire land in the Etche and Elele areas of the Ahoada Division with a view to the establishment of an Oil Palm Estate. The possibility of establishing a Cocoa Estate in the Bende Division is also under examination.

COMMERCE

During the year a company known as Williams and Williams (Nigeria) Ltd. was formed between my Government and the parent

British firm. This company will manufacture glazed and unglazed metal doors and windows, metal curtain walling and metal furniture. A factory is being built in Port Harcourt and production is expected to start next month.

The Government-sponsored Ekulu Pottery Factory began producing during the year. The factory is small, producing 120,000 articles a year, but is fully mechanised. Bulk trials of local sandstone have been carried out in conjunction with a United Kingdom glass manufacturer and an assessment of present and potential market demand is being made in co-operation with the United Africa Company (Nigeria) Ltd.

It is proposed in the coming year to attract more investors by developing an industrial estate in Port Harcourt and by improving existing hotel and catering facilities for the benefit of tourists and industrialists. The principal commodities in respect of which it is hoped that new investors will be attracted include flat and corrugated aluminium sheets, corrugated asbestos sheets, nails, plastics, salt, and oxygen and acetylene gases for welding.

A German Economic Mission visited the Region and inspected the lignite outcrop at Nnewi. Discussions were held as to the possibility of exporting either coal or lignite to Europe. This subject was considered also during a visit by Lord Reith, the Chairman of the Colonial Development Corporation. My Government will pursue this matter energetically.

An Italian Economic Mission also visited the Region to consider the possibilities of investment and to recommend to interested Italian industrialists the extension of their businesses to Nigeria.

The Shell-B.P. Company completed the sinking of some sixteen exploration wells in six of which oil was encountered. Production during 1958 amounted to nearly a quarter of a million tons and this figure is expected to be increased next year. The parent companies of Shell-B.P. announced a gift of £500,000 to Nigeria for technical education. A twelve-inch oil pipe-line is to be laid in the Bodo-Afam area for the purpose of exporting oil from two wells near Bodo and more wells are to be drilled in that area.

EDUCATION

Last year was a very difficult one for all concerned with Education in this Region. The modifications which had to be made in the Universal Primary Education Scheme caused hardship and inconvenience but there was in fact, less disruption of the educational system than had been feared at one time. My Government wishes to express its gratitude to all Voluntary Agencies, School Managers and school teachers for their splendid response to the problems of last year.

In December, the Minister of Education was able to announce substantial educational reliefs at a cost of £836,000. This announcement was warmly welcomed in all quarters.

Under the Colonial Development and Welfare Scheme £310,000 was allocated as building grants to secondary schools and teacher training colleges. Under the same scheme £127,000 was made available for the building of technical wings at Government College, Umuahia, and at the Government Secondary School, Afikpo. Four new domestic science centres and an extension to the Adult Education Centre at Uyo will be constructed this year.

Hon. Members will be pleased to hear that, in spite of the difficulties encountered in operating the Universal Primary Education Scheme, this Region has continued to lead other countries in the Continent of Africa in the number of children attending its primary schools. There are more than one and a quarter million pupils attending over 7,000 primary schools in the Region. Secondary schools number ninety-nine and there are 123 teacher training colleges.

As foreshadowed in my speech last year, my Government has now appointed a committee to make a detailed review of our educational system. The membership of this committee was designed to ensure that it commands the greatest respect both in Nigeria and overseas. I wish to express my Government's gratitude to the Ford Foundation of New York which is financing the entire cost of the survey, apart from local expenses within Nigeria.

FINANCE

The financial year, 1958-59 opened with the General Revenue Balance standing at over £5½ million, which was substantially

more than was anticipated when I addressed you a year ago. When the out-turn of the current financial year is known it is likely to show a further increase in the General Revenue Balance.

Efforts have continued to be made to increase the efficiency of income tax collection. An officer with a life-time's experience in the United Kingdom Inland Revenue Department has joined the Internal Revenue Division and the training of further inspectors is being intensified. A Bill to improve the enforcement of tax collection under the Finance Law will be laid before you.

The Annual Report of the Accountant-General for the year ended 31st March, 1958 testified to the soundness of fiscal policy and administration over the past six years. It endorsed the stand of the Treasury Bench that, in spite of the bulge created by the Universal Primary Education Scheme, the revenue from Regional and Federal sources was "unusually buoyant" and showed that the total Regional revenue had increased from £4,832,371 in 1952-53 to £13,379,639 in 1957-58.

The Report also confirmed the view that expenditure on social services had so greatly increased over the years as to have a serious effect on our budget. For example, expenditure on education rose from £1,241,130 in 1952-53 to £5,545,643 in 1957-58 and the cost of medical services increased from £495,586 to £1,276,573 over the same period.

In the coming year it will be my Government's policy to provide the finance necessary for the steady development of the Region while preserving a sound budgetary position. The funds available to the Region in 1959-60 will be materially higher than last year, or indeed in any previous year. The allocation of Federal revenues to this Region shows an increase from £7.05 million to £9.2 million and the total recurrent revenue shows an increase from £12.15 million to £14.01 million—an increase of some 15 per cent.

After due account has been taken of the substantially increased cost of education consequent upon the relaxation in assumed local contributions which was announced by my Government in November, these additional funds will be applied to restore the cuts which

had to be made in various services last year; to meet the cost of constitutional and administrative developments such as the introduction of the House of Chiefs and the implementation of the policy of devolution; to improve the maintenance of existing Government services; to allow a modest expansion of certain services of particular economic importance; and—last but of extreme importance—to provide a massive contribution to the capital development fund out of which the major development projects for this Region must be financed.

The estimates for the public services which have been laid before you reflect this policy, and for the first time in this Region show capital expenditure details in a separate capital budget. The provision so made corresponds with the allocations shown in the recently published four-year Development Programme which contemplates a total expenditure of £16.6 million.

It is proposed to nationalise the African Continental Bank. A Ministerial statement was made last December explaining the constitutional and legal difficulties which confronted my Government and thereby impeded its genuine and sincere efforts to acquire the existing private interests of that Bank. My Government has availed itself of expert advice and a Bill will be introduced at this meeting for a Law to provide for the establishment of the Eastern Regional Government Bank, which shall acquire the going concern known as the African Continental Bank Limited and purchase all the Preference and Ordinary Shares held by its private shareholders. The Bill will empower the new Government Bank to co-operate with any Government agency, local government body, statutory corporation or registered co-operative society by giving financial assistance in the form of loans, subject to the provisions of the Constitution and of the Banking Ordinance, 1958.

HEALTH

The expansion of Government hospitals under the five-year Development Plan is now nearing completion. During the year some £9,000 was spent on hospital buildings at Aba, £14,000 at Degema, £20,000 at Enugu, £12,000 at Ikot Ekpene and £14,000 at Opobo. Work has also continued at Arochuku, Okigwi, Owerri and Port Harcourt and on the Operating Theatre at Ogoja. The hospital at Yenagoa has been completed at a cost of about £71,000 and will shortly be opened.

Financial aid provided for recurrent assistance to Voluntary Agency hospitals amounted to £140,160. Twelve Rural Health Centres have been completed as part of a first programme of twenty-eight Centres, towards the construction of which my Government is providing £67,128. £20,000 was spent on Rural hospitals of which nine are under construction. New regulations governing the payment of fees in Government hospitals have been introduced, under which free medical treatment is now provided for all school children and other children under eighteen years of age at Government hospitals.

There are now in the Eastern Region 163 medical practitioners and seventy-nine hospitals with 4,399 beds. My Government is proud to announce that its policy of providing a hospital in each Division has been implemented. In the year ahead emphasis will continue to be given to preventive medicine. Arrangements have been made to extend four 32-bed hospitals, which are being built under the Rural Hospital Programme, to units of sixty beds, at a cost of £90,000. This amount is being provided entirely by the Regional Government and £53,000 has been earmarked for a second programme of Rural Health Centres.

The Mbaise Rural Hospital is about to be taken over as a Joint Hospital, which will bring the number of such hospitals to six. The sum of £10,000 is being provided for capital works at the Awgu Joint Hospital and £8,360 has been allocated to the Annang Joint Hospital, Abak. £15,000 has been set aside for capital grants to Voluntary Agencies.

There is already close association in the field of health with such international agencies as W.H.O. and U.N.I.C.E.F. and next year such joint activity will be expanded. The Five-Year Plans for the Development of Medical Services and for Leprosy Control are now entering their final stage.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

Recent occurrences in the Region have convinced my Government of the need to take adequate steps to ensure the preservation of law and order in public places and at public meetings. It is proposed to introduce at this meeting a Public Order Bill which will prohibit the wearing of uniforms and will ban the carrying of weapons at public meetings or on the occasion of public

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

15

[Governor's Speech]

31 MARCH 1959

[Governor's Speech]

16

procession. The Bill will prohibit the establishment of quasi-military organisations and will provide for the adequate punishment of those who behave offensively in public.

The Government Press continued to work at high pressure. Nevertheless there has been no diminution in efficiency, speed of production and high standards of printing. In-service training in the interests of Nigerianisation is being continued.

There has been close liaison with the Federal Government in order to check the activities of football pool agents, one consequence of which is an amendment to the Criminal Code which will be presented during this meeting.

The Firearms Ordinance, 1958, came into force on the 1st February and the licensing of firearms is now wholly the responsibility of the Nigeria Police. The need to improve fire fighting arrangements will be kept under review and, although the financial implications are such that my Government cannot immediately establish a Regional Fire Service, every encouragement is being given to those Municipalities which feel they ought to set up such services. My Government contributes towards the cost of a Federal Fire Inspector whose expert advice is always available.

The Provisions of the Distillation of Spirits Ordinance will be extended to this Region to encourage the commercial distillation of spirits. The Liquor Licensing Boards have continued to operate smoothly. A Regional Census Officer has now been recruited.

Eight Bailey bridges were launched during the year and in many other ways encouragement is given to the spirit of community development, which is so strong in this Region. The Community Development Training Centre at Avogu organised courses for Local Government staff. It is a technical focus for community development projects throughout the Region and sends plant and small teams of skilled artisans to help communities in their projects. Unfortunately the key post of Inspector of Works was vacant during most of the year.

Thirteen new Youth Clubs were organised and the total of such Clubs is now forty-five. The Social Welfare Division is to be wound up, except for a small staff which will have the duty of assisting in the movement of labour to Fernando

Po. The Children and Young Persons Law came into force during the year. My Government is negotiating with the Development Corporation (West Africa), a subsidiary of the Colonial Development Corporation, to form a company in this Region one of whose objects will be the development of land and the building of houses to be made available to purchaser on mortgage through the Nigerian Building Society.

The Federal Labour Department has continued to co-operate with my Government. One of my Ministers attended the International Labour Conference at Geneva. Industrial relations were good during the year and the machinery for the settlement of disputes worked smoothly.

My Government is solicitous of the welfare of workers in this Region and of the 28,000 natives of this Region who are working under contract in Spanish Guinea and in the Gabon. There has been a substantial increase in the number of persons engaged in wage earning employment as a result of the expansion of our economy in post-war years. The need for technical training facilities is fully recognised, and training schemes by Government and private establishments now cater for 10,000 trainees annually. The Technical Education Advisory Committee has recommended the further expansion of facilities for technical education.

My Government recognises that there are considerable difficulties in the way of establishing a social security system in a new country but is determined to press for the greatest possible degree of social security legislation. It is intended that a system of superannuation schemes for all workers will eventually be set up in this Region.

JUSTICE

A Judicial Service Commission has been set up and a political Attorney-General assumed duty in April last year. On being appointed a Regional Minister he took charge of the Ministry of Justice, and responsibility for Customary Courts will now pass to that Ministry. A Solicitor-General was appointed during the year. He assists the Attorney-General in his duties and also acts as Permanent Secretary to the Ministry.

Thirty Bills will be introduced at this session of the House including eight amending Bills which are devised to bring about uniformity

in the constitution and workings of all the statutory corporations which operate in this Region. It is intended to bar from membership of such bodies certain undesirable characters including persons who have been sentenced by a Court to a term of imprisonment for any offence involving fraud or stealing.

The Laws of Eastern Region stand in great need of revision and a special division in the Ministry of Justice is being created for that purpose.

The Federal Supreme Court held their first session in the Region last November and it is hoped that the Court will be able to visit the Region regularly. A total of 36,786 cases were tried during the year in the High Court and Magistrates Courts of the Region.

The Customary Courts Law was amended during the year to remove any doubts as to its validity and to modernise the jurisdiction of the Courts. Further amendment may be necessary to clarify the position of the staff. Customary Courts have now been set up in about half the Divisions of the Region and will be introduced in the remainder during the coming financial year.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

During the year the seventeen County Councils were abolished and their staff, powers, assets and liabilities were successfully transferred to the District Councils in each area. Elections to a large number of Councils based on single member wards were conducted in September.

After due enquiry my Government approved the creation of several new District Councils and has now fixed the maximum traditional membership in any Council at 20 per cent. A consolidating Bill for a new Local Government Law will be introduced at this meeting. My Government will continue in its efforts to develop a reliable and efficient system of Local Government and special emphasis will be given to training, particularly of Treasury staff. Faulty procedure and irregularities are still far too common and an intensification both of training and of inspection is required.

During the year more than £1,000,000 was paid out in block grants to Local Government Councils and loans totalling £68,700 were

issued, while a further £35,900 were offered. Special grants amounting to £37,474 were paid out in respect of previously approved projects.

TOWN PLANNING

During the year land at Nsukka was surveyed for the site of the University of Nigeria. Twelve map sheets covering the area have been prepared and the Nsukka Planning Authority has begun to function.

Over a thousand plots were made available in layouts throughout the Region and of these 929 have been allocated. A further 603 have been surveyed and await the provision of services before allocation. The Aba and Enugu Town Planning Authorities have been revived and it is intended to create new Authorities at Onitsha, Umuahia-Ibeku, Abakaliki, Owerri and Omoba. Action continues on the further development of the Port Harcourt area and in particular on the planning of new industrial layout. At Enugu an area of 2,000 acres to be known as "Independence Layout" will be acquired and laid out for the building of a new House of Assembly, House of Chiefs as well as Government quarters and offices. Within the Ministry itself a Town Planning Division is to be set up.

WORKS

My Government has had a busy and successful year in improving the communications of the Region. Eighty miles of road have been reconstructed and 175 miles tarred. There are now 820 miles of tarred surface in the Region, of which 360 miles are Federal Trunk roads. During the forthcoming year my Government will spend over £700,000 on road development together with £300,000 from Colonial Development and Welfare funds.

Of the many important works undertaken during the year special mention falls to be made of the Oferekpe Ferry, the Nkana Bridge across the Enyong River and the tarring of the Afikpo-Okigwi, Enugu-Awgu, Umuahia-Ikot Ekpene-Abak, Umukoroshe-Kono and Awka-Orlu Roads. Two new launches costing £50,000 and two new ferries have been delivered for use at Brass, Port Harcourt, Ikot Okporo and Itigidi.

£1½ million of new money has been set aside for road development over the next three years and will be used for reconstructing and tarring some 380 miles of important roads.

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

19

[Governor's Speech]

31 MARCH 1959

[Governor's Speech]

20

Priority will be given to those areas which lack good roads but have good prospects for agricultural and commercial development and to those earth roads where traffic densities make reconstruction and sealing necessary. There are many important feeder roads in the Region whose usefulness is continually jeopardised by the failure of existing timber bridges. My Government has therefore set aside £225,000 to be spent over the next three years upon the construction of sixty to 100 permanent and Bailey bridges and a further £20,000 will be spent on ten important bridge approaches. £69,000 has been allocated in the Development Plan for the improvement of Inland Waterways. This money will be used mainly for the construction of piers and for the purchase of additional launches, including launches for every County Council in the Rivers Province.

Funds for Public Works Extraordinary were limited during the year to £121,000. The efforts of the Ministry of Works were therefore devoted mainly to improving urban water supplies, carrying out capital works for other Ministries and undertaking on an agency basis over £500,000 worth of Federal projects. Even so, the fifth Secretariat Extension, a much needed new Survey Office, and several smaller Works Extraordinary, including an extension to the Premier's Lodge and work on the Yenagoa Hospital, were completed. Capital works undertaken for other Ministries included the expenditure of over £300,000 for various Ministry of Health projects.

My Government has introduced a new rating system whereby users of water will pay for the actual cost of water consumed. Aba now has three times the amount of water available to it two years ago; Calabar's supply has been doubled; Onitsha receives nearly one million gallons a day; and work continues on the extensions to the Umuahia, Enugu and Port Harcourt water supply undertakings. My Government wishes to record its appreciation of the generous grant of £120,000 made by the Federal Government which will make possible the provision of a two million gallons per day supply for Port Harcourt by 1960, at a total cost of £413,000. A sum of £380,000 has been earmarked for further urban water supplies and although some of this amount will be required to meet the cost of expanding existing urban water undertakings, the greater part of it will be spent on providing water for Ikot Ekpene, Okrika, Owerri, Uyo, Orlu and Nnewi.

Progress with the rural water supplies programme has continued to be unsatisfactory but the introduction of Federal conditions of service for contract engineers and other measures taken by my Government to alter the terms of the Colonial Development and Welfare scheme make it possible to forecast an expenditure of the order of £1 million in the coming financial year in implementation of proposals set out in Eastern Region Document No. 5 of 1958, which was laid on the Table of this House in December. It is my Government's intention to take over responsibility for the maintenance of all rural water supplies, as Local Government Councils have failed to provide effective maintenance. A special branch of the Provincial Works Organisation will be set up in each Province and will devote its time to works of a Local Government character.

During the next twelve months the Ministry of Works will undertake the construction of quarters costing over £600,000 including new residences for the Premier, Ministers and Provincial Commissioners and new quarters for the Public Service. Over the next five years public buildings will be put up at a cost of over £1½ million. These will include a new House of Assembly, a House of Chiefs, Provincial Assembly Halls, a composite office block at Port Harcourt, a High Court at Onitsha, Magistrates Courts at Port Harcourt and Enugu, a new Divisional Headquarters at Yenagoa, extension to the Government Press at Enugu and a new Ministerial Block which will be an impressive multi-storey building housing all the integrated Ministries of my Government.

Mr Speaker and hon. Members, only eighteen months remain before this vast country will become independent and I cannot do better than repeat and re-emphasise what I said a year ago, namely, that it is my earnest hope that in this part of Nigeria no less than in the whole, conflict of opinion honestly held may be honestly argued and honestly resolved; and that unity of purpose, so far from weakening, shall be strengthened.

Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I pray that Almighty God will guide you in all your deliberations.

His Excellency then retired from the Chamber.

Mr Speaker: Hon. Members, sitting is suspended for 15 minutes.

Sitting suspended at 11.15 a.m.

Sitting resumed at 11.30 a.m.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS

Mr M. E. Ogon (Ikom Division): Mr Speaker, I rise to move "That a Humble Address of Thanks be presented to His Excellency the Governor for His Excellency's Most Gracious Speech."

Mr Speaker, this is coming shortly after the Easter season and I trust that we shall wish each other goodwill for the season and be less controversial. We better start from the things we agree together and I think, Sir, that we are all happy in this Region that His Excellency has completely recovered from his operation in the United Kingdom. We would like you, Sir, to extend our joy on his recovery and to wish him well in the future. His stay with us will be most interesting unlike his predecessor because he has not dabbled in our politics. We are also happy, Sir, that unlike his friend across the Niger, his administration is free from tyranny. So, Sir, we can now commend the Speech from the Throne.

The Speech is bold and uncomplicated. It is very difficult to go through all the items of the Speech but I would like to start with the most important one. We are very happy, Sir, that the Government of this Region gave to the hon. Dr Kwame Nkrumah a wonderful reception. We are also happy that the people of Ghana have found in us great friends. What we want the Government to proceed now to do is to give governmental support to the attempt of the All-African Peoples Conference to rid Africa of colonialism. We need not take lightly attempts and threats to rule Africa perpetually and we ought to commend the effort of the Government and people of Ghana to give support to our friends in the East and Central Africa who are being prosecuted. Our Government should immediately give conscientious support to Dr Nkrumah's effort to rid that part of Africa of colonialism.

We are happy that this Government is proceeding with the Nigerianisation policy, but while we want this policy to be continued, we do not want to do that at the expense of efficiency. I remember that following the

1957 Constitutional Conference, certain supernumerary posts were created and reserved for Nigerians. I understand that these posts have now been filled and I congratulate the Government for filling the posts; but these Africans should not be allowed to do their jobs in a half-hearted manner. There should be a method by which these officers should have training from their expatriate seniors so that they can do the job most efficiently.

Before I go to other controversial points, I would like to start another less controversial one—the University of Nigeria. We are happy that this Government is pushing ahead with the University of Nigeria to begin in October 1960. It will be a memorial to the people of this country and I think that this University is the first course in the free and independent Nigeria. We have no apologies for that and we want the Government to proceed with it.

Continuing on this field of Education, Sir, I feel that this Government deserves to be congratulated on the fact that we still have more children of school-day age than all the other Regions combined. The important thing is not based on having the number. We also have a better quality of education. (*Applause*).

Opposition Bench: How do you know?

Mr Ogon: I hope they are not getting impatient. I am a trained teacher and I have had the opportunity, Sir, of seeing the curricula and the syllabuses of both the Western and the Northern Regions and I am certain, Sir, that they are miserably defective. Now, the important thing I want to stress is that many parents all over the West and the North send their children to the East to be educated, and so I will praise the Government for carrying out that policy. I have no doubt that while the University of Nigeria will not provide free education for all, it will provide equality of opportunity for all Eastern Nigerians (as a matter of fact all Nigerians) who are capable to have their education on Government funds. That is the important thing about the educational policy of this Government. Not only is it better in quantity and in quality, but also it offers equality of opportunity for all children who are capable.

[MR OGON]

My only quarrel with the Ministry of Education is the setting of the Standard VI Examination Questions. It is not the question of scholarship; it is the question of discipline and of administration. Now, those who are teachers will know that the Arithmetic Paper contains three sums on progression and the children were asked to work these sums. By this it is suggested that after eight years in school, if a child does not know progression, it means that he has failed his Arithmetic. Those who set the Examination Papers ought to be experienced School Masters who have had a good career of primary education. Outside that, this Ministry has done very well indeed and we ought to applaud them. (*Hear! hear!*)

I am very proud of it, and it is a measure of joy to me to see, that this House is entering the Third Session without any crisis from this side of the House. I am happy that we are going to last our five-year term.

The second point is that for the first time in the history of the Eastern Region, our finances are on the point of stability and our people (of the Eastern Region) are working hard to support the Government in their big development programme in spite of instigations from mischievous quarters. All along, this Government has been and will continue to be dedicated to the progress and prosperity of the people of the Eastern Region. We are immensely grateful for what they are doing and will continue to give them our loyal support.

Opposition Bench: In order to remain for five years.

Mr Ogon: To last for ever, if possible.

I just want to raise two or three other points, Sir. I think that Government deserves our congratulations on their bold development programme because development programme is very rare and it is very involved in recurrent and administrative expenditure. If you study the Western Region development programme you will agree they stated that (*Interruption—What of Northern Region?*) they spent £140,000,000; the thing is really £30,000,000 and this is not real development but administrative expenditure for the year.

If you take that of the East, it is a real picture of the actual amount of money which the Government is going to spend on development programme. I think they deserve our congratulations. If I may continue with the Development Programme Account of the Accountant-General, I refer you to the Accountant-General's report for 1957-58 and people like my hon. Friends Opposite cannot find that. This Government said that we have a balance of £3 million. The Action Group Papers and the Leader of the Opposition shouted that this Region was under financial disaster. I wonder what they will now say. We have £3½ million. I refer to the statement from the Leader of the Opposition. He reported all the sources of finance to make more money available for the Government.

An hon. Member: Where are you quoting from?

Mr Ogon: Mr Speaker, I do not propose to comment on the other contradictions of this type of Action Group economics. I will state that the source of revenue all over the world is taxation and loan. You may have national hints; there are no other sources and I challenge the Leader of the Opposition to make known any other sources from which the Government will make money available. It is either by loan or taxation.

Opposition Members: Your calculation is wrong.

Mr Ogon: We welcome the Government's statement on the nationalisation of the African Continental Bank. The D.P.N.C. had carried the most vile propaganda on that Bank. Now, we are going to nationalise the Bank at our own pace and at our own leisure. What we objected to was the question of using the Bank as a sort of propaganda slogan to deceive the people of the Eastern Region. Now that this propaganda slogan has been taken away, I wonder what will be the new trump card of that Party. At any rate, if the Party is prepared to take another line of action, it will appeal to Mr Eyo who is the Director of Propaganda. (*Laughter*).

Mr Speaker, Sir, lest there should be any doubt as to whether I mean Mr J. E. Eyo or Mr E. O. Eyo . . . (*Interruptions*).

Mr E. O. Eyo (Uyo Division): You couldn't have meant Mr J. E. Eyo but Mr E. O. Eyo. (*Laughter*).

Mr Ogon: We on this side of the House are very grateful to the Government for its statement to nationalise the A.C.B.

If you take a look at the whole situation, you will appreciate the question of Provincial Assembly. I think we from Ogoja Province are particularly happy that what we have been dreaming for long has now been given to us. With the Provincial Assembly being set up it will mean our developing our own resources at our own pace. We will have a certain amount of autonomy and will work side by side with the rest of the people of the Eastern Region. We have given full support to this new scheme and we have no doubt that the Government is proceeding with the implementation of it. To my mind, unless that is done it will still give certain individuals the scope of deceiving the people that the possibility of creating a C.O.R. State exists.

Mr E. O. Eyo: We shall consider a substitute!

Mr Ogon: I would like to tell my hon. Friend, Mr Eyo, that on Saturday last, at Ogoja, the people of Ogoja Province (including Chiefs, Councillors of District Councils) met and adopted a resolution giving their full and unreserved support to the Government's plan to set up a Provincial Assembly.

Another point on which I would like to pay tribute to the Minister of Commerce is the case of the Co-operative Department. Those who belong to my constituency will not fail to appreciate the progress that Co-operative Societies are making in the marketing of their cocoa. Farmers continue to turn out cash crops in great quantities, but their only worry is that the Co-operative Bank has not got sufficient money with which to buy these crops directly from them, so that as a result the situation arises in which they face competition with the other expatriate firms. I would ask the Minister of Commerce to request for a grant from the Federal Government of up to £80,000 for the local co-operative society. At the same time, Sir, this Department ought to be congratulated on the fact that we have in the Eastern Region

the highest number of registered co-operative societies all over the Commonwealth, and for this reason I would ask the Minister of Commerce to do everything in his power to increase the staff.

Another thing on which the Government will need to give support in local initiative, is in the field of community development. It is impossible, Sir, for the Government to give it to all the villages but I want it where a group of villages has laid down a rule. It is only fair that the Government should set aside a huge sum of money in order to help these peoples realise their ambition.

It is true that many miles of roads have been opened all over the Eastern Region. I would ask the Minister responsible on behalf of the Ogoja people for grants to be made to villages for the construction of roads. I hope the Minister will give consideration to it. We are grateful to the Government for adding or for acquiring five hundred miles of surface road within the past few years; but, Sir, the thing that worries me is the rate they are proceeding after three or four years. What strikes us alarmingly is that every day in every year most of these roads are being retarred over and over again. If it costs the Government £3,000 to construct a road and to bridge it and after two years we are faced with the recurrent expenditure of having to re-tar the road with £1,000, it would be much better if we checked our road policy and built stronger roads that could last for about eight years before resurfacing. Now, the thing I am saying, Sir, is this: if you loan money to build a road, it is better that this loan should be repaid over ten years or so. If the loan is repaid every one year, well, you have left nothing in future for the future generation in the form of amenities to enjoy. So I would ask the Government that while thanking them on the road policy they should also consider the financial aspect of it and have the loan repaid for at least ten years. It is also necessary that these roads should be resurfaced. I do not believe in spreading roads all over the Region. I believe that whenever there is a breakdown, this should be budgeted for in the next year; then another in the following year and so on.

Take for instance, the Afikpo road, which has been beautifully laid down but the bridges

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

27

[Governor's Speech—
Debate on the Address]

31 MARCH 1959

[Governor's Speech—Debate
on the Address] Papers]

28

[MR OGON]

are not good enough. I think that it is better if we are going to build roads, that we should also make the bridges strong so that they would be safe for heavy traffic at the same time.

We would also like to thank the Government for their desire to enlarge Government information and publicity in the Region. It is important, Sir, that in a Region like ours, where false rumours abound, that Government publicity should reach the rural areas as well. I do not intend to discuss the budget, but the provision made there already is, in my opinion, inadequate. Take the West for instance; it has the largest cinema vans than any other Government in West Africa. They have very many information officers. These people are using these cinema vans to publicise dictatorship. Why can't we in a democratic Government use more vans to publicise our own way of life.

The next point, Sir, is that if you go all over the whole of Ogoja or Rivers Province, you can't find Government information. The people are hungry to know what the Government has done. So I think, in fairness to Government, we should publicise our democratic way of life to our people especially if we realise the mischievous nature of the Opposition.

Mr Speaker: The hon. Member has only five minutes more.

Mr Ogon: It is very hard to catch up Mr Speaker. (Laughter).

An Opposition Member: What about the House of Chiefs?

Mr Ogon: I am very grateful to my Friend opposite for reminding me of what really I wanted to say. As I said, it is very hard to catch up. I always go to Ogoja Province and the nearby areas. Chief Morphy . . .

An hon. Member: You mean Mr Morphy—he is not a chief.

Mr Ogon: Chief Morphy on behalf of the Opposition was going round his area crowning chiefs. Not only did they crown chiefs but I have in my possession, Sir—I can produce it—a circular in which Chief Morphy had written to the chiefs in his Division summoning

them to a meeting to be presided over by the Minister for Ogoja Division.

Opposition Bench: Who is that?

Mr Ogon: It has taken us a very long time in going round to preach that Chief Morphy has the remotest possibility of becoming a Minister.

Finally, Sir, I would like really to say that we would like to join in thanking Government for their efforts during the past twelve months. We have also to thank Government for their good behaviour. During this period the people have been able to express their complaints to the Government in a constitutional manner; that was the result of the steps taken to maintain law and order. We are supporting Government in all their attempts to restore law and order and I hope that they will continue to give us better education, medical facilities, good houses; and I have also no doubt, that as we are moving on to independence, the Eastern Region, of all the Regions in the Federation, shall be a show-piece of democracy.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

Mr E. U. Eronini (Owerri Division): Sir, I beg to second.

Question proposed.

And under Standing Order 24 (2) the debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed upon Friday, 3rd of April, 1959.

PAPERS

Presented

The Draft Estimates of the Eastern Region (including Memorandum) 1959-60. (*The Minister of Finance*).

Mr Speaker: During Recess the *Eastern House of Assembly Debates—Second Session, Second Meeting, 21st to 23rd May, 1958* was delivered to the House and distributed to Members. This Paper is deemed to be laid upon the Table pursuant to Standing Order 10 (1) and will be entered upon the Votes and Proceedings of today.

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

BILL PRESENTED**The 1959-60 Eastern Region Appropriation Bill**

Bill to appropriate the sum of twelve million, four hundred and forty-four thousand, seven hundred and thirty pounds to the Service of the year ending on the thirty-first day of March, one thousand nine hundred and sixty, to authorise expenditure of six million, three hundred and twenty-five thousand, seven hundred and thirty pounds out of the Capital Development Fund and for other related purposes; presented by the Minister of Finance, Dr S. E. Imoke; read the First time; to be read a Second time tomorrow, 1st April, 1959.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**Hours of Sitting of the House**

The Minister of Production (Dr M. I. Okpara): Mr Speaker, I beg to move, That pursuant to Standing Order 71—Suspension of Standing Orders—paragraph (1) of Standing Order 4—Sittings of the House—be suspended until further notice so that the hours of sitting of the House on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays shall be 10 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. each day.

Mr Speaker, it is proposed that in due course these hours of the meeting of the House will be a regular feature of the House so that the Standing Orders Committee will make necessary amendments to the Standing Order eventually. This Motion is necessary in order to conclude the Business of the House. It is an old Motion that everyone knows about.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

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

Question proposed.

Mr E. O. Eyo: Mr Speaker, I rise to say that while Government considers altering the hours of sitting of the House one and a half hours each day we shall be losing on the

debate on the Speech from the Throne under Standing Order 24. We shall be losing on the average one and half hours a day and in four days we shall lose six hours.

Under Standing Order 66, the debate on the Committee of Supply is for seven days and we shall lose ten and a half hours, roughly two days. Also on the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill we shall lose four and a half hours.

We suggest that while Government is considering amendment to Standing Order 4, to allow for less hours of sitting, they should also consider amendment to Standing Orders 24 and 66 to compensate for loss in the number of days. It is very important that Members of this hon. House should be given every opportunity to debate the Speech from the Throne, the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill and the Committee of Supply so that it would not be fair to shorten the hours of sitting without increasing the number of days. I understand that Government intends to introduce several Bills. I imagine our having a very hot session and we would like to use the hours usefully. I am very sincere. If we are to shorten the hours of sitting we would like to increase the number of days, otherwise the effect would be to deprive Members of the number of days they were originally entitled to debate very important issues.

Dr Okpara: Mr Speaker, there is no intention of the Government to curtail the number of hours the Members of this hon. House may debate the Speech from the Throne and the Speech on the Budget. Therefore, Government will give consideration to extending the times for the Speech from the Throne, and the Budget Speech. I must say, however, that the hours the Opposition Chief Whip has mentioned are merely theoretical; nobody can really work when the day is very hot and humid and when one is tired. It is better to put in work when one is fresh and strong than to extend work to several hours of the day. However, Government will give due consideration to the time question.

Question put and agreed to.

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

31

[*Business of the House*]

31 MARCH 1959

[*Adjournment*]

32

Resolved: That pursuant to Standing Order 71—Suspension of Standing Orders—paragraph (1) of Standing Order 4—Sittings of the House—be suspended until further notice so that the hours of sitting of the House on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays shall be 10 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. each day.

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved: That this House do now adjourn.
(*The Minister of Production, Dr M. I. Okpara*).

Adjourned accordingly at eighteen minutes past twelve o'clock noon.

APPENDIX

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Answers received during Adjournment
(13th to 15th March, 1959)

E.R.D.C. Loans

25. **Mr G. C. Okeya** asked the Minister of Production the names of those people to whom loans were given by the E.R.D.C. during the period 1954/58 and the amount still outstanding.

The Minister of Production: The hon. Member is referred to the answer given to Question No. 195 in which the names and amounts as requested are embodied.

Loans

195. **Mr O. B. Nalelo** asked the Minister of Production, whether he would give in a tabular form, the names of persons who have

received loans from the Loans Board since its inception, their Divisions, the amount and period of the loans, the rate of interest and loans fully repaid or outstanding.

The Minister of Production: Full details as at 31st March, 1958 are given in tabular form. It should be noted that the amount shown in the column "Amount of loan" relates to the total amount authorised. It does not mean the amount actually issued which in some cases is less than the amount authorised. It should also be borne in mind that the amount shown in the column "Amount outstanding" is not necessarily due since the period of repayment may not yet have begun.

E.R.D.C. LOANS DEPARTMENT: LIST OF BORROWERS AND LOANS PARTICULARS

Name of Borrower	Division	Amount	Period	Rate of	Amount
		of Loan	of Loan	Interest	Outstanding
		£	years	per cent	£ s d
E. U. O. Moody	Eket	200	5	3	76 0 0
Ibeneme & Sons	Onitsha	500	10	3	358 12 4
Industry & Service Agency	Port Harcourt	400	10	3	215 0 0
Oyibo Imegi	Ahoada	300	5	3	14 6 0
Martin N. N. Eke	Bende	300	10	3	90 0 0
M. A. N. Atughonu	Aba	750	10	3	225 0 0
D. E. S. Jumbo	Akwete Aba	660	10	3	330 0 0
V. F. Briggs	Abonnema	654	10	3	321 10 0
J. J. Ekpiken	Eket	500	10	3	250 0 0
F. K. Ockiya	Aba	1,000	10	3	643 3 11
L. Y. Nkendurum	Port Harcourt	300	7	3	206 5 8
T. M. O. Eruba	Akwete Aba	300	10	3	150 0 0
M. E. Ezezezi	Enugu	150	5	3	96 16 0
Hawkins O. Ekeke	Azumini	350	10	3	175 0 0
Erime Agwu Agwu	Oguta	2,000	10	3	1,000 0 0
Chi Onye Ani Hus Co.	Aba	250	5	3	114 11 9
M. A. Abassah	Aba	650	10	3	195 0 0
G. D. Oparaugu	Owerri	200	10	3	80 0 0
Felix Dibia	Umuahia	300	10	3	170 0 0
D. J. Assirim	Ahoada	200	4	3	200 0 0
Nigerian Food Supply Co.	Aba	250	5	3	10 0 0
E. A. Chime	Udi	4,160	10	3	3,824 8 10
M. Mba	Onitsha	200	10	3	80 0 0
N. O. Oji	Omoku	150	5	3	12 0 0
Mark Nwadike	Okigwi	400	3	3	305 0 0
Meccoa Eastern Farmers' Association	Onitsha	4,000	10	3	3,910 0 0
C. O. Wagbara	Aba	400	10	3	240 0 0
F. M. Eke	Onitsha	200	5	3	200 0 0
Nigerian Food Supply Co.	Aba	250	5	3	200 0 0
M. T. Mbu	Ogoja	5,000	5	3	3,510 6 8
Maria A. Balonwu	Awka	2,000	8	3	968 0 0
J. U. Chijioke	Uzuakoli	300	4	3	75 0 0

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

35

[Written Answers]

31 MARCH 1959

[Written Answers]

36

E.R.D.C. LOANS DEPARTMENT: LIST OF BORROWERS AND LOANS PARTICULARS

Name of Borrower	Division	Amount	Period	Rate of	Amount		
		of Loan	of Loan	Interest	Outstanding		
		£	years	per cent	£	s	d
Owune & Sons Demonstration Farm ..	Aba ..	1,250	10	3	980	0	0
K. J. N. Okpokam ..	Ikom ..	3,500	10	3	3,500	0	0
Charles Otoko ..	Opobo ..	100	3	3	66	13	4
H. V. Okoroji ..	Arochuku ..	3,500	10	3	3,150	0	0
E. O. Harbor ..	Umuahia ..	2,500	10	3	2,250	0	0
J. N. Igwebuike ..	Nsukka ..	1,000	10	3	750	0	0
S. O. Obiuku ..	Okigwi ..	700	5	3	630	0	0
J. O. Kalu ..	Aba ..	750	7	3	562	17	2
Jeremiah Ndubuisi ..	Okigwi ..	200	4	3	170	0	0
J. O. E. Ebuta ..	?	300	5	3	120	0	0
S. N. Amobi ..	Ogidi ..	250	3	3	83	6	8
J. O. Onwe ..	Abakaliki ..	600	4	3	350	0	0
A. O. Oparaji ..	Enugu ..	250	5	3	200	0	0
Igwe Kalu ..	Uzuakoli ..	200	3	3	133	6	8
D. O. Omara ..	Umuahia ..	400	3	3	233	13	4
Bennet Irimagha ..	Aba ..	300	5	3	120	0	0
M. I. Okoronkwo ..	Umuahia ..	200	3	3	133	6	8
R. N. Harbor ..	Umuahia ..	300	3	3	300	0	0
Nejom Obasseh ..	Ikom ..	300	3	3	200	0	0
Innocent & Kalu Okoro ..	Arochuku ..	500	7	3	500	0	0
C. O. Onwenu ..	Ndizuogu ..	200	3	3	200	0	0
N. Uku ..	Arochuku ..	700	7	3	700	0	0
J. U. Utum ..	Ugep ..	350	3	5	350	0	0
M. A. W. Atughonu ..	Aba ..	1,000	5	3	1,000	0	0
Samuel Asinya Odo ..	Ikom ..	300	3	3	300	0	0
Davis Akpan ..	Opobo ..	100	3	3	33	6	8
D. U. Iloka ..	Awka ..	570	5	3	570	0	0
S. N. Amobi ..	Ogidi ..	150	3	3	150	0	0
H. O. F. Princewill ..	Opobo ..	1,000	7	3	300	0	0
Nnebe and Sons ..	Enugwu-Abo ..	500	3	5	500	0	0
D. O. Worgu ..	Aba ..	1,050	3	5	350	0	0
S. O. Nwajagu ..	Awka-Ajali ..	700	3	5	700	0	0
Isaac Chuku ..	Afikpo ..	600	5	5	600	0	0
N. Njekwe ..	Ahoada ..	1,000	3	5	1,000	0	0
M. O. Nwaola ..	Itu ..	500	3	5	500	0	0
M. Salifu ..	Ikom ..	500	5	5	500	0	0
L. A. Irobi ..	Aba ..	300	3	5	300	0	0
M. A. Ogbonah ..	Nsukka ..	350	5	5	350	0	0
M. A. W. Atughonu ..	Aba ..	2,000	3	5	2,004	10	8
E. A. Chime ..	Udi ..	1,300	3	5	1,300	0	0
A. S. Ogbonah ..	Mbawsi ..	1,500	3	5	1,000	0	0
David Ebeleagu ..	Umuahia ..	700	3	5	700	0	0
J. Okonkwo ..	Okigwi ..	350	3	5	350	0	0
Frank Ikerionwu ..	Umuahia ..	2,100	3	5	700	0	0
T. E. Amakihe ..	Aba ..	3,000	3	5	2,000	0	0
S. A. Uzokwe ..	Nnewi ..	200	3	5	133	6	8
S. I. Wokeh ..	?	3,000	3	5	3,000	0	0
M. N. Nnorom ..	Abakaliki ..	750	3	5	750	0	0
Nwaka Abalogu ..	Umuahia ..	700	3	5	700	0	0
Ephraim Mbakwe ..	Onitsha ..	700	3	5	350	0	0
N. O. Izuwa ..	Umuahia ..	700	3	5	700	0	0
G. Atangba ..	Ikom ..	350	3	5	350	0	0
A. O. Nsor ..	Ikom ..	700	3	5	700	0	0
J. O. Ifeama ..	Enugu ..	500	3	5	250	0	0
S. N. Omeili ..	Nsukka ..	600	3	5	600	0	0
R. N. Anyaegbunam ..	Ogidi ..	750	3	5	250	0	0
Jacob Njoku ..	Owerri ..	700	3	5	700	0	0
M. N. I. Nwosu ..	?	1,000	3	5	1,000	0	0
D. U. Ajoku ..	Owerri ..	1,000	3	5	700	0	0
A. N. Nwosu ..	Port Harcourt ..	2,100	3	5	2,100	0	0
S. U. Achuko ..	Port Harcourt ..	3,150	3	5	2,050	0	0
Chief O. Lawrence-Odu ..	Ogoja ..	2,100	3	5	1,400	0	0
E. N. Abang ..	Ikom ..	1,050	3	5	1,050	0	0
Christiana I. Osuji ..	Owerri ..	300	3	5	200	0	0

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

37

[Written Answers]

31 MARCH 1959

[Written Answers]

38

E.R.D.C. LOANS DEPARTMENT: LIST OF BORROWERS AND LOANS PARTICULARS

Name of Borrower	Division	Amount	Period	Rate of	Amount	
		of Loan	of Loan	Interest	Outstanding	
		£	years	per cent	£	s d
Gaius Ahanonu	Awgu	1,000	5	5	700	0 0
T. O. Loromeke	Port Harcourt	1,000	3	5	1,000	0 0
Ibute Umuezeani	Udi	2,000	3	5	2,000	0 0
Isiah Okedi	Ahoada	750	3	5	750	0 0
J. A. Ogbonah	Bende	1,050	3	5	700	0 0
E. A. Wokoma	?	750	3	5	500	0 0
Olujie and Sons	Imo River	5,500	3	5	2,000	0 0
T. Osemeka & Sons	Awka	1,500	3	5	1,000	0 0
G. D. Oparaugo	Owerri	100	3	5	66	13 4
J. I. Odor	Aba	875	3	5	700	0 0
J. K. Mmeha & Co.	Bende	525	3	5	525	0 0
I. Nwankwo	Afikpo	1,500	3	5	1,000	0 0
Osai & Sons	Onitsha	500	5	5	500	0 0
E. I. U. Egwu	Bansara	6,000	6	5	6,000	0 0
S. N. Njekwe	?	500	3	5	250	0 0
Ezebuike and Sons	?	1,000	3	5	400	0 0
E. O. Nzeakor	Nsukka	800	8	5	800	0 0
Igwe Ude	Umuahia	700	3	5	500	0 0
Daniel Uworn	Ahoada	1,050	3	5	350	0 0
James O. Osoka	Bende	900	3	5	300	0 0
M. I. Anyanwu	Umuahia	1,500	3	5	1,000	0 0
S. O. Ogbonah	Bende	1,050	3	5	700	0 0
M. N. Nnecha	Bende	875	3	5	350	0 0
G. U. Udensi	Port Harcourt	1,300	3	5	650	0 0
James Obionwu	Enugu	450	3	5	150	0 0
James Ikeguru	Port Harcourt	1,500	3	5	1,000	0 0
William Obasey	Owerri	500	3	5	250	0 0
Okim Ofu	Ikom	350	5	5	350	0 0
U. Uduma	Afikpo	450	3	5	150	0 0
J. J. Enweruzoh	Ahoada	2,100	3	5	700	0 0
H. I. Akwitti	Owerri	1,000	3	5	750	0 0
N. O. Ekpa	?	350	3	5	350	0 0
Sampson Idiong	Abak	500	3	5	250	0 0
Okon Ukpe	Abak	750	3	5	250	0 0
Okoro Udo Anya	Itu	1,050	3	5	350	0 0
Okoro Oji	Arochuku	1,050	3	5	350	0 0
D. A. Nnaji	Udi, Enugu	500	3	5	250	0 0
J. N. Nwagwu	Mbawsi	600	3	5	200	0 0
Silas Ojukwu	Aba	500	3	5	—	
F. E. Durunna	Aba	1,500	3	5	1,000	0 0
M. N. Igwilo	Orlu	750	3	5	250	0 0
David Akaleme	Okigwi	750	3	5	250	0 0
Israel Ohaeri	Umuahia	700	3	5	350	0 0
Nwamuo Uzoka	Umuahia	250	3	5	250	0 0
Michael Bisong	Ogoja	700	3	5	700	0 0
J. U. Idiong	Abak	500	3	5	250	0 0
J. I. Maduka	Okigwi	1,350	3	5	450	0 0
E. O. Ohanuka and P. I. Madubugwu	Onitsha	300	3	5	300	0 0
H. J. Ubuo	Eket	500	3	5	250	0 0
J. K. Osuji	Owerri	2,000	3	5	1,000	0 0
M. N. Obi	Ahoada	2,000	3	5	700	0 0
B. O. Odum	Ahoada	1,050	3	5	350	0 0
Udo U. Ichok	Abak	250	3	5	250	0 0
O. E. Nwuzor	Afikpo	900	3	5	400	0 0
David O. Enang	Obubra	1,200	3	5	600	0 0
Chima Ibiam	Afikpo	1,500	3	5	500	0 0
T. E. A. Eno	Uyo	1,050	3	5	350	0 0
J. I. Onuoha	Okigwi	1,500	3	5	500	0 0
W. O. Chithey	Ogoni	450	3	5	150	0 0
Shadrack Ugoji	Omoba-Aba	1,000	3	5	350	0 0
A. U. Inyang	Abak	500	3	5	250	0 0
J. O. Inyang	Ikom	700	3	5	350	0 0
S. I. Anokwu	?	1,050	3	5	350	0 0

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

39

[Written Answers]

31 MARCH 1959

[Written Answers]

40

E.R.D.C. LOANS DEPARTMENT: LIST OF BORROWERS AND LOANS PARTICULARS

Name of Borrower	Division	Amount	Period	Rate of	Amount
		of Loan	of Loan	Interest	Outstanding
		£	years	per cent	£ s d
Ota Okocha	Afikpo	900	3	5	300 0 0
Eastern Farmers Company	Aba	450	3	5	150 0 0
Ogbonnah Oruakpa	Aba	900	3	5	200 0 0
Joseph Musa Lawani	Okigwi	1,500	3	5	500 0 0
Silas Ojukwu	Aba	500	3	5	250 0 0
Andrew Udo Udo	Abak	750	3	5	250 0 0
CORN MILLS					
A. A. Iwuala	Enugu	350	4	3	203 6 4
Chigbo Oji	Awka				—
Lily Ikediala	Owerri	1,200	3	5	200 0 0
V. O. Agada	Umuahia	500	3	5	500 0 0
T. I. Agunwah	Enugu (Owerri)	3,000	3	5	1,775 0 0
T. N. Ofodile	Okigwi	500	3	5	500 0 0
G. I. Anukwem	Enugu	500	3	5	500 0 0
J. A. Arimah	Onitsha	800	3	5	800 0 0
A. C. Mofunanya	Nzam	500	3	5	472 5 0
RICE MILLS					
S. H. Igbelina	Aguleri	1,420	6	3	1,083 6 8
Jas. F. Egbunike	Onitsha	1,215	10	3	486 0 0
Meecoa Eastern Nigeria Farmers Association	Onitsha	1,435	10	3	861 0 0
H. E. Nwalusi	Awka	500	5	3	100 0 0
P. I. Okechukwu	Enugu	1,000	5	4½	150 0 0
A. O. Ejidike	Abakaliki	1,050	5	3	630 0 0
Abboh Co-operative Rice Mill Society	Abboh	500	8	3	375 0 0
J. E. Iduma	Afikpo	500	4	3	125 0 0
W. O. Okoro	Okigwi	500	5	3	360 0 0
C. N. Nwadiogwu	Nzam	1,200	10	3	840 0 0
Sa. Jechoniah		300	3	3	300 0 0
D. A. Onu	Afikpo	750	4	3	687 0 0
FISHERIES					
J. V. Clinton	Lagos	600	10	3	260 0 0
E. M. W. Epelle	Aba	400	6	3	400 0 0
F. A. Lele	Brass	200	5	3	160 0 0
H. Bowani Brown	Degema	600	4	3	300 0 0
T. I. N. Owo	Opobo	200	2	5	200 0 0
MINOR INDUSTRIES					
United Ex-Service Motor Repairs	Aba	300	6	3	—
Awka Co-operative Carvers' Union	Awka	100	20	2	65 0 0
B. A. Ajose	?	3,500	10	3	2,555 13 10
G. O. Ejimofor	Enugu	500	10	3	300 0 0
Eastern Technical Company	?	1,230	10	3	369 0 0
Servicemen General Repairs	Enugu	1,000	10	3	900 0 0
T. N. Otu	Abakaliki	300		3	300 0 0
B. A. Duru and Partners	Ehime	235	6	3	143 3 9
F. N. Ekwuazi	Enugu	500	5	4	150 0 0
J. N. Anene	Enugu	300	9	2½	166 13 4
Josiah Igwilo Anosike	Port Harcourt	8,000	10	3½	8,000 0 0
Awka Carvers Union	Awka	400	6	3	200 0 0
L. B. Ekwuno	Enugu	350	5	3	315 0 0
Nwokoye Igweze	Awka	350	5	3	140 0 0
Charles Okoro	Okigwi	95	3	3	18 0 0
C. C. Ike	Okigwi	2,150	5	3	2,150 0 0
Edward N. Nwagboso	Enugu	8,000		3 (£5,000)	5 (£3,000) 8,745 17 10
S. O. Ibe	Enugu	600	5	3	480 0 0
Eastern Press Syndicate	?	4,000	20	3	3,800 0 0
D. A. Wokeh	Aba	5,000	4	5	2,600 0 0

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

41

[Written Answers]

31 MARCH 1959

[Written Answers]

42

E.R.D.C. LOANS DEPARTMENT: LIST OF BORROWERS AND LOANS PARTICULARS

Name of Borrower	Division	Amount	Period	Rate of	Amount	
		of Loan	of Loan	Interest	Outstanding	
		£	years	per cent	£	s d
T. O. Okaka	Calabar	10,000	5	5	10,000	0 0
C. D. Ofoegbu	Enugu	4,000	3	5	2,121	5 0
African Tailoring Co. Ltd	Port Harcourt	2,000	3	6	2,000	0 0
Eastern General Contractors	Enugu	25,000	7	6	25,000	0 0
Jerome and Patrick Aloh	Nsukka	500	3	5	250	0 0
Silas Ezenwah	Onitsha	5,000	3	5	1,500	0 0
P. W. Wagboso	Aba	1,200	3	5	1,050	0 0
J. O. Iheanatu	Orlu	6,500	3	5	500	0 0
MAJOR INDUSTRY						
N. E. M. Co.	Enugu	100,000	10	6	100,000	0 0
PIONEER OIL MILLS						
L. N. Obioha and Brothers	Okigwi	4,000	10	3	1,200	0 0
Nigerian Eastern Wealth	Mbawsi	5,250	10	3	2,375	9 1
Okigwi Industrial Co.	Okigwi	3,000	10	3½	1,500	0 0
L. O. Okoro	Ndizuogwu	4,900	10	3½	1,470	0 0
Alala Industrial Co. Ltd.	Umuahia	8,000	10	3	4,800	0 0
Prince Abbi	Degema	4,500	10	3	4,485	5 0
J. Ihekwoaba	Port Harcourt	9,200	10	3	7,476	19 0
Ibibio Farmers	Eket	9,000	8	5	3,000	0 0
Ikeduru Co-operative Oil Mill.	Ikeduru	4,902	13 4 8	5	3,881	5 0
Asutan Ekpe Co-operative Society	Uyo	10,900	10	3	9,688	7 9
Okon Ika Co-operative Oil Mill Union Ltd.	Ikot Ekpene	3,933	6 8 8	5	3,933	6 8
Old Calabar Company	Calabar	9,000	10	5	8,700	0 0
E. C. I. Onuigbo Sons and Co.	Ufuma	5,033	8	3	5,033	0 0
CASSAVA GRATERS						
Simon A. Chiekezie	Owerri	150	3	3	115	0 0
John Nweke	Enugu	150	3	3	50	0 0
M. A. Okafor	Enugu	150	3	3	100	0 0
F. O. Emetuche	Owerri	150	3	3	85	0 0
J. K. Nwalozie	Owerri	150	3	3	30	0 0
E. I. Alata and V. Agada	Umuahia	150	3	3	—	
Thom Samuel Manuel	Abonnema	150	3	3	150	0 0
B. N. Obijiako	Umuahia	150	3	3	130	0 0
D. O. Ezeani	Enugu	150	3	3	97	0 0
Mary Nwaemeze	Awgu	150	3	3	47	0 7
BRICK AND TILES						
A. E. Ihejirike	Aba	130	3	3	130	0 0
Nigerian Ex-Servicemen Transport Clay Industry	Onitsha	2,000	10	4	1,200	0 0
Okigwi Industrial Co.	Okigwi	3,000	10	3	3,000	0 0
E. B. Oborie	Brass	300	5	3	143	0 9
Asuquo Ekpenyong	Itu	1,600	5	3	1,595	0 0
WEAVING						
A. O. Udeorah	Ogidi	600	10	3	300	0 0
C. Amadu	Onitsha	947	10	3	256	0 0
R. D. Ordor	Aba	1,500	10	4	1,460	0 0
Florence Ogolo	Aba	1,375	7	4	1,299	5 4
A. O. Udeorah	Ogidi	400	10	4	320	0 0
Samuel Nnodi Ofraeli	Nnewi	150	3	4	9	0 0
U. U. Etok	Itu	500	7	4	285	14 3
Tommy Eduok	Opobo	200	4	4	50	0 0
A. A. Ikpat	Calabar	500	5	4	300	0 0
Achan Ika Com. Dev. Comm.	Abak	200	3	4	—	
Christopher A. Nwokeocha	Aba	50	3	4	33	6 8
SOAP FACTORIES						
Wellington Industrial Home	Aba	500	7	3	516	15 6
International Equitable Association	Aba	2,500	3	3½	1,528	10 0

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

43

[Written Answers]

31 MARCH 1959

[Written Answers]

44

E.R.D.C. LOANS DEPARTMENT: LIST OF BORROWERS AND LOANS PARTICULARS

Name of Borrower	Division	Amount	Period	Rate of	Amount		
		of Loan	of Loan	Interest	Outstanding		
		£	years	per cent	£	s	d
SAW MILLS							
T. Nwachuku Saw Mill	Port Harcourt ..	1,000	8	3½	875	0	0
J. B. Onwuasonya	Aba	400	10	3½	120	0	0
A. Nwabueze	Enugu	200	5	3½	51	0	0
J. C. Okeke	Uzuakoli	2,500	10	3½	1,000	0	0
L. O. Manuel	Abonnema	1,000	6	3½	800	0	0
J. I. Muruaku	Owerri	1,800	3	5	1,800	0	0
Eastern Nigeria Saw Mill	Owerri	8,000	3	5	8,000	0	0
P. N. Opara	Owerri	1,050	3	5	1,050	0	0
E. O. Udoma and Sons	Abakaliki	3,500	3	5	500	0	0
COMMERCIAL							
Eastern Produce Transport Co.	Port Harcourt ..	10,000	3	6	8,000	0	0
African Pioneer Co. Ltd.	Port Harcourt ..	10,000	6	6	9,000	0	0
F. O. Mbadiwe	Enugu	10,000	3	6	3,000	0	0
E. C. I. Onuigbo and Sons Co. Ltd.	Ufuma-Awka	10,000	3	6	—		
L. O. Okoro	Aba	10,000	3	6	8,000	0	0
Z. C. Obi	Port Harcourt ..	7,000	3	6	6,000	0	0
Jinco and Brothers Ltd	Port Harcourt ..	3,000	3	6	2,000	0	0
Okereke Brothers Ltd.	Port Harcourt ..	10,000	3	6	9,000	0	0
Ikom Co-operative Marketing Union	Ikom	2,500	3	3	2,000	0	0
RIVER TRANSPORT							
K. J. Dagogo Jack	Abonnema	300	3	3	216	0	0
Bassey Akpan	Itu	150	5	3	60	0	0
S. A. Freshmer	Onitsha	400	3	3	400	0	0
Eastern River Craft Co.	Onitsha	10,000	10	3	7,000	0	0
S. P. U. Ogan	Port Harcourt ..	100	3	3	—		
Chief Imo Akpan	Eket	600	4	3	500	0	0
Meshack Igwe	Ahoada	200	3	3	115	3	9
B. E. Ikpeme	Enyong	500	3	3	500	0	0
Eastern River Craft Co.	Onitsha	5,000	10	3	3,500	0	0
Enyibio John Akpan Esien	Enyong	350	3	3	350	0	0
Robert Etim Ikpeme Akpatre	Itu	260	3	3	215	0	0
Rowland K. Kigigha	Brass	300	2	3	300	0	0
Goin Brothers	Brass	250	3	3	134	19	0
A. O. Igbo and T. O. Usang	Obubra	1,000	3	3	1,000	0	0
Emodi Brothers	Onitsha	1,000	5	3	1,000	0	0
B. Hursmare	Ahoada	200	3	5	200	0	0
E. S. Bens	Brass	250	3	5	183	15	0
R. A. Worie	Ahoada	250	3	5	250	0	0
Easter Wokoma	Ahoada	250	3	5	230	0	0
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT LOCAL GOVERNMENT							
Urban District Council, Enugu	Enugu	12,000	15	2	5,600	0	0
Urban District Council, Enugu	Enugu	100,000	20	2	65,000	0	0
Port Harcourt Town Council	Port Harcourt ..	24,000	10	3	12,000	0	0
Affa Local Government Council	Affa-Udi	3,000	5	3	3,000	0	0
MINOR INDUSTRIES							
Olujie and Sons	Aba	2,500	5	5	2,420	14	5
E. N. Uwaerne	Onitsha	1,000	3	5	200	0	0
B. J. Mora	Onitsha	5,000	3	5	2,539	0	0
Professor Eyo Ita	Calabar	5,000	3	5	2,000	0	0

Customary Courts Staff: Conditions of Service

224. **Mr S. T. Akpan** asked the Minister of State charged with responsibility for Customary Courts and Appointment and Recognition of Chiefs, what the scales of salaries of, and the prospects for, servants of the Customary Courts will be.

The Minister of State charged with responsibility for Customary Courts and Appointment and Recognition of Chiefs: The Registrars in the County Councils are paid on the Local Government Scale 4 which starts at £270. The Registrars in the District Courts are either in the Local Government Scale 2 or 3. The former starts at £66 and the latter at £150. The staff has promotion prospects similar to those of other Local Government employees.

Primary School Fees

256. **Mr S. T. Akpan** asked the Minister of Education, what has Government decided in regard to the reduction of school fees in Primary Schools.

The Minister of Education: I refer the hon. Member to the Ministerial Statement I made in the House on 11th December, 1958.

Abakaliki-Afikpo and Okigwi-Afikpo Roads

262. **Mr U. Enyi** asked the Minister of Transport, whether he is aware of the bad condition of the Abakaliki-Afikpo and the Okigwi-Afikpo roads recently tarred by Messrs Costain and Co., if so, what steps are being taken to re-tar the roads.

The Minister of Transport: I am aware that during the last rainy season some sections of the Abakaliki-Afikpo and Afikpo-Okigwi roads were flooded and broken up.

However, since the beginning of the dry season, repairs have been actively pursued and are nearing completion. The responsibility for repairs is that of the Contractor under the maintenance clauses of the contract.

Admission to Girls' Secondary Schools and Training Colleges

267. **Chief G. N. Agbasiere** asked the Minister of Education, what are the conditions for admitting prospective students into Girls' Secondary Schools and Training Colleges at present; are age and height taken into consideration?

The Minister of Education: Qualifications for entrance into Secondary Schools and Training Colleges are the same for girls as for boys. For secondary schools they must have passed the entrance examination and must normally be not more than thirteen years of age. For Training Colleges they must have gained Standard VI certificate and passed the Training College entrance examination. There is no age qualification for Training College candidates, but preference is usually given to those who are of an age to derive most benefit from the training.

I am not aware that height is taken into consideration though, in the absence of a birth certificate, it may sometimes be used in conjunction with general development as an indication of a person's age, for purposes of entry to Secondary Schools.

EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 1st April, 1959

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

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

PAPERS

Presented :

(1) The Development Programme, 1958-62 (Eastern Region Official Document No. 2 of 1959). (*The Minister of Finance*).

(2) Annual Report of the Eastern Nigeria Tourist Corporation, 1957-58. (*The Minister of Commerce*).

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

BILLS PRESENTED

(1) University

Bill to amend the University of Nigeria (Provisional Council) Law, 1959, presented by the Premier, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, read the First time; to be read a Second time *Tomorrow*.

(2) Chiefs

Bill to provide for the classification of Chiefs in the Eastern Region for purpose of the Eastern House of Chiefs; presented by the Premier, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe; read the First time; to be read a Second time *Tomorrow*.

(3) Finance

Bill to amend the Finance Law, 1956, presented by the Minister of Finance, Dr S. E. Imoke; read the First time; to be read a Second time *Tomorrow*.

(4) Loans

Bill to authorise the raising in Nigeria from the Government of the Federation of Nigeria of a loan or loans not exceeding in the aggregate six million pounds for the purposes of Capital Expenditure on Development Programmes of the Government of the Eastern Region of Nigeria; presented by the Minister of Finance, Dr S. E. Imoke; read the First time; to be read a Second time *Tomorrow*.

ORDER OF THE DAY

The 1959-60 Eastern Region
Appropriation Bill

Order for Second Reading read.

BUDGET SPEECH

The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke): Mr Speaker, I rise to move that a Bill entitled "A Bill for a Law to appropriate the sum of twelve million, four hundred and forty-four thousand, seven hundred and thirty pounds to the service of the year ending on the thirty-first day of March, one thousand nine hundred and sixty, to authorise expenditure of six million, three hundred and twenty-five thousand, seven hundred and thirty pounds out of the Capital Development Fund, and for related purposes" be now read a Second time.

We stand today on the threshold of a new financial year—a year which I hope and believe will be one of promise for this Region. At such a moment it is natural for our thoughts to turn back over the year 1958-59 which now lies behind us. The last financial year began under the shadow of financial difficulties, and the Budget which I introduced a little over a year ago was based on the policy of limiting public spending in order to give revenue a breathing space and allow our reserves to recover.

That policy, Mr Speaker, has proved an outstanding success; and the hard decisions which it was necessary for the Government and this House to make in January and February of last year have borne fruit and given the reward that courage and prudence may rightly expect. At the time of my last Budget Speech I expected that we should start the financial year 1958-59 with a general revenue balance of £3½ millions. In the event, the measures of economy which the Government had already begun to enforce, together with unexpected improvements in certain revenue items, resulted in the actual balance as at 1st April, 1958, amounting to approximately £5½ millions. During the present financial year that general revenue balance has in no way been impaired; at the latest available date the figure was approximately £5.3 millions and, after making all prudent allowance for the heavy expenditure which is usually incurred in the last month or two of the financial year,

I am confident that we shall do no worse than that—perhaps indeed rather better—by the end of the year.

The House may be interested in some rather more detailed figures. As is shown at page E 11 of the Estimates before you, the revised estimated revenue for the year which has just finished is £14,322,400, as compared with an original estimate of £14,040,150—an improvement of more than £275,000. This is accounted for by improvements both in Regional revenue (by about £300,000) and in the statutory share of Federal Government revenues (by about £150,000), partially offset by a decline in Colonial Development and Welfare revenues below the estimate of approximately £175,000. There is thus a net gain on the revenue side of approximately £275,000. On the expenditure side, total expenditure is expected to reach £14,071,075, an increase as compared with the original estimate of approximately £225,000. This increase in expenditure is the net result of a number of important changes, including substantial increases in Other Charges and Special Expenditure, partly counterbalanced by a shortfall in C.D. and W. expenditure (equal to and balancing the shortfall in C.D. and W. revenue to which I have referred above), and a shortfall of some £150,000 on Personal Emoluments. These changes in turn are the net result of numerous alterations—items of additional expenditure which have been reflected in the Supplementary Estimates laid before the House at its last two Sessions, and savings under a number of Heads, including Education.

The House will see, however, that the net result of all these many changes is that we expect to have a surplus of some £250,000 on the year, as compared with the original estimated surplus of £192,270. This is satisfactorily close to the original estimates; and it will mean that our final balance at the end of the year will be something over £5.5 millions—a very satisfactory figure. Thus, it is on a firm foundation laid by the efforts and sacrifices of a year ago and of last year, that we shall be able to approach the problems of the current financial year which I shall come to later in my speech.

The last financial year has been notable not only for the satisfactory financial out-turn to which I have referred but also for

many important developments in the financial field, the full effect of which will only be felt in the coming financial year.

Outstanding and overriding in importance has been the Constitutional Conference held in London last year. Not only did this Conference under the inspiration of our Premier secure the promise of Independence on 1st October, 1960, but it accepted the Report of the Fiscal Commission which made profound changes in the arrangements for the allocation of Federal revenue to the Regions. (*Interruptions*).

Mr Speaker: Order! Order! I would like to call the attention of hon. Members to Standing Order 27 (4) and (5)—

(4) “During a sitting all Members shall be silent or shall confer only in undertones”.
Undertones—please mark.

(5) “Members shall not make unseemly interruptions while any Member is speaking”.

In my opinion, the interruptions are unseemly. It does not befit this hon. House that when somebody is speaking a Member from any side speaks to another Member. I think we must try to maintain peace and tranquillity in this hon. House and I hope Members will try to compose themselves in an orderly manner.

Dr Imoke: The scheme propounded by the Fiscal Commission's Report contains certain features which, in our view in the Eastern Region, were not in the best interests of Nigeria as a whole and moreover ignored some of the special interests and problems of the Eastern Region. Nevertheless it was an improvement on the former scheme of Sir Louis Chick, and as an act of high statesmanship this Government's delegation decided after a full discussion of this Report in the Conference, to accept it in order that agreement might be reached on a firm foundation for the advance to Independence. With all its faults, the Fiscal Commission Report did give us an appreciable improvement in our revenue position and this I propose to analyse at a later stage in my speech.

Nearer home, the year has been notable for the setting up, in some cases, and improved

[DR IMOKE]

functioning, in others, of certain institutions and organs in Lagos which are designed to promote a healthy financial and economic co-operation between the Governments of Nigeria and to provide the facilities connected therewith.

In this connection I would refer first to the continued working of the National Economic Council; and to the fact that for the second time only since it was created the Loans Advisory Board was able to meet in Lagos in January of this year. Further, during the year there was set up the new Central Bank of Nigeria with whose Governor this Government has been able to maintain contact through informal visits and through the Advisory Committee which has been established, comprising the Ministers of Finance of the Regional Governments. The first main task of this Bank will be to introduce a new and wholly Nigerian currency in place of the existing currency of the West African Currency Board with which we are all familiar.

Here, in the introduction of our own Nigerian currency, is a major and visible step forward in the direction of Independence which I am sure that all Members will welcome. Considerable progress has already been made towards bringing the Bank into operation and on the 1st July, 1959 it will issue Nigerian currency notes in denominations of £5, £1, 10s and 5s. The issue of a 5s note is new departure for Nigeria but it is hoped that it will be widely used as it will have the advantage of enabling payments of a relatively small nature to be made without the necessity of handling several individual coins. The other new notes are intended to replace as quickly as possible the West African Currency Board's notes now circulating throughout the country.

Also on the 1st July, 1959 the Central Bank will begin to issue Nigerian 1s pieces. The Bank will subsequently issue other Nigerian coins in denominations of 2s, 6d, 3d, 1d and ½d. These coins are now being minted by the Royal Mint in the United Kingdom as part of a huge order of over one thousand million coins to replace all of the West African Currency Board's coin now in use in Nigeria. Although the denominations other than 1s will not be ready for circulation on 1st July, 1959, they will be put into circulation by the Bank

as sufficient quantities are received from the Royal Mint, but the whole process may take two or three years to complete. Until the Central Bank is able to establish its own branches in the main centres of Nigeria, commercial banks will act as its agents in connection with the new currency and will provide adequate facilities for the issue of the new notes and coin and for the redemption of the Currency Board's currency.

The new notes and coins will have the same value as the Currency Board currency of the same denominations. For some time after the 1st July the Board's notes and coin will remain in circulation in Nigeria along with the new currency but in diminishing quantities. During this period both the Nigerian and the Currency Board's notes and coins will be legal tender and therefore acceptable to meet day-to-day payments. When there are enough new notes and coin in circulation, the legal tender status of the old currency will be withdrawn, but only after advance notice has been given.

It need hardly be mentioned that it is of vital importance that Nigeria's new currency should be soundly managed so as to command and maintain full confidence both at home and overseas. Although this will be a primary task, it will, of course, not be solely the responsibility of the Bank. Indeed, the Bank's ability to carry out the task will be dependent on the full support of Governments and on the pursuit by Governments of sound economic and financial policies.

Finally, in the year that is past, further progress has been made in the establishment of an adequate Government Revenue Service and though the final tax collection figures are not yet in, it is to be hoped that they will show an improvement over those of last year.

In the Budget for the coming year to which I now turn, the most notable feature is a massive increase in the revenue available. As compared with the original Approved Estimate for 1958-59, revenue (excluding Colonial Development and Welfare Grants and contributions from Development Account) was £12,147,000 last year and this year is estimated at £14,010,000, an increase of £1,862,000. Before I go on, Mr Speaker, may I warn

that the figures shown under Head 411—Statutory Share of Federal Government Revenues—are, as they should be, based on information supplied by the Federal Government to my Ministry at the time of preparation of the Estimates last February. I have just been informed that the Approved Estimates of the Federal Government show adjustments in respect of estimates for Import and Excise Duties on Tobacco and Import Duties on Motor Spirit and Diesel Oil. The net effect of the adjustments, several of which cancel each other out, is that the estimate of our share of Federal Government Revenues is up by £1,530—a difference which, of course, is not significant in our Budget. The actual figures will be inserted before the Estimates are finally printed.

As I was saying, there has been an increase of £2,171,000 in the statutory share of Federal Government Revenue. In this very large increase the dominant role has been played by an increase of £2,171,000 in the statutory share of Federal Government revenue. This increase in turn is due in nearly equal proportions to two distinct features. First, the effect of the Fiscal Commission recommendations on re-allocation of revenue, calculated at the rates of taxation which were in force last year, would have been expected, according to the Federal Government, to increase our statutory share from £7,052,000 to £8,071,000—an increase of £1,019,000 or 14.4 per cent. On this already substantial increase there was superimposed the further benefits which accrued to this Government from the decision of the Federal Government to increase a number of import duties and duties of excise as from 30th January this year. The gross benefit of these further increases to this Region is estimated at £1,152,000, a further increase of 16.3 per cent. The cumulative effect of the increases attributable to the new system of allocation and of the revised rates of taxation is to give us the increase in statutorily allocated revenues of £2,171,000—a figure just over 30 per cent higher than the corresponding figure for last year.

The net improvement to our finances is not quite as great as this. One part of the increases in import duties introduced by the Federal Government was that related to petrol and auto-gas oil—an increase which was carried

through by the Federal Government after consultations with other Governments, in which the Eastern Region welcomed the Federal Government's proposal and determined to take the opportunity of this increase in Federal import duties, which accrue directly to us, to drop our own Purchase Tax on petrol and auto-gas oil. Thus under the new arrangements the Federal Government collects for us, and allocates to us, a sum which is in principle equal to the amount which we were collecting ourselves through Purchase Tax. In fact, it is likely to be somewhat greater: our Purchase Tax could never be one hundred per cent efficient because, under the Constitution, there is free movement of goods within Nigeria and this inevitably creates opportunities for bringing in duty-free petrol from other Regions. The amount of Purchase Tax which we would have expected to collect during the coming year at our previous rates of taxation was approximately £450,000; and this reduction must be set against the increases which I have just referred to.

Indeed the picture for our Regional revenue as a whole does not match the handsome increase in the Federally allocated revenues to which I have just referred. There is an actual reduction of almost exactly £300,000—from £5,099,000 to £4,790,000. This net reduction of some £300,000 is the net effect of the cessation of revenue from Purchase Tax, costing £252,000, of an expected decline in Regional Income Tax for a special reason to which I shall refer later in my speech, and of a number of comparatively small increases and decreases in a number of less important items. For example, the total under Head 410, Miscellaneous, is reduced by £175,000 owing to the fact that the payment in 1958–59 in connection with the distribution of assets of former enemy property was, of course, non-recurrent; on the other hand the revenue under Head 404 will increase by some £50,000, primarily as a result of increased revenue from the Ministry of Education, that under Head 405, Water Undertakings, by a further £50,000 as a result of the fact that we shall in future charge an economic rate for water supplied to municipalities, and there is an increase of over £80,000 under Head 408, Interest, resulting mainly from the correction of underestimation in 1958–59.

[DR IMOKE]

The estimation of the revenue of the Regional Income Tax for this year has been a matter of particular difficulty. In preparing the estimates for last year it was assumed that we should collect a substantial sum of arrears which were outstanding at 31st March, 1958 owing largely to the disruption of tax collections during the crisis in January and February, 1958; we hoped further that by the end of the year not only would the arrears have been collected, but the tax for 1958-59 would itself have been fully, or nearly fully, collected. We still lack the final figures to know exactly where we stand. But in so far as this expectation has been realised, 1959-60 can expect to be, on the face of it, a leaner year for tax collections because it will not be bolstered artificially at the beginning of the year with the collection of arrears relating to the year we have just completed. There are always, and inevitably, some arrears; but we are fairly satisfied that the arrears with which we enter the present year are less than those with which we entered the previous year. After allowing for loss in the way of collection of arrears, but some improvement in current collections, I and my advisers originally reached the conclusion that we might expect to collect approximately £2,300,000 in Regional Income Tax in the forthcoming year.

The Income Tax is a most powerful fiscal engine on which we must continue to rely for a very substantial revenue. As the years go by, however, and we become more familiar with its workings, it becomes necessary to review certain features from time to time. The Income Tax at present in force in the Eastern Region as compared with those in force in other Regions of the Federation, is, generally speaking, higher. This is not the case at the lowest income levels so far as a comparison with the Western Region is concerned: a study of the tables at page 65 of the Fiscal Commission Report will show that a bachelor earning less than £200 pays between £1 and 25s less than he would in the Western Region, the married man with one child between 25s and £2 10s less, and the married man with three children between 27s 6d and £5 less. In case my hon. Friends opposite should wish to confuse this very plain issue, I must point out that these figures include for the West, and do not include for the East, an allowance for a general rate

imposed by Local Government bodies; since the maximum general rate in this Region is 15s, our rates for the lowest income groups are *still* lower than those in the West, even when the maximum of 15s is subtracted from the differences that I have just quoted. For the higher incomes, however, our tax is higher—and in general this is right. But there is one class of persons for whom the tax burden is so much higher here than elsewhere as to cause a real problem—that is the single man, and to a lesser extent the married man without children and the married couple with one or two children only. In other words, the differential against the bachelor, or the person with few family encumbrances, is far heavier in the Eastern Region—and progressively more so as the income rises—than in any other Region.

Bachelors and married couples without children are to be found mainly amongst the younger people on whom the Region is relying to use their new-found skills and knowledge to accelerate the development of this Region to a higher standard. A young man with a degree or technical qualification, who finishes his studies in Nigeria or abroad and looks around for employment, can at the present time pick or choose freely as virtually all the Nigerian Governments are eager to have him. If we impose on such people a very high tax, sharply higher than that paid by their opposite numbers elsewhere, then we are likely to find that the service of the Eastern Region—and by that I include both its public service and many other employments in the Region—is unattractive to these key young people: as a result, they will seek opportunities in Lagos or elsewhere.

Bearing in mind the overriding importance of a substantial revenue from Income Tax, we have most carefully analysed the income structure of the tax-paying population to see whether some concession would be possible without undue expense. It has been found that the number of persons with incomes over £200 a year—and it is almost entirely in relation to such persons that these problems arise—is not very large. The number of persons with incomes over £500 a year—and this covers virtually all those with University degrees or equivalent professional qualifications—is really very small indeed. There are, for instance, only 1,706 single men with

incomes between £200 to £500 a year; and only 200 with incomes between £500 and £1,000. Yet small as the numbers are, these are key people in our economy.

Because of the small numbers, it is, therefore, possible to make some concession in tax without seriously affecting our financial position. We have therefore decided to bring about a reform in taxation by which in the main the present taxation for the married man with a wife and three children remains as it is; the basic rates of tax for the "Schedule I" tax-payers with incomes under £60 remain as they are; but for bachelors with higher incomes and married couples without children or with one or two children the tax will be adjusted to a position roughly half-way between the present Eastern Region Tax and the broad level of the other taxes applicable in the Federation. When I say half-way, I ask hon. Members to realise that it is not always a question of an exact mathematical half—on the one hand, the tax rates in the other Regions, though very similar, are not exactly the same as each other; on the other hand, there are certain problems of smoothness of progression which have to be observed. In this connection we are also taking steps to smoothen the £20 "jump" for the married man with three children at the £1,000 level. Those with incomes immediately above this point will pay £20 less than at present. At higher levels this loss is gradually recouped but no individual will pay more tax than at present. A certain number of married men with three children will pay rather less than at present; and all those in the other "marriage groups" will pay substantially less. For a wealthy bachelor, the saving may run into some hundreds of pounds. The exact figures will be made available to hon. Members shortly.

But the total cost to Government is approximately £85,000 only—because, as I have explained, of the small numbers in the upper income groups in which appreciable reductions are being made. Thus the revised figure for Regional Income Tax is, instead of £2,300,000, £2,215,000.

Hon. Members will remember that on the last occasion on which we altered the Income Tax Schedule—in March 1957—we adopted the procedure of section 66 of the Finance

Law as amended by the Finance (Amendment) Law, 1956; that is to say, immediately at the conclusion of the Budget Speech I moved a resolution which had the effect of bringing the new rates of tax into immediate force, subject to subsequent confirmation and validation by an appropriate clause in the Finance (Amendment) Bill. This procedure will be followed again on the present occasion. At the conclusion of this speech copies of the new Schedule will be distributed to hon. Members and immediately thereafter I will move a Resolution framed in accordance with section 66.

After these adjustments, we still have a recurrent revenue figure of £14,010,000. How do we propose to spend this money? Before I comment upon any of the details of the recurrent expenditure Estimates, I must draw the attention of hon. Members to one general point, which is that the Estimates now reflect fully the implementation of Government's policy of the integration of Departments into Ministries. This policy was described in considerable detail in the preface to the Supplementary Estimates of December, 1958 and by the beginning of the new financial year it will have been carried out. Indeed, it will have been carried out to an even greater extent than originally envisaged, by the incorporation of the Ministry of Information into the Premier's Office, of the Ministry of Production into the Ministry of Agriculture, of the Ministry of Transport into the Ministry of Works, and of the Ministry of Welfare into the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Hon. Members will note that there is now, with two exceptions, one Head of the Estimates only for each Ministry or non-Ministerial Department; the exceptions are the Ministry of Local Government which retains a separate Head for Grants to Local Government Bodies, owing to the voluminous explanatory detail that is required in order to keep Members fully informed of the destination of these grants; and my own Ministry which retains, mainly for statistical purposes, two extra Heads for the very specialised and almost wholly statutory expenditure on Pensions and Gratuities and on Public Debt Charges.

I am sure, however, that hon. Members are much more interested in the figures that appear in these Estimates than in their layout;

[DR IMOKE]

our improved financial position can be demonstrated in no better way than by examination of the increased expenditure which it has been possible for us to provide under Education. In particular it will be noted that expenditure of £4.8 millions is to be incurred on Grants-in-Aid—£300,000 more than the 1958-59 estimate, and, according to the latest figures available, no less than £800,000 more than the actual figures for 1958-59. In fact if hon. Members will refer to Appendix N, which shows the old Education Head, they will see that the estimated expenditure on Grants-in-Aid next year is only £100,000 less than the actual expenditure in 1957-58 before the modification of the U.P.E. Scheme. I am sure that they will agree that this, together with the other increases permitted under the Ministry of Education, represents a most laudable contribution to the further education of the people of this Region, upon which the hearts of all of us are so firmly set.

The net increase under the Premier's Office after allowing for integration is no less than £250,000 most of which is accounted for by the establishment of twelve Provincial Organisations including Provincial Commissioners, Provincial Assemblies and adequate staff. This follows, of course, from the Government's policy of the devolution of power to the lowest level compatible with efficiency, and from the assurances given by this Government's delegation at the Constitutional Conference last year that everything possible would be done to allay the fears, however groundless, of the minority groups in the Region. We have felt glad to meet the wishes of the people in this matter even at some considerable expense.

Hon. Members will also note the very generous provision under Head 425, Legislature, for the establishment of a House of Chiefs. A democratic Government is obliged to give effect to the wishes of the people whenever possible; and it is the clearly expressed desire of the people of this Region to have a House of Chiefs in which the traditional authorities can be represented and can give full expression to their valuable views.

The other changes and increases which appear in the recurrent Estimates can be attributed to more general causes, and in this connection I would draw the attention of hon. Members to the fact that, apart from the

normal annual increase for increments, the Estimates also contain provision to permit the Public Service of the Region to receive the same conditions of service (i.e., allowances and similar facilities) as those enjoyed by members of the Federal Public Service. This, too, is an indication of our improved financial position, but also of the concern of Government for the well-being and contentment of those who serve it well.

After a careful assessment of our commitments in respect of the matters that I have so far mentioned, it was decided that funds were available for a very considerable improvement in the standard of the services already provided by Government, and indeed for a modest degree of expansion in those services. Allocations for these two purposes account for the remaining increases in expenditure permitted by the Estimates. As examples of improved maintenance of existing services, I would refer hon. Members to the restoration of the £100,000 cut in Grants to Local Government Bodies, to the greatly increased provision for the maintenance of roads, and to the insertion of an item of £25,000 for the replacement of plant and equipment under the special expenditure section of the Ministry of Works.

The expansion of Government's services is perhaps best reflected under the Ministry of Agriculture which received an allocation of no less than £67,000 for this purpose, following representations from the Board of Agriculture. All Ministries have, of course been permitted a degree of expansion and, after the Ministry of Agriculture, I would draw the particular attention of hon. Members to the increases under the Ministries of Health, Town Planning and Works. The provision under this last Ministry has been devoted solely to the creation of a more efficient instrument for the execution of the Regional Development Plan, on which so much of our energies, and so much public interest, are bound to be concentrated in the next few years.

The most important feature of the new Budget as it has been presented to you in the Estimates, is that for the first time we have presented separately a distinct Capital Budget. This, too, is a reflection of the improved strength and stability of our financial situation which allows us to look and plan further ahead than was at one time possible. The Capital

Budget as embodied in the Estimates before you is closely related to the Development Programme which has been published as Official Document No. 2/1959, the main difference being that the Development Programme as published covers the four-year period from 1st April, 1958 to 31st March, 1962 while the Capital Estimates before you are entirely concerned with the period beginning 1st April, 1959, though hon. Members will find that the necessary figures for 1958-59 are given in order to permit complete reconciliation with the figures in the Development Programme.

The House will have noted that the complete programme as published in the Sessional Paper involves a sum of no less than £16.6 millions spread over four years. This is, I am sure the House will agree, a most substantial figure; and a great effort on the part of all the Executive organs of the Government and of its Corporations will be required to achieve this result. Further, the programme is a comprehensive one, in accordance with the best principles of economic planning. It embraces not only the expenditure of Government itself but also capital expenditure out of funds provided by the Marketing Board on the projects of the Eastern Region Development Corporation and on that great project, the University of Nigeria, which we all have so much at heart. The financing of so great a sum of nearly £17 millions is, indeed, a formidable problem. To mobilise this massive sum, the Government is bringing into play every possible resource. In the first place, certain funds are being made available by the Marketing Board—that is outside the direct scope of Government financing and Capital Budgets. This splendid contribution by the Marketing Board is of crucial importance to the achievement of the Programme as a whole; but, as I am now presenting Government Estimates and Government's Capital Budget, I propose to concentrate for the moment on the other sources of finance available.

First as this is a four-year programme, a good part of the work has already been done and the money spent during 1958-59—the amount so spent, which is detailed in Table II in Official Document No. 2, is £2,047,118. There remains £10,692,882 to be financed during the three years just begun.

This £10,692,882 is to be found from various sources. In the first place, there were in the Estimates of 1958-59 and earlier years certain separate funds out of which particular classes of capital expenditure were financed or partly financed—examples were the Regional Contributions Account, the Urban Water Supplies Fund and the Local Government Loans Fund. These funds are all being wound up and the balances from them will be paid into the new Development Fund which will finance the Capital Budget. From these initial balances about £1.4 millions will be available in total. Secondly, after a careful review of the balance on the Consolidated Revenue Fund, we have concluded that the amount which it is necessary to hold as working capital and to provide for revenue equalisation is a sum of the order of £3.6 to £3.8 millions. As the general revenue balance at the end of the year is expected to be about £5.5 millions, we can therefore transfer £1,750,000 from the general revenue balance.

Next, we hope to make an annual contribution from revenue to the Development Fund; over the whole period this contribution is expected to add up to a further £2 millions. Certain minor and miscellaneous sources (Loan repayments, Premium Rents on Crown Lands, etc. etc.) add up to a further £350,000.

We hope to receive the balance of our C.D. and W. Grants, amounting to £1.82 millions.

Finally, we come to the important subject of loans. If we are to achieve the total programme as I have outlined it to you, we need £3.35 millions of loans. Towards this we are now definitely assured of £½ million.

In order to raise funds to assist in implementing Nigeria's development programmes, the Federal Government on the 10th May, 1959 will float a loan of £2,000,000 called the Federation of Nigeria Development Loan, 1959. Under arrangements already agreed upon, the funds will be re-loaned by the Federal Government to the Governments of the Northern and Eastern Regions. It is intended that the loan will be issued and administered by the Central Bank on behalf of the Federal Government. The loan will have three maturities—£1,000,000 will be repayable in 20 years, £600,000 in ten years and £400,000 in

[DR IMOKE]

five years. In order that as many private investors as possible may subscribe to the loan and thereby play their part in promoting Nigeria's development, subscriptions of as low as £10 may be lodged and arrangements are being made for applications to be accepted by commercial banks throughout the country. Public announcements will be made shortly giving the other terms of the loan.

After allowing for this £500,000, there remains £2,850,000 to raise by loans. There are at present no absolutely firm assurances as to what additional loans we shall be able to raise. But there are several sources from which we can reasonably have solid hopes. First, if the first Federal Internal Loan is a success, it is to be hoped that, within the period of the Development Programme, at least one if not more further loans of the same character will be made. The disposition of the proceeds of these loans will be a matter for discussion through the Loans Advisory Council; but I think that we can reasonably hope that some further allocation from this source will come to us.

Much will depend on the growth of the habit of saving. The new Central Bank will seek to promote the growth of financial institutions which will encourage greater savings. Although the banking habit in Nigeria has grown in recent years, the banks and other financial institutions, such as the Co-operative Societies, Insurance Companies and the Post Office Savings Bank, which encourage savings, still have a most important role to play in stimulating further saving. In view of the urgent need for capital it is most important that the moves to encourage greater savings receive the whole-hearted support of all sections of the community. On these savings will depend largely the possibility of future internal loans.

Beyond that there are possibilities of external loans. While external borrowing is a subject reserved to the Federal Government, the benefit of a loan raised externally for a purpose specific to a Regional Government may nevertheless accrue to us. We have already embarked, on the occasion of the recent Loans Advisory Council, on certain informal discussions with the United Kingdom authorities

concerning the possibility of loans under the new policy of Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom whereby the United Kingdom will make Exchequer Loans to Commonwealth territories for selected projects.

Secondly, the United States Government announced in 1957 the establishment of a new "Loan Development Fund" which, it was announced, is prepared in principle to make loans for development in under-developed territories in all parts of the world. Certain applications for assistance under this scheme were made in 1957; and so far have not proved successful. However, we hope to renew our applications and may hope that within the period which we are considering some part at least of our application will be successful.

Again, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development recently announced that it was prepared to consider applications for loans for projects likely to have a direct impact on African life and these loans would probably fall within the field of a Regional Government. Again, we have made certain applications but so far have not been successful.

Thus there are at least four sources from which loans may be received towards the loan figure which is given in the programme. As will be clear from what I have already said, negotiations for loans, particularly from overseas, are a slow and in some ways a disappointing business. It would be imprudent to set our sights too high, or to expect a great flood of loan finance which would resolve all our difficulties. Equally it would be wrong to be too pessimistic. We have good friends overseas and we believe that within the period concerned one or more of the various schemes and applications which I have expounded above will come to fruition. With this, and with some further internal loan finance, we may hope to attain the total target. But it is a target and not a certainty, and unless our efforts and the co-operation of our friends overseas enable the target to be reached, curtailment of the Programme would become necessary. It is the confident hope of the Government that we shall not be let down; that we shall raise an additional £2,850,000 of loan finance, and thus that the total finance available for the programme will amount to the £10,692,882 referred to in Table V of Official Document No. 2 of 1959.

The raising of money is often an arduous matter. The spending of it is a matter of greater pleasure and ease. So I now turn to the manner in which we propose to allocate the £10 millions odd available for the three years to the 31st March, 1962, as I have just explained.

In deciding the apportionment of this money, Government has had two underlying principles: first, to increase the economic strength of our economy by heavy spending on vital economic sectors; secondly, to give visible form to the spirit of pride with which this Region under its present Government is advancing to play its part in an Independent Nigeria.

In the economic field pride of place has gone to a very substantial allocation for construction of roads and bridges. As will be seen from Table IV in the Development Programme and Page E 116 in the Capital Budget no less than £3,076,000, is allocated to this purpose (of which £509,000 is required to clear the advance account created as part of our massive road programme already in 1958-59). Other massive allocations in the economic sector include some £660,000 for the various plans under the general heading of Agriculture, £1,130,000 for Rural Water Supplies, £691,000 for Urban Water Supplies, and £805,000 for participations in industrial and commercial projects—that is cases in which the Government will enter into participation with an industrial company or other organisation to set up the new industries and facilities of which this Region stands so gravely in need.

In all these sectors the detailed expenditure is explained in the Development Programme and will no doubt be further expounded to you in presenting their respective Heads of the Capital Budget by the hon. Ministers concerned.

I turn now to the expenditure which is designed to mark the pride and status of this Region at this turning point in Nigerian history. First, the hon. Premier has already announced the decision of this Government to create twelve Provinces, each with a Provincial Assembly, which will keep the people of all the different areas in the Region in close touch with the work of Government. To do their work in an appropriate and dignified way,

these Provincial Assemblies will need suitable buildings and Headquarters, and a substantial allocation is being made within the building programme for the purpose of this.

More important still, however, is that Government has decided to create a new group of Government Buildings in a well chosen site in what is at present the outskirts of Enugu. This group of buildings which will be architecturally planned so as to be one of the finest architectural compositions in West Africa, will comprise a new building for the House of Assembly, in due course a new building for the House of Chiefs, and, completing the picture, a tall skyscraper block to house in dignity the offices comprising the various Ministries. The cost of this group, with all the necessary ancillary buildings, the layout of the site and roads, the acquisition of the land, etc., comprises a substantial part of the expenditure under Head 801, Buildings. In addition there are a number of necessary Office buildings, Courts, Quarters, etc., in various parts of the Region including a fine office block in Port Harcourt.

I have now laid before the House all the main features of my Budget. In the days that lie before us there will be ample opportunities for hon. Members to obtain further information on the many points of detail which arise in such a considerable enterprise as that on which we—the Government, the House, and the people of the Eastern Region—have now embarked together. But if we pause for a moment to look at the Budget as a whole, I think its striking feature is that, while we have continued and developed the policies already well established, there is a great stride forward in the field of development through the creation of the Capital Budget and the allocation of substantial sums of capital to purposes which have for several years past been under-supplied—indeed in some cases starved. It has become fashionable to seek to attach a name or key-word to a year's Budget. In moving his Budget a few weeks ago the Federal Minister of Finance christened it the "Responsibility Budget". Looking at what I and my colleagues have tried to achieve in the Budget which we now lay before you, I believe it would be right to call this the "Opportunity Budget".

Mr Speaker, I beg to move. (*Applause*).

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

Question proposed and under Standing Order 66(3) the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday, 9th April.

Sitting suspended 11.25 a.m.

Sitting resumed 12 noon.

VARIATIONS TO THE SCHEDULES TO THE FINANCE LAW, 1956

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

Mr Speaker, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name, That this House resolve itself immediately into a Committee of the whole House to consider certain variations to the Schedules to the Finance Law, 1956, in accordance with section 66 of that Law.

This Motion, Mr Speaker, is the first step required to bring into play the machinery of section 66 of the Finance Law. That section is in the following terms:—

“66. (1) Where a Resolution moved by the Minister is passed with or without modification by a Committee of the Whole House of the House of Assembly providing for the revocation, replacement, variation of any Schedule to this law such resolution shall have effect as if contained in a Law—”

and the section then continues with certain provisos, the effect of which is that the change so made by Resolution must be confirmed by a Bill read a Second time within ten days.

There are two reasons for adopting this procedure. The first is that in matters of taxation it is desirable to have certainty. It is confusing and unsatisfactory if people know that a proposed change of taxation has been

announced, but do not know whether it has legal force. Further, there is much work to be done in the way of printing and issuing revised Schedules, now Tables for P.A.Y.E. deductions, and many other matters. This work cannot properly start until the House has expressed in some formal manner, such as a Resolution under section 66, its approval of the new Schedule.

Secondly, this procedure was adopted on the last occasion, 1957, when we amended the Schedule. It is therefore approved by precedent—always a matter of great importance in the proceedings of Parliaments.

I hope, therefore, that the House will agree with me that it is fully appropriate that we should now resolve ourselves into Committee for the purpose stated in the Motion.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

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

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That this House resolve itself immediately into Committee of the Whole House to consider certain variations to the Schedules to the Finance Law, 1956 in accordance with section 66 of that Law.

Schedules immediately considered in Committee.

(In the Committee)

FIRST SCHEDULE

The Minister of Finance (Dr Imoke): Mr Chairman, I beg to move that this Committee resolve that the First Schedule to the Finance Law, 1956, approved by the Committee on 26th March, 1957, be revoked, and that it be replaced by the following Schedule with effect from the 1st day of April, 1959:—

THE FIRST SCHEDULE

			Single Persons			Married Persons with no Children			Married Persons with not more than 2 Children			Married Persons with 3 or more Children		
			£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
Under £	60 ...	...	1	10	0	1	7	6	1	5	0	1	2	6
£	60 or over, but under £	70 ...	1	17	6	1	13	9	1	10	0	1	6	3
£	70 or over, but under £	80 ...	2	5	0	2	0	0	1	15	0	1	10	0
£	80 or over, but under £	90 ...	2	12	6	2	6	3	2	0	0	1	13	9
£	90 or over, but under £	100 ...	3	0	0	2	12	6	2	5	0	1	17	6
£	100 or over, but under £	110 ...	3	7	6	2	18	9	2	10	0	2	1	3
£	110 or over, but under £	120 ...	3	15	0	3	5	0	2	15	0	2	5	0
£	120 or over, but under £	130 ...	4	2	6	3	12	6	3	0	0	2	10	0
£	130 or over, but under £	140 ...	4	10	0	4	0	0	3	6	3	2	15	0
£	140 or over, but under £	150 ...	4	17	6	4	7	6	3	12	6	3	0	0
£	150 or over, but under £	160 ...	5	10	0	4	15	0	3	18	9	3	5	0
£	160 or over, but under £	170 ...	6	2	6	5	5	0	4	5	0	3	10	0
£	170 or over, but under £	180 ...	6	15	0	5	15	0	4	15	0	3	17	6
£	180 or over, but under £	190 ...	7	7	6	6	5	0	5	5	0	4	5	0
£	190 or over, but under £	200 ...	8	0	0	6	17	6	5	15	0	4	12	6
£	200 or over, but under £	210 ...	8	15	0	7	10	0	6	5	0	5	0	0
£	210 or over, but under £	220 ...	9	12	6	8	5	0	6	17	6	5	10	0
£	220 or over, but under £	230 ...	10	10	0	9	0	0	7	10	0	6	0	0
£	230 or over, but under £	240 ...	11	7	6	9	15	0	8	2	6	6	10	0
£	240 or over, but under £	250 ...	12	5	0	10	10	0	8	15	0	7	0	0
£	250 or over, but under £	260 ...	13	2	6	11	5	0	9	7	6	7	10	0
£	260 or over, but under £	270 ...	14	0	0	12	0	0	10	0	0	8	0	0
£	270 or over, but under £	280 ...	14	17	6	12	15	0	10	12	6	8	10	0
£	280 or over, but under £	290 ...	15	15	0	13	10	0	11	5	0	9	0	0
£	290 or over, but under £	300 ...	16	12	6	14	5	0	11	17	6	9	10	0
£	300 or over, but under £	310 ...	17	10	0	15	0	0	12	10	0	10	0	0
£	310 or over, but under £	320 ...	18	7	6	15	15	0	13	2	6	10	10	6
£	320 or over, but under £	330 ...	19	5	0	16	10	0	13	15	0	11	0	0
£	330 or over, but under £	340 ...	20	2	6	17	5	0	14	7	6	11	10	0
£	340 or over, but under £	350 ...	21	0	0	18	0	0	15	0	0	12	0	0
£	350 or over, but under £	360 ...	21	17	6	18	15	0	15	12	6	12	10	0
£	360 or over, but under £	370 ...	22	15	0	19	10	0	16	5	0	13	0	0
£	370 or over, but under £	380 ...	23	12	6	20	5	0	16	17	6	13	10	0
£	380 or over, but under £	390 ...	24	10	0	21	0	0	17	10	0	14	0	0
£	390 or over, but under £	400 ...	25	7	6	21	15	0	18	2	6	14	10	0
£	400 or over, but under £	410 ...	26	5	0	22	10	0	18	15	0	15	0	0
£	410 or over, but under £	420 ...	27	2	6	23	5	0	19	7	6	15	10	0
£	420 or over, but under £	430 ...	28	0	0	24	0	0	20	0	0	16	0	0
£	430 or over, but under £	440 ...	28	17	6	24	15	0	20	12	6	16	10	0
£	440 or over, but under £	450 ...	29	15	0	25	10	0	21	5	0	17	0	0
£	450 or over, but under £	460 ...	30	12	6	26	5	0	21	17	6	17	10	0
£	460 or over, but under £	470 ...	31	10	0	27	0	0	22	10	0	18	0	0
£	470 or over, but under £	480 ...	32	7	6	27	15	0	23	2	6	18	10	0
£	480 or over, but under £	490 ...	33	5	0	28	10	0	23	15	0	19	0	0
£	490 or over, but under £	500 ...	34	2	6	29	5	0	24	7	6	19	10	0
£	500 or over, but under £	510 ...	35	0	0	30	0	0	25	0	0	20	0	0
£	510 or over, but under £	520 ...	35	17	6	30	15	0	25	12	6	20	10	0

THE FIRST SCHEDULE—continued

	Single Persons			Married Persons with no Children			Married Persons with not more than 2 Children			Married Persons with 3 or more Children		
	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
£ 520 or over, but under £ 530 ...	36	15	0	31	10	0	26	5	0	21	0	0
£ 530 or over, but under £ 540 ...	37	12	6	32	5	0	26	17	6	21	10	0
£ 540 or over, but under £ 550 ...	38	10	0	33	0	0	27	10	0	22	0	0
£ 550 or over, but under £ 560 ...	39	7	6	33	15	0	28	2	6	22	10	0
£ 560 or over, but under £ 570 ...	40	5	0	34	10	0	28	15	0	23	0	0
£ 570 or over, but under £ 580 ...	41	2	6	35	5	0	29	7	6	23	10	0
£ 580 or over, but under £ 590 ...	42	0	0	36	0	0	30	0	0	24	0	0
£ 590 or over, but under £ 600 ...	42	17	6	36	15	0	30	12	6	24	10	0
£ 600 or over, but under £ 610 ...	43	15	0	37	10	0	31	5	0	25	0	0
£ 610 or over, but under £ 620 ...	44	12	6	38	5	0	31	17	6	25	10	0
£ 620 or over, but under £ 630 ...	45	10	0	39	0	0	32	10	0	26	0	0
£ 630 or over, but under £ 640 ...	46	7	6	39	15	0	33	2	6	26	10	0
£ 640 or over, but under £ 650 ...	47	5	0	40	10	0	33	15	0	27	0	0
£ 650 or over, but under £ 660 ...	48	2	6	41	5	0	34	7	6	27	10	0
£ 660 or over, but under £ 670 ...	49	0	0	42	0	0	35	0	0	28	0	0
£ 670 or over, but under £ 680 ...	49	17	6	42	15	0	35	12	6	28	10	0
£ 680 or over, but under £ 690 ...	50	15	0	43	10	0	36	5	0	29	0	0
£ 690 or over, but under £ 700 ...	51	12	6	44	5	0	36	17	6	29	10	0
£ 700 or over, but under £ 710 ...	52	10	0	45	0	0	37	10	0	30	0	0
£ 710 or over, but under £ 720 ...	53	7	6	45	15	0	38	2	6	30	10	0
£ 720 or over, but under £ 730 ...	54	5	0	46	10	0	38	15	0	31	0	0
£ 730 or over, but under £ 740 ...	55	2	6	47	5	0	39	7	6	31	10	0
£ 740 or over, but under £ 750 ...	56	0	0	48	0	0	40	0	0	32	0	0
£ 750 or over, but under £ 760 ...	56	17	6	48	15	0	40	12	6	32	10	0
£ 760 or over, but under £ 770 ...	57	15	0	49	10	0	41	5	0	33	0	0
£ 770 or over, but under £ 780 ...	58	12	6	50	5	0	41	17	6	33	10	0
£ 780 or over, but under £ 790 ...	59	10	0	51	0	0	42	10	0	34	0	0
£ 790 or over, but under £ 800 ...	60	7	6	51	15	0	43	2	6	34	10	0
£ 800 or over, but under £ 810 ...	61	5	0	52	10	0	43	15	0	35	0	0
£ 810 or over, but under £ 820 ...	63	0	0	54	0	0	45	0	0	36	0	0
£ 820 or over, but under £ 830 ...	64	15	0	55	10	0	46	5	0	37	0	0
£ 830 or over, but under £ 840 ...	66	10	0	57	0	0	47	10	0	38	0	0
£ 840 or over, but under £ 850 ...	68	5	0	58	10	0	48	15	0	39	0	0
£ 850 or over, but under £ 860 ...	70	0	0	60	0	0	50	0	0	40	0	0
£ 860 or over, but under £ 870 ...	71	15	0	61	10	0	51	5	0	41	0	0
£ 870 or over, but under £ 880 ...	73	10	0	63	0	0	52	10	0	42	0	0
£ 880 or over, but under £ 890 ...	75	5	0	64	10	0	53	15	0	43	0	0
£ 890 or over, but under £ 900 ...	77	0	0	66	0	0	55	0	0	44	0	0
£ 900 or over, but under £ 910 ...	78	15	0	67	10	0	56	5	0	45	0	0
£ 910 or over, but under £ 920 ...	80	10	0	69	0	0	57	10	0	46	0	0
£ 920 or over, but under £ 930 ...	82	5	0	70	10	0	58	15	0	47	0	0
£ 930 or over, but under £ 940 ...	84	0	0	72	0	0	60	0	0	48	0	0
£ 940 or over, but under £ 950 ...	85	15	0	73	10	0	61	5	0	49	0	0
£ 950 or over, but under £ 960 ...	87	10	0	75	0	0	62	10	0	50	0	0
£ 960 or over, but under £ 970 ...	89	5	0	76	10	0	63	15	0	51	0	0
£ 970 or over, but under £ 980 ...	91	0	0	78	0	0	65	0	0	52	0	0
£ 980 or over, but under £ 990 ...	92	15	0	79	10	0	66	5	0	53	0	0

THE FIRST SCHEDULE—continued

	Single Persons	Married Persons with no Children			Married Persons with not more than 2 Children			Married Persons with 3 or more Children				
		£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
£ 990 or over, but under £1,000 ...	94	10	0	81	0	0	67	10	0	54	0	0
£1,000 or over, but under £1,010 ...	96	5	0	82	10	0	68	15	0	55	0	0
£1,010 or over, but under £1,020 ...	98	10	0	84	10	0	70	10	0	56	10	0
£1,020 or over, but under £1,030 ...	100	15	0	86	10	0	72	5	0	58	0	0
£1,030 or over, but under £1,040 ...	103	0	0	88	10	0	74	0	0	59	10	0
£1,040 or over, but under £1,050 ...	105	5	0	90	10	0	75	15	0	61	0	0
£1,050 or over, but under £1,060 ...	107	10	0	92	10	0	77	10	0	62	10	0
£1,060 or over, but under £1,070 ...	109	15	0	94	10	0	79	5	0	64	0	0
£1,070 or over, but under £1,080 ...	112	0	0	96	10	0	81	0	0	65	10	0
£1,080 or over, but under £1,090 ...	114	5	0	98	10	0	82	15	0	67	0	0
£1,090 or over, but under £1,100 ...	116	10	0	100	10	0	84	10	0	68	10	0
£1,100 or over, but under £1,110 ...	118	15	0	102	10	0	86	5	0	70	0	0
£1,110 or over, but under £1,120 ...	121	0	0	104	10	0	88	0	0	71	10	0
£1,120 or over, but under £1,130 ...	123	5	0	106	10	0	89	15	0	73	0	0
£1,130 or over, but under £1,140 ...	125	10	0	108	10	0	91	10	0	74	10	0
£1,140 or over, but under £1,150 ...	127	15	0	110	10	0	93	5	0	76	0	0
£1,150 or over, but under £1,160 ...	130	0	0	112	10	0	95	0	0	77	10	0
£1,160 or over, but under £1,170 ...	132	5	0	114	10	0	96	15	0	79	0	0
£1,170 or over, but under £1,180 ...	134	10	0	116	10	0	98	10	0	80	10	0
£1,180 or over, but under £1,190 ...	136	15	0	118	10	0	100	5	0	82	0	0
£1,190 or over, but under £1,200 ...	139	0	0	120	10	0	102	0	0	83	10	0
£1,200 or over, but under £1,210 ...	141	5	0	122	10	0	103	15	0	85	0	0
£1,210 or over, but under £1,220 ...	143	10	0	124	10	0	105	10	0	86	10	0
£1,220 or over, but under £1,230 ...	145	15	0	126	10	0	107	5	0	88	0	0
£1,230 or over, but under £1,240 ...	148	0	0	128	10	0	109	0	0	89	10	0
£1,240 or over, but under £1,250 ...	150	5	0	130	10	0	110	15	0	91	0	0
£1,250 or over, but under £1,260 ...	152	10	0	132	10	0	112	10	0	92	10	0
£1,260 or over, but under £1,270 ...	154	15	0	134	10	0	114	5	0	94	0	0
£1,270 or over, but under £1,280 ...	157	0	0	136	10	0	116	0	0	95	10	0
£1,280 or over, but under £1,290 ...	159	5	0	138	10	0	117	15	0	97	0	0
£1,290 or over, but under £1,300 ...	161	10	0	140	10	0	119	10	0	98	10	0
£1,300 or over, but under £1,310 ...	163	15	0	142	10	0	121	5	0	100	0	0
£1,310 or over, but under £1,320 ...	166	0	0	144	10	0	123	0	0	101	10	0
£1,320 or over, but under £1,330 ...	168	5	0	146	10	0	124	15	0	103	0	0
£1,330 or over, but under £1,340 ...	170	10	0	148	10	0	126	10	0	104	10	0
£1,340 or over, but under £1,350 ...	172	15	0	150	10	0	128	5	0	106	0	0
£1,350 or over, but under £1,360 ...	175	0	0	152	10	0	130	0	0	107	10	0
£1,360 or over, but under £1,370 ...	177	5	0	154	10	0	131	15	0	109	0	0
£1,370 or over, but under £1,380 ...	179	10	0	156	10	0	133	10	0	110	10	0
£1,380 or over, but under £1,390 ...	181	15	0	158	10	0	135	5	0	112	0	0
£1,390 or over, but under £1,400 ...	184	0	0	160	10	0	137	0	0	113	10	0
£1,400 or over, but under £1,410 ...	186	5	0	162	10	0	138	15	0	115	0	0
£1,410 or over, but under £1,420 ...	188	10	0	164	10	0	140	10	0	116	10	0
£1,420 or over, but under £1,430 ...	190	15	0	166	10	0	142	5	0	118	0	0
£1,430 or over, but under £1,440 ...	193	0	0	168	10	0	144	0	0	119	10	0
£1,440 or over, but under £1,450 ...	195	5	0	170	10	0	145	15	0	121	0	0
£1,450 or over, but under £1,460 ...	197	10	0	172	10	0	147	10	0	122	10	0

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

75

[Variations to the Schedules

1 APRIL 1959

to the Finance Law, 1956]

76

THE FIRST SCHEDULE—continued

	Single Persons			Married Persons with no Children			Married Persons with not more than 2 Children			Married Persons with 3 or more Children		
	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
£1,460 or over, but under £1,470 ...	199	15	0	174	10	0	149	5	0	124	0	0
£1,470 or over, but under £1,480 ...	202	0	0	176	10	0	151	0	0	125	10	0
£1,480 or over, but under £1,490 ...	204	5	0	178	10	0	152	15	0	127	0	0
£1,490 or over, but under £1,500 ...	206	10	0	180	10	0	154	10	0	128	10	0
£1,500 or over, but under £1,510 ...	208	15	0	182	10	0	156	5	0	130	0	0
£1,510 or over, but under £1,520 ...	211	0	0	184	10	0	158	0	0	131	10	0
£1,520 or over, but under £1,530 ...	213	5	0	186	10	0	159	15	0	133	0	0
£1,530 or over, but under £1,540 ...	215	10	0	188	10	0	161	10	0	134	10	0
£1,540 or over, but under £1,550 ...	217	15	0	190	10	0	163	5	0	136	0	0
£1,550 or over, but under £1,560 ...	220	0	0	192	10	0	165	0	0	137	10	0
£1,560 or over, but under £1,570 ...	222	5	0	194	10	0	166	15	0	139	0	0
£1,570 or over, but under £1,580 ...	224	10	0	196	10	0	168	10	0	140	10	0
£1,580 or over, but under £1,590 ...	226	15	0	198	10	0	170	5	0	142	0	0
£1,590 or over, but under £1,600 ...	229	0	0	200	10	0	172	0	0	143	10	0
£1,600 or over, but under £1,610 ...	231	5	0	202	10	0	173	15	0	145	0	0
£1,610 or over, but under £1,620 ...	234	5	0	205	3	4	176	1	8	147	0	0
£1,620 or over, but under £1,630 ...	237	5	0	207	16	8	178	8	4	149	0	0
£1,630 or over, but under £1,640 ...	240	5	0	210	10	0	180	15	0	151	0	0
£1,640 or over, but under £1,650 ...	243	5	0	213	3	4	183	1	8	153	0	0
£1,650 or over, but under £1,660 ...	246	5	0	215	16	8	185	8	4	155	0	0
£1,660 or over, but under £1,670 ...	249	5	0	218	10	0	187	15	0	157	0	0
£1,670 or over, but under £1,680 ...	252	5	0	221	3	4	190	1	8	159	0	0
£1,680 or over, but under £1,690 ...	255	5	0	223	16	8	192	8	4	161	0	0
£1,690 or over, but under £1,700 ...	258	5	0	226	10	0	194	15	0	163	0	0
£1,700 or over, but under £1,710 ...	261	5	0	229	3	4	197	1	8	165	0	0
£1,710 or over, but under £1,720 ...	264	5	0	231	16	8	199	8	4	167	0	0
£1,720 or over, but under £1,730 ...	267	5	0	234	10	0	201	15	0	169	0	0
£1,730 or over, but under £1,740 ...	270	5	0	237	3	4	204	1	8	171	0	0
£1,740 or over, but under £1,750 ...	273	5	0	239	16	8	206	8	4	173	0	0
£1,750 or over, but under £1,760 ...	276	5	0	242	10	0	208	15	0	175	0	0
£1,760 or over, but under £1,770 ...	279	5	0	245	3	4	211	1	8	177	0	0
£1,770 or over, but under £1,780 ...	282	5	0	247	16	8	213	8	4	179	0	0
£1,780 or over, but under £1,790 ...	285	5	0	250	10	0	215	15	0	181	0	0
£1,790 or over, but under £1,800 ...	288	5	0	253	3	4	218	1	8	183	0	0
£1,800 or over, but under £1,810 ...	291	5	0	255	16	8	220	8	4	185	0	0
£1,810 or over, but under £1,820 ...	294	5	0	258	10	0	222	15	0	187	0	0
£1,820 or over, but under £1,830 ...	297	5	0	261	3	4	225	1	8	189	0	0
£1,830 or over, but under £1,840 ...	300	5	0	263	16	8	227	8	4	191	0	0
£1,840 or over, but under £1,850 ...	303	5	0	266	10	0	229	15	0	193	0	0
£1,850 or over, but under £1,860 ...	306	5	0	269	3	4	232	1	8	195	0	0
£1,860 or over, but under £1,870 ...	309	5	0	271	16	8	234	8	4	197	0	0
£1,870 or over, but under £1,880 ...	312	5	0	274	10	0	236	15	0	199	0	0
£1,880 or over, but under £1,890 ...	315	5	0	277	3	4	239	1	8	201	0	0
£1,890 or over, but under £1,900 ...	318	5	0	279	16	8	241	8	4	203	0	0
£1,900 or over, but under £1,910 ...	321	5	0	282	10	0	243	15	0	205	0	0
£1,910 or over, but under £1,920 ...	324	5	0	285	3	4	246	1	8	207	0	0
£1,920 or over, but under £1,930 ...	327	5	0	287	16	8	248	8	4	209	0	0

THE FIRST SCHEDULE—continued

		Single Persons			Married Persons with no Children			Married Persons with not more than 2 Children			Married Persons with 3 or more Children		
		£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
£1,930 or over, but under £1,940 ...	...	330	5	0	290	10	0	250	15	0	211	0	0
£1,940 or over, but under £1,950 ...	...	333	5	0	293	3	4	253	1	8	213	0	0
£1,950 or over, but under £1,960 ...	...	336	5	0	295	16	8	255	8	4	215	0	0
£1,960 or over, but under £1,970 ...	...	339	5	0	298	10	0	257	15	0	217	0	0
£1,970 or over, but under £1,980 ...	...	340	5	0	301	3	4	260	1	8	219	0	0
£1,980 or over, but under £1,990 ...	...	345	5	0	303	16	8	262	8	4	221	0	0
£1,990 or over, but under £2,000 ...	...	348	5	0	306	10	0	264	15	0	223	0	0
£2,000 or over, but under £2,010 ...	...	351	5	0	309	3	4	267	1	8	225	0	0
£2,010 or over, but under £2,020 ...	...	355	0	0	312	10	0	270	0	0	227	10	0
£2,020 or over, but under £2,030 ...	...	358	15	0	315	16	8	272	18	4	230	0	0
£2,030 or over, but under £2,040 ...	...	362	10	0	319	3	4	275	16	8	232	10	0
£2,040 or over, but under £2,050 ...	...	366	5	0	322	10	0	278	15	0	235	0	0
£2,050 or over, but under £2,060 ...	...	370	0	0	325	16	8	281	13	4	237	10	0
£2,060 or over, but under £2,070 ...	...	373	15	0	329	3	4	284	11	8	240	0	0
£2,070 or over, but under £2,080 ...	...	377	10	0	332	10	0	287	10	0	242	10	0
£2,080 or over, but under £2,090 ...	...	381	5	0	335	16	8	290	8	4	245	0	0
£2,090 or over, but under £2,100 ...	...	385	0	0	339	3	4	293	6	8	247	10	0
£2,100 or over, but under £2,110 ...	...	388	15	0	342	10	0	296	5	0	250	0	0
£2,110 or over, but under £2,120 ...	...	392	10	0	345	16	8	299	3	4	252	10	0
£2,120 or over, but under £2,130 ...	...	396	5	0	349	3	4	302	1	8	255	0	0
£2,130 or over, but under £2,140 ...	...	400	0	0	352	10	0	305	0	0	257	10	0
£2,140 or over, but under £2,150 ...	...	403	15	0	355	16	8	307	18	4	260	0	0
£2,150 or over, but under £2,160 ...	...	407	10	0	359	3	4	310	16	8	262	10	0
£2,160 or over, but under £2,170 ...	...	411	5	0	362	10	0	313	15	0	265	0	0
£2,170 or over, but under £2,180 ...	...	415	0	0	365	16	8	316	13	4	267	10	0
£2,180 or over, but under £2,190 ...	...	418	15	0	369	3	4	319	11	8	270	0	0
£2,190 or over, but under £2,200 ...	...	422	10	0	372	10	0	322	10	0	272	10	0
£2,200 or over, but under £2,210 ...	...	426	5	0	375	16	8	325	8	4	275	0	0
£2,210 or over, but under £2,220 ...	...	430	0	0	379	3	4	328	6	8	277	10	0
£2,220 or over, but under £2,230 ...	...	433	15	0	382	10	0	331	5	0	280	0	0
£2,230 or over, but under £2,240 ...	...	437	10	0	385	16	8	334	3	4	282	10	0
£2,240 or over, but under £2,250 ...	...	441	5	0	389	3	4	337	1	8	285	0	0
£2,250 or over, but under £2,260 ...	...	445	0	0	392	10	0	340	0	0	287	10	0
£2,260 or over, but under £2,270 ...	...	448	15	0	395	16	8	342	18	4	290	0	0
£2,270 or over, but under £2,280 ...	...	452	10	0	399	3	4	345	16	8	292	10	0
£2,280 or over, but under £2,290 ...	...	456	5	0	402	10	0	348	15	0	295	0	0
£2,290 or over, but under £2,300 ...	...	460	0	0	405	16	8	351	13	4	297	10	0
£2,300 or over, but under £2,310 ...	...	463	15	0	409	3	4	354	11	8	300	0	0
£2,310 or over, but under £2,320 ...	...	467	10	0	412	10	0	357	10	0	302	10	0
£2,320 or over, but under £2,330 ...	...	471	5	0	415	16	8	360	8	4	305	0	0
£2,330 or over, but under £2,340 ...	...	475	0	0	419	3	4	363	6	8	307	10	0
£2,340 or over, but under £2,350 ...	...	478	15	0	422	10	0	366	5	0	310	0	0
£2,350 or over, but under £2,360 ...	...	482	10	0	425	16	8	369	3	4	312	10	0
£2,360 or over, but under £2,370 ...	...	486	5	0	429	3	4	372	1	8	315	0	0
£2,370 or over, but under £2,380 ...	...	490	0	0	432	10	0	375	0	0	317	10	0
£2,380 or over, but under £2,390 ...	...	493	15	0	435	16	8	377	18	4	320	0	0
£2,390 or over, but under £2,400 ...	...	497	10	0	439	3	4	380	16	8	322	10	0

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

79

[Variations to the Schedules

1 APRIL 1959

to the Finance Law, 1956]

80

THE FIRST SCHEDULE—continued

	Single Persons			Married Persons with no Children			Married Persons with not more than 2 Children			Married Persons with 3 or more Children		
	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
£2,400 or over, but under £2,410 ...	501	5	0	442	10	0	383	15	0	325	0	0
£2,410 or over, but under £2,420 ...	505	0	0	445	16	8	386	13	4	327	10	0
£2,420 or over, but under £2,430 ...	508	15	0	449	3	4	389	11	8	330	0	0
£2,430 or over, but under £2,440 ...	512	10	0	452	10	0	392	10	0	332	10	0
£2,440 or over, but under £2,450 ...	516	5	0	455	10	8	395	8	4	335	0	0
£2,450 or over, but under £2,460 ...	520	0	0	459	3	4	398	6	8	337	10	0
£2,460 or over, but under £2,470 ...	523	15	0	462	10	0	401	5	0	340	0	0
£2,470 or over, but under £2,480 ...	527	10	0	465	16	8	404	3	4	342	10	0
£2,480 or over, but under £2,490 ...	531	5	0	469	3	4	407	1	8	345	0	0
£2,490 or over, but under £2,500 ...	535	0	0	472	10	0	410	0	0	347	10	0
£2,500 or over, but under £2,510 ...	538	15	0	475	16	8	412	18	4	350	0	0
£2,510 or over, but under £2,520 ...	542	10	0	479	3	4	415	16	8	352	10	0
£2,520 or over, but under £2,530 ...	546	5	0	482	10	0	418	15	0	355	0	0
£2,530 or over, but under £2,540 ...	550	0	0	485	16	8	421	13	4	357	10	0
£2,540 or over, but under £2,550 ...	553	15	0	489	3	4	424	11	8	360	0	0
£2,550 or over, but under £2,560 ...	557	10	0	492	10	0	427	10	0	362	10	0
£2,560 or over, but under £2,570 ...	561	5	0	495	16	8	430	8	4	365	0	0
£2,570 or over, but under £2,580 ...	565	0	0	499	3	4	433	6	8	367	10	0
£2,580 or over, but under £2,590 ...	568	15	0	502	10	0	436	5	0	370	0	0
£2,590 or over, but under £2,600 ...	572	10	0	505	16	8	439	3	4	372	10	0
£2,600 or over, but under £2,610 ...	576	5	0	509	3	4	442	1	8	375	0	0
£2,610 or over, but under £2,620 ...	580	0	0	512	10	0	445	0	0	377	10	0
£2,620 or over, but under £2,630 ...	583	15	0	515	16	8	447	18	4	380	0	0
£2,630 or over, but under £2,640 ...	587	10	0	519	3	4	450	16	8	382	10	0
£2,640 or over, but under £2,650 ...	591	5	0	522	10	0	453	15	0	385	0	0
£2,650 or over, but under £2,660 ...	595	0	0	525	16	8	456	13	4	387	10	0
£2,660 or over, but under £2,670 ...	598	15	0	529	3	4	459	11	8	390	0	0
£2,670 or over, but under £2,680 ...	602	10	0	532	10	0	462	10	0	392	10	0
£2,680 or over, but under £2,690 ...	606	5	0	535	16	8	465	8	4	395	0	0
£2,690 or over, but under £2,700 ...	610	0	0	539	3	4	468	6	8	397	10	0
£2,700 or over, but under £2,710 ...	613	15	0	542	10	0	471	5	0	400	0	0
£2,710 or over, but under £2,720 ...	617	10	0	545	16	8	474	3	4	402	10	0
£2,720 or over, but under £2,730 ...	621	5	0	549	3	4	477	1	8	405	0	0
£2,730 or over, but under £2,740 ...	625	0	0	552	10	0	480	0	0	407	10	0
£2,740 or over, but under £2,750 ...	628	15	0	555	16	8	482	18	4	410	0	0
£2,750 or over, but under £2,760 ...	630	10	0	559	3	4	485	16	8	412	10	0
£2,760 or over, but under £2,770 ...	636	5	0	562	10	0	488	15	0	415	0	0
£2,770 or over, but under £2,780 ...	640	0	0	565	16	8	491	13	4	417	10	0
£2,780 or over, but under £2,790 ...	643	15	0	569	3	4	494	11	8	420	0	0
£2,790 or over, but under £2,800 ...	647	10	0	572	10	0	497	10	0	422	10	0
£2,800 or over, but under £2,810 ...	651	5	0	575	16	8	500	8	4	425	0	0
£2,810 or over, but under £2,820 ...	655	0	0	579	3	4	503	6	8	427	10	0
£2,820 or over, but under £2,830 ...	658	15	0	582	10	0	506	5	0	430	0	0
£2,830 or over, but under £2,840 ...	662	10	0	585	16	8	509	3	4	432	10	0
£2,840 or over, but under £2,850 ...	666	5	0	589	3	4	512	1	8	435	0	0
£2,850 or over, but under £2,860 ...	670	0	0	592	10	0	515	0	0	437	10	0
£2,860 or over, but under £2,870 ...	673	15	0	595	16	8	517	18	4	440	0	0

THE FIRST SCHEDULE—continued

	Single Persons			Married Persons with no Children			Married Persons with not more than 2 Children			Married Persons with 3 or more Children		
	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
£2,870 or over, but under £2,880 ...	677	10	0	599	3	4	520	16	8	442	10	0
£2,880 or over, but under £2,890 ...	681	5	0	602	10	0	523	15	0	445	0	0
£2,890 or over, but under £2,900 ...	685	0	0	605	16	8	526	13	4	447	10	0
£2,900 or over, but under £2,910 ...	688	15	0	609	3	4	529	11	8	450	0	0
£2,910 or over, but under £2,920 ...	692	10	0	612	10	0	532	10	0	452	10	0
£2,920 or over, but under £2,930 ...	696	5	0	615	16	8	535	8	4	455	0	0
£2,930 or over, but under £2,940 ...	700	0	0	619	3	4	538	6	8	457	10	0
£2,940 or over, but under £2,950 ...	703	15	0	622	10	0	541	5	0	460	0	0
£2,950 or over, but under £2,960 ...	707	10	0	625	16	8	544	3	4	462	10	0
£2,960 or over, but under £2,970 ...	711	5	0	629	3	4	547	1	8	465	0	0
£2,970 or over, but under £2,980 ...	715	0	0	632	10	0	550	0	0	467	10	0
£2,980 or over, but under £2,990 ...	718	15	0	635	16	8	552	18	4	470	0	0
£2,990 or over, but under £3,000 ...	722	10	0	639	3	4	555	16	8	472	10	0
£3,000 ...	726	5	0	642	10	0	558	15	0	475	0	0
On each £ over £3,000 and not exceeding												
£10,000 ...	0	9	0	0	8	0	0	7	0	0	6	0
On each £ over £10,000 ...	0	11	3	0	10	0	0	8	9	0	7	6

With your permission, Mr Chairman, I shall not read out the figures in the voluminous Schedule which has been handed to all hon. Members of this Committee in printed form.

In my Budget Speech I have explained fully the reasons for the proposed amendments to the Schedule which are, briefly, to eliminate the sudden jump in tax rates at the £1,000 income level and to effect a considerable reduction in the tax paid by bachelors, and a proportionate reduction for married persons with no or few children.

Hon. Members will note that there is no change in the tax payable by married persons with three or more children on incomes of up to £1,000; this is the basic tax from which those payable by persons with less than three children are calculated, and the only changes in

it are those involved in ironing out the jump of £20 that formerly took place at the thousand pound level. The excision of this jump has, of course, necessitated a reduction in tax payable on incomes of over £1,000, and the reduction varies from £20 at the thousand pound level to nil at the three thousand pound level.

Hon. Members may be interested to know the rates per pound of the tax levied in accordance with this Schedule on married persons with three or more children. They are 4½d in the pound on that part of the income lying between £60 and £110; 6d in the pound between £110 and £160; 9d in the pound between £160 and £200; 1s in the pound between £200 and £800; 2s between £800 and £1,000; 3s between £1,000 and £1,600; 4s between £1,600 and £2,000 and 5s between £2,000 and £3,000.

[DR IMOKE]

The tax paid by persons with less than three children is, as I have said, based upon that paid by those with three or more children. The calculation is done in the following manner. The additional tax payable by a married person with three or more children for a £10 increase in income is taken as a basis, the married person with not more than two children pays a slightly larger increase, a married person with no children a still larger increase, and the bachelor an even greater increase. The relation between these increases is, of course, the cause of the differentials between the tax paid, for example, by a bachelor and that by a married person with three or more children. Under the old Schedule these differentials were very considerable because on incomes lying behind £200 and £1,000, for every pound increase in the tax paid by a married person with three children, a married person with two children paid an extra £1 10s, a married person with no children an extra £2, and a bachelor an extra £2 10s; this relationship of 1 to 1½ to 2 to 2½ was used for the construction of the First Schedule in respect of incomes under £1,000; for incomes over £1,000 the relationship was 1 to 1⅓ to 1½ to 1⅞, i.e., in this income segment the bachelor paid an extra £1 17s 6d for every pound by which tax to the married person with three children increased.

The proposed new Schedule effects the reductions in the tax paid by bachelors (and to a lesser extent those paid by married persons with less than three children) by reducing the proportions that I have described above. Thus, in place of the old formula of 1 to 1½ to 2 to 2½ we have used in the construction of the new Schedule a proportion of 1 to 1¼ to 1½ to 1¾, and in place of the old formula of 1 to 1⅓ to 1½ to 1⅞ we have used 1 to 1 1/6 to 1¼ to 1½.

This may seem rather complicated to hon. Members, but it means quite simply that whereas under the old Schedule, for every pound increase in the basic rate the bachelor paid an increase of £2 10s, he now pays an extra £1 15s; the married person with no children similarly pays an increase of 10s instead of £2, and the married person with less than three children pays £1 5s instead of £1 10s extra. This is based on the income range of £200 to £1,000; in the income range over the £1,000 mark, for every pound increase

on the basic rate the bachelor pays £1 10s instead of £1 17s 6d, the married person with no children pays £1 6s 8d instead of £1 12s 6d, and the married person with less than three children pays £1 3s 4d instead of £1 7s 6d.

These changes will effect a very considerable reduction in the disparity between our rates of tax and those of the Federation and of the other Regions; in fact the disparity in the case of the bachelor is reduced to about half.

I think that hon. Members will agree that the proposed new Schedule represents a great step towards the levelling of tax rates so strongly recommended by the Report of the Fiscal Commission and I hope that they will whole-heartedly endorse it.

Mr Chairman, I beg to move.

The Chairman: I have to call the attention of hon. Members to Standing Order No. 4 (9) which reads:

“On Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, proceedings in pursuance of the provisions of any Law or Ordinance or in pursuance of the provisions of the Order may be entered upon or continued after 6 p.m., and on any such day on which such proceedings stand on the Order Paper and have not been disposed of by 1 p.m. Mr Speaker shall not accept a motion for the adjournment under paragraph (1) of this Standing Order but shall at 1 p.m. suspend the sitting until 3 p.m. that day”.

Question proposed.

Mr S. G. Ikoku (Enyong Division): Mr Chairman, I rise to move an amendment to the Motion moved by the hon. Minister of Finance, as follows:

To leave out all the words after “revoked” and insert the following:—

“and that it be replaced by a new First Schedule computed on the basis of the following percentage cuts with effect from the 1st of April, 1959:—

33½ per cent cut in income tax on all incomes up to £84 per annum.

25 per cent cut in income tax on all incomes between £84 and £250 per annum.

16½ per cent cut in income tax on all incomes between £250 and £500 per annum.

12½ per cent cut in income tax on all incomes between £500 and £720 per annum.

10 per cent cut in income tax on all incomes between £720 and £1,000 per annum.

5 per cent cut in income tax on all incomes above £1,000 per annum.

Several hon. Members: Total reduction is how much?

Dr Imoke: We did not hear your figures well.

Mr Ikoku: I am at your mercy, Sir. He is complaining about the figures; what do I do? They are available there. I will make reference to them as I go on. I wish to say, Sir, that the Government has had pressure to bear on them not only by the Opposition but also by the public of the Eastern Region and they have now come to the conclusion that the reduction in income tax is inevitable. Mr Chairman, Sir, what I would like to point out is that both sides of the House are now agreed on the need for reduction in personal income tax. This is common ground. The question now is what is the degree of that reduction? What is the extent of the reduction?

The House is being called upon to make certain reductions which according to the Minister of Finance himself total to a sum of £85,000, and if you work it out, Sir, on the basis of the population of this Region, you will find that the tax reduction works out at the rate of 2s 8d *per capita*—less than 3s per head reduction.

My second point, Sir, is that the tax reduction sought by the Government is agreeable to many people but it is significant that the whole of our tax-paying population is not covered by this tax reduction. I repeat that

the bulk of the tax-paying population is not covered by the reduction suggested by the Government and I have today, with your permission, to refer you to a book that has been quoted in this question. It is the Report of the Fiscal Commission. At page 64, Paragraph 10, of that Report, Sir, the learned gentlemen made this observation of the Eastern Region and with your permission, I quote:—

“Since the 1st April, 1956, all African males over the age of 16 in the Eastern Region have been liable to pay regional income tax. In addition African women wage- or salary-earners over the age of 16 and earning more than £100 a year, and African women over the age of 16 living or doing business in six urban areas and with an income arising in such an area of over £100 a year are also liable to the regional tax. In 1956–57 it was calculated that 1.5 million persons were liable to tax out of a total of regional population of 7.2 million. Of these 1.2 million had income below £60 a year . . .”

If you look at your Tax Deduction Schedule you will realise that there is not a single reduction for those who have income below £60. I would like to refer you to the suggested First Schedule. In respect of those with incomes under £60, single persons pay £1 10s, married with no children £1 7s 6d and married with three or more children pay £1 2s 6d. This is exactly the old rate.

The important point, Mr Chairman, is that 1.5 millions are liable to pay tax in the Eastern Region. Of this number 1.2 million belong to the lower income group of less than £60 per annum and the rate suggested by the Minister of Finance does not bring any tax relief to this lower income group. That means, Sir, that the relief which the Government is trying to make so much noise about does not bring any relief to an appreciable percentage of the tax-paying population of the Eastern Region. Indeed, it could be said that the reduction is noticeable from an income of £1,000 or over, which income embraces only a negligible proportion of the tax-paying population. And yet the Government goes about telling the people that it is bringing tax relief to the masses.

[MR IKOKU]

One of the canons of taxation is that tax should be uniformly outlined and that it should affect the higher income group more than the lower income group. Now here is the position in which we find ourselves. The bulk of the people who are on the lowest rung of income are not getting a penny reduction. Mr Chairman, I would like to make it clear to our Friends opposite that we are talking about personal income tax. We would not like this debate to be confused by bringing in produce tax or any other type of tax they like. We are talking about personal income tax.

Now I heard the hon. the Minister of Finance say something about rates. Mr Chairman, Sir, I would like to make it clear that rates are levied by Local Government; therefore, when we want to argue about rates we should go to our District Councils.

A lot has been said, Sir, about the lower income groups in this Region paying very low tax, and those in other Regions paying very high income tax. Mr Chairman, Sir, speaking for the Opposition and speaking for the tax-payers of this Region, I would like to make it clear that any day, if we are given the option, we would prefer to pay the rates of income tax in the Western Region.

Mr Chairman, Sir, I would like to draw your attention to the comparable figures of income tax payable in this Region and those payable in the Western Region. I would like to make it clear that if you are a bachelor in the Western Region and you earn an income of £100 or less you do not pay a single penny as income tax. While the bachelor in this Region is paying £1 10s as income tax, his counterpart in the Western Region is not paying a penny; while the man on £60 in the Eastern Region pays £2, his counterpart as a bachelor or married man pays nothing. A man on £70 per annum pays £2 10s in the Eastern Region, in the Western Region he pays nothing, and so it goes on.

I will give you the figures for £150. A bachelor in the Western Region at an annual income of £150 pays income tax of £1 17s 6d, his counterparts in the Eastern Region pay £7 10s. The reason for this is that there is a big difference in our computation of income

tax between this Region and the Western Region. In the Western Region the whole of your annual income is not taxable; you are given a rebate. The man gets a £100 relief for himself plus another £100 for his wife and in addition he gets £40 for every child up to a maximum of four children.

Mr Chairman, Sir, I would like to refer you to the Income Tax Law, 1957 (Western Region Income Tax Law No. 16/1957) and if you study that law, you will find all I have said about tax relief. Here in the Eastern Region we have no such relief. If you turn to the Finance Law No. 1/56, you will find at clause 6 of that law that the annual income of any person for each year of assessment shall be the full amount of the annual income of the year immediately preceding the year of assessment. The important thing, Sir, is that in the Western Region you are given a substantial relief, but here in the Eastern Region you are taxed on your full income.

Mr Chairman, Sir, many of our Friends opposite still feel that when we say that this relief in the Western Region is a good project, there is no truth in what we are saying. It is not political propaganda. I have cited this law—the Income Tax Law in the Western Region—to support my point. Sir, I am asking hon. Members to read the Fiscal Commission Report which further supports my case.

Now if we come back to the revised Schedule, you will find that even the new Schedule brought out by our hon. Minister of Finance still leaves us here in the Eastern Region in a worse position than our counterparts in the Western Region.

Let us take the figures for bachelors. A bachelor on less than £60 annual income in the East pays income tax of £1 10s; in the West, he pays nothing. A man on £60 exactly in the East pays £1 17s 6d; in the West, nil. £70 annual income in the East, £2 5s 0d tax; in the West, nil; £80 annual income in the East, £2 12s 6d tax; in the West, nil; £90 annual income in the East, £3 0s 0d tax; in the West, nil; £100 annual income in the East, £3 7s 6d tax; in the West, nil; £150 annual income in the East, £5 10s 0d tax; in the West, £1 17s 6d; £200 annual income in the East, £8 15s 0d tax;

in the West, £3 15s 0d; £250 annual income in the East, £13 2s 6d tax; in the West, £5 12s 6d; £300 annual income in the East, £17 10s 0d tax; in the West, £7 10s 0d; £350 annual income in the East, £21 17s 6d tax; in the West, £9 11s 8d; and £400 annual income in the East, £26 5s 0d tax; in the West, £11 13s 4d.

My point is that despite this revised Schedule of Income Tax which has been forced upon us by the Government, our position is still worse than the position of our counterparts in the other Regions; and in winding up, Sir, I would like to make it clear that it is the duty of this Government to be fair to this hon. House and to the Region. Each time they try to talk, they give the impression that we do not pay as much tax here as is being paid elsewhere. The simple truth is that we pay much higher tax than any other Region in the Federation of Nigeria. In fact, Sir, I would like to make it clear that the Gentleman opposite, at the Resumed London Constitutional Conference last year, when they knew that it would not pay them to indulge in political rigmarole, came out in the true colour and told the truth.

Several hon. Members: Did they?

Mr Ikoku: They did, and I would refer to their Memorandum on the matter. (*Hear! hear!*)

They submitted a Memorandum NC. 58/99 signed by the hon. Premier himself.

The Chairman: It is confidential, you know.

Mr Ikoku: Paragraph 4 of the Memorandum states:

"The weight of income tax is accordingly heavier than in other Regions of Nigeria."

Again in the 11th Plenary Session of the London Conference, the hon. the Minister of Finance was speaking and at page 10 of the reports states: "The Eastern Region also carries the heaviest weight of personal income tax than all the Regions."

Why do they insist upon running up and down the country and saying that they pay the lowest rate of tax? What I am saying is that

we want the new suggested Schedule changed in order to bring relief to all income groups, from the lowest to the highest. Our people deserve reduction. High taxation came in for the purpose of financing the Universal Primary Education Scheme which is now dead and gone. Why do they go on burdening the Region with high taxation? Reduction with a total of £85,000 in the whole Region works out at the lowest of 3d per head. Our rate of income tax works out at 6s 1d per head of the population. At page 66 of the Raisman Report, Appendix 10, you find that whereas in the Eastern Region we are paying 6s 1d *per capita* income tax, in the Western Region they are paying 1s 3d per head and in the Northern Region the rate is 3s 5d per head.

An hon. Member: What about the Western Region?

Mr Ikoku: You are always pointing to the Western Region but you never bother to know what is happening in that Region!

Mr Chairman, we have made our recommendation (that is what the people want) and we are calling upon the Government to give this Region a real and substantial reduction in income tax and to stop flickering around with the idea that the people of this Region pay the lowest income tax.

Mr Chairman, I beg to move.

Question proposed.—That the words proposed to be left out be left out.

The Premier (Dr N. Azikiwe): Mr Chairman, we appreciate very much the anxiety of our hon. Friend, the Leader of the Opposition, to be in a position to invent an election stunt for the forthcoming Federal elections. We realise, too, that the high-powered Commission whose report he has quoted at length, that is the Raisman Commission, actually places his Party on the dock by showing in this particular report (Tables 7, 8 and 9) that the taxation structure of the Western Region is weighted in favour of the upper income group than the lowest income group, and he has come here deliberately to mislead the House by giving the impression that there is a difference between income tax

[THE PREMIER]
and rates. I want to say, Sir, that as far as this report is concerned the difference will be shown as I advance my own argument.

My argument, Sir, is that Government is opposed to the amendment suggested by my hon. Friend, because the present taxation structure of the Eastern Region not only favours the lowest income group but also compares favourably with the taxation structures of the other Regions. That is our main ground of contention. We hold to this view, Mr Chairman, because the gravamen of his amendment is that there should be a reduction in the income payable by the lowest income group, and my point is that he is actually misdirected because he is labouring under a misapprehension to say that in the Eastern Region, the lowest income group pays more tax than in the West. I want to say, Sir, that they do not.

In the first place, what do we mean by taxes? He has been shouting "income tax", "income tax", and trying to show that the lowest income group pays less tax than their opposite number in the West. Somebody, whom I presume to be my hon. Friend, the Leader of the Opposition, has distributed some tax Schedules and put a copy in my box—that is, a section of the Western Income Tax Law—and then cleverly, Mr Chairman, he pointed out that tax payable on incomes under £60 per annum in the East was £1 10s and in the West, nil. But that is not true. I say so because in the Report of the Raisman Commission it was said at page 65: "The figures given for the West include an element for rates payable on income under the Local Government Law, but in all cases liability to education or property rates has been ignored".

Mr Chairman, I would like to direct your attention particularly to the words "rates" and "income"—tax on income, rates on income. Our contention is that in the Eastern Region, when the rates and the taxes are put together in our taxation structure, it is weighted in favour of the lowest income group.

I refer, Mr Chairman, to the dictionary for the definition of the words "rates" and "taxes".

Mr Ikoku: Do you read the dictionary?

The Premier: I quite understand: I am enjoying it.

Rate means an impost. Unless where it is specifically designed, that is, so far as this dictionary is concerned, tax almost means an impost. Now, the point I am making is that the rates and taxes imposed by our Government on the lowest income group are lower than those imposed by the West. I am quoting the document which is placed before this House in order to prove our case. Take the income of married people in the West receiving incomes under £60 per annum. I am emphasising those who are married with three or more children but according to their Report, it must be impossible that the great majority of Africans paid tax under Table 9. I hope my hon. Friend agrees to that. In the East, tax on £90 or over, but under £100 per annum is £1 17s 6d, rate 15s; in the West, it is £3 15s minus education and property rate. In the East, tax on £100 or over, but under £110 is £2 1s 3d, and adding rate of 15s you have £2 16s 3d. In the West, adding the two together, it is £5. So, I am accusing my hon. Friend of coming to this House to give wrong information deliberately.

Government Supporters: Shame!

Mr E. O. Eyo (Uyo Division): Mr Chairman, it is most unparliamentary for Members to shout "Shame". I am calling upon you, Sir, to ask Members to stop shouting "shame". It is most unparliamentary. I refer to page 464 of *Erskine May*. It is, I repeat, most unparliamentary.

The Premier: Mr Chairman, I am in sympathy with the intelligence of the Opposition Chief Whip and the only way to shame them is to say "Shame"!

Government Supporters: Shame! Shame!

The Premier: Mr Chairman, I am still sticking to my point that no case has been made by the hon. Leader of the Opposition to justify this amendment; that is the main point, because if the tax structure of the East has been so devised to weigh more in favour of those on top to enjoy life more abundant, we should have understood that, but according to our rates and taxes, we have tried to make life more abundant for those below because the majority of the rate and tax payers in the

East pay less income tax than those in the West. No case has been made for a reduction in our Schedule; therefore, the Schedule presented to this Committee by the hon. Minister of Finance is quite in order. It is invulnerable so far as the arguments adduced by the Leader of the Opposition are concerned.

Finally, Sir, I hope my Friend will understand the spirit in which I put it. In London, the delegation represented by the Government Party suggested that the proceedings of the Constitutional Conference should be published to avoid any misgivings and to avoid any particular political party claiming certain victories or certain defeats for their opponents. That suggestion was stoutly opposed by the political party represented by my hon. Friend. In any case, Sir, I do not want to 'iron' my own words here. The U.K. Delegation, headed by the Secretary of State, also opposed it and ultimately the Conference resolved in the majority that the proceedings of the Conference should be secret and should not be published. We wanted it to be published so that everybody would be able to understand what role each delegation and their advisers played. Well, the Conference opposed it and it was agreed that it was confidential and therefore should not be published and before we closed it was emphasised that all these documents were to be secret.

I am surprised that even here in this hon. House that my hon. Friend should come and quote verbatim from the Report which all delegates agreed in London should be confidential. Mr Chairman, this is evidence of bad faith on the part of my hon. Friend to put it in that way. But in order not to mislead the House, I would like, with your permission, Mr Chairman, to make one comment. He cited from what he said to be the Report that we agreed in London that our taxation structure is higher; yes, but unfortunately, he only took out of the context what submission we made. We made the submission and we are borne out by the Report of the Fiscal Commission that the taxation structure is heaviest in the Eastern Region as far as those who have incomes of £400 or above are concerned. He has come now to give the impression that what we said in London was that our taxation is heavier even as far as the lowest income group is concerned. I do not think it is fair, and therefore, because we have proved this . . .

Mr Ikoku: Are you sad with the comment about your statement?

The Premier: I never made any statement in London and whatever Memorandum I submitted on behalf of my Party was done in my official capacity only and not in any other sense. Therefore, Mr Chairman, we have convincingly proved from the evidence of the Fiscal Commission and from the document which the Leader of the Opposition presented to us that the present taxation structure of the Eastern Region not only favours the lowest income group but also compares favourably with the taxation structures of the other Regions. The word "tax" and the word "rate" are synonymous. The only difference is the sphere of operation. Rate is an impost levied by a Local Government body; tax is an impost levied by a Central Government body—that is the only difference—but it does not remove the idea that whether it is rates or tax, it is on income, that is the point; and my Friend has misled the House. Therefore, we oppose the amendment. (*Applause*).

Mr E. O. Eyo (Uyo Division): Mr Chairman, I thought when the Minister of Finance was moving his Motion he made it quite clear that he was discussing income tax and the Schedule is in respect of income tax in the Eastern Region. All that the Leader of the Opposition tried to show the House was this simple truth—that the income tax in the Eastern Region is higher than the income tax payable in the Western Region. I thought the Premier was going to refute that statement. Well, the debate before you, Sir, is in respect of income tax and Government has cleverly dragged in the question of rates. Government was interested in defining rates and taxes.

Now, Sir, our point is that we are urging the Government to grant a substantial reduction in income tax to the people of the Eastern Region. In this regard I have to quote from page 65 of the Report of the Fiscal Commission which says:

"The figures given for the West include an element for rates payable on income under the Local Government Law, but in all cases liability to education or property rates has been ignored."

[Mr E. O. Eyo]

Now, Sir, will Government then accept this suggestion that we be allowed to pay the income tax payable in the Western Region? We are arguing a case against high income tax which has been proved to be the highest in the whole of the Federation. The debates should narrow down to income tax and nothing more. The Government is trying to confuse the issue. I do not know how many people in my constituency earn £1,000. Parliamentary Secretaries earn £1,500 and they are asking us to reduce their own tax. We are more concerned with the people at home. We are begging Government not to adopt the attitude that the Premier has already adopted. Government promised to introduce Free Primary Education, and because of that everybody in the Region accepted this new income tax, but Sir, is it fair to promise the people of the Region free primary education in return for new income tax and then turn round and abolish the Free Primary Education Scheme? However, let the Regional Government decide once and for all whether they are going to grant tax relief to the people of this Region. If so, it should be right from the bottom.

We are concerned more with the lower income group. 1.5 per cent of our population pay tax and 1.2 per cent fall under the group that we are fighting for. So that it is rather confusing for the Premier to be talking about rates imposed by Local Government Councils. Let the Government mind its own business. They are not concerned with Local Government rates. The Councils have not been consulted before Government decided to impose these taxes. The Councils consulted their own people on 15s rate and 10s bicycle licence and the people agreed to pay the levies. What concerns the Premier and his Government now is relief in the income tax. We are appealing to the Premier and his Ministers—there used to be a time when we regarded the Premier as a Socialist, (*Laughter*) but I really do not know whether he still lays claim to that. I want to remind him of the old days when he claimed to be a socialist.

The Government should reconsider the matter. I am appealing to the Government as this is a very important matter. If they are making any reductions, they should be substantial. If they are granting a reduction let everybody enjoy the reduction. But as the

case is now, Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries will have their reductions while the voters, the workers, have none. Sir, the Parliamentary Secretaries, I understand, will benefit most. I want all of them to remember the people who sent them here, and I hope that when the Members think of the interest of the bulk of the tax-payers of the Region they will support the amendment that we are proposing.

The Premier (Dr N. Azikiwe): On point of order, Mr Chairman. Standing Order No. 14. The Opposition Chief Whip has left the House under the impression that it is in this Schedule to reduce the tax of Ministers. That is not true. If you look at the Schedule you will see that there has been no change whatever; no change suggested.

Mr M. E. Ogon (Ikom Division): Mr Chairman, I would like to be very brief. The hon. Chief Whip of the Opposition made the suggestion that we should adopt the Western Region tax model. I do not think this is a proper thing to do. Our tax law was passed in 1956. Shortly after that we had a general election in the Eastern Region in which the tax proposals of the Government of the Eastern Region were laid before the electorate. At the same time Members of the Opposition put forward their own views which were identical with the Western Regional Government's proposals. The electorate returned the N.C.N.C. Government to power thereby demonstrating conclusively that it accepted our own model.

The next thing I would like to say is in connection with the words "rate" and "income tax". Members of the Opposition are inclined to confuse these words. The distinction between the two words is clear. If we refer to annual income of £3,000, which is the same thing that both the Eastern Regional and Western Regional Ministers receive, we will see that the Eastern Regional Ministers pay more tax and are therefore making more sacrifice. Again, if one looks at the lower income group one will appreciate that the Eastern Region rate of income tax, which is £1 10s, is the lowest anywhere in the Federation of Nigeria so that our Government need not reduce the tax of the ordinary man. Hon. Members will agree that our Government is more reasonable and sympathetic than the Western Regional Government.

So we are very sympathetic, very compassionate. We say to the ordinary people, "We will tax the capitalist and then we will tax you very low".

The next point we would like to make is that there is really a substantial reduction in the Minister's amendment and I feel that the hon. Minister of Finance deserves our thanks rather than our criticism. If you take the figures of the hon. Minister of Finance, whereas a man on £200 was formerly paying £12 10s, by this amendment he is going to pay £8 15s, a tax relief of £3 15s. Well, if you take a man on £400, whereas he was hitherto paying £37 10s he is now going to pay £26 5s, a tax relief of £11 5s. If you take the income of £600, whereas formerly the man was paying £62 10s, he is going to pay £43 15s, a tax relief of £18 15s. Our submission, Sir, is that the reduction is substantial and the hon. Minister of Finance very well deserves our praise.

Again, Sir, I will refrain my statement from the sheet the Action Group chief put into our boxes. I will not bother to quote from that because today is the 1st of April and that sheet is meant to be "April Fool". It was a very clever thing, I saw "tax extract from the income tax law, Western Region", and I thought it was by the Minister of Finance, but then I turned round the gallery and saw it was 1st of April and I said: "Oh, it is April Fool". So, Sir, these papers were cyclostyled in the Western Region. They were cyclostyled in Ibadan by Lawani.

Mr Ikoku: Just an explanation about what the hon. Government Chief Whip has said.

The Chairman: Standing Order 14. It is a case of whether the Member speaking will yield.

Mr Ogon: I refuse to yield.

Mr Ikoku: It is not a question of being heard a second time. It is a question of explanation. The papers were cyclostyled in the Clerk's office this morning. I submitted them myself.

The Chairman: I do not think the hon. Member should take the advantage of

continuing his speech. My own decision is that Standing Order 14 is correct.

Mr Ogon: What we are saying is that actually these papers were meant as an election stunt; but it has been done in a wrong way and savours of political dishonesty. The people of this Region should be grateful to the hon. Minister of Finance. His income tax proposal is an incentive to effort; as a matter of fact, we owe him much gratitude.

Hear what the Fiscal Commissioners said about the tax law. They said—the basis of charge on tax is residence. They further said—Africans resident in the Western Region are liable to regional income tax since the 1st April, 1957. Assessments are also made on the incomes of Africans resident in the other regions and resident in the Western Region. So that if my Friend, the hon. Eronini, is resident in the Western Region, or in the Eastern Region, what happens in the Western Region is that he will have to pay tax in the West, pay tax in the East, and in fact pay tax in the whole regions of the country.

I now turn to the report on Capitation Tax Law. Look at what the Commissioners said about that law. They said—the system of capitation tax has worked well. That is what they said about that. They further said—the Inland Revenue Department is still at the initial stage of development. The taxes they collect are considerably below the regional estimates so that the Inland Revenue Department is inefficient.

It is not true also to say that the Councils in this Region want to collect revenue themselves. In Opofo there were tax arrears of £13,000 and the Council had to get the Police to get these arrears paid. My hon. Friend the Member for Opofo ran away when this trouble developed.

Now, I will show another political irresponsibility on the part of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition stood up to say that he wants tax to be reduced by 19 per cent. Here is Her Majesty's accredited Opposition that may come over to this side of the House at any possible time. Now, what the Leader of the Opposition is suggesting is that the Government should depart from their traditional way of Local Government finance.

[MR OGON]

That is the issue but we have presented to them a development programme.

The challenge to them is how they can proceed with our Development Programme with all their proposed cuts. That is the issue. We have presented to them the Development Programme. We are prepared to spend the sum of £22 millions on development throughout the Eastern Region. If they were on this side of the House and had 32 per cent cut on all income tax, perhaps they would have to tell the people of this Region how they hoped to govern, and unless they did that, they would have to be condemned by the people of the Region and by history for the greatest example of political irresponsibility.

Dr W. N. Onubogu (Onitsha Division):

Mr Chairman, Sir, I say that the Government Chief Whip was not very serious when he suggested that as today is 1st of April, this Motion should be regarded as a joke. I am saying, Sir, that the Motion is quite clear. As a matter of fact, when the Premier dragged in this question of rates, I thought that you could have ruled him out of order. We are discussing taxes. (*Interruptions*). As I speak, Sir, I have the common man before me. I am still saying, Sir, that the Premier, in all the clever way he puts it, has not controverted the statement by the Leader of the Opposition. Out of 1.5 million people who are liable to pay tax, 3,172 come under Income Group below £60. That is a fact that we cannot doubt. What our workers and our people are interested to know is whether their tax has been reduced. That is the main point. All these figures that hon. Members are presenting do not help us at all. These figures do not interest the people in the villages. What they want to know is whether their tax has been reduced or not. I am saying, Sir, that the hon. Premier comes from the same Division with me and he knows very well that people complain of high taxation.

I am saying, Sir, our people groan because the impact of our tax is very heavy and he (the Premier) knows. Who doubts the fact that people complain about heavy taxation? If not, why make the reduction at all? I agree with the Leader of the Opposition who said that it is a very good gesture, but what of our people who

pay the tax? We are talking about tax and not about rates. The question of rates was by agreement between the Local Council and the people concerned. What is imposed by the Government is what we are discussing now.

When the Leader of the Opposition introduced this it was he who actually showed you the fact. Let us forget the question of rates and face tax on personal income. When we talk of rice we talk of yam because they are all food. We shall all go back and tell the people that they do not want to make any reduction of tax.

I am saying that the Premier knows that the whole trouble... (*Interruption—Why the Premier?*) Because he comes from my own constituency. Mr Chairman, I am saying that the whole machinery of tax collection is grossly inefficient in the Eastern Region. Unless they are able to re-examine their machinery for collection of tax (*Interruption*).

The Chairman: Order, Order.

Dr Onubogu: I am saying, Sir, that because the machinery is wrong that is why tax is not collected. Tax evaders will continue to escape from tax unless the machinery is revised but even at that, the bulk of the people who pay tax are saying that the Government must reduce the tax. The Government is certainly playing with fire. We are going back home to tell the people the difference between taxes and rates. Mine is reduced. I earn above a thousand pounds but there are people who earn below £60; these people have not been considered.

An hon. Member: What about the D.P.N.C.?

Dr Onubogu: The D.P.N.C. will go to the people and explain to them. I hope, Mr Chairman, that you will allow Members to speak out their minds, Division by Division, so that the Government's coffin will be finally nailed.

The Attorney-General (Mr M. O. Ajegbo): Mr Chairman, I wish to make a point of law. The Premier had said earlier on that the tax paid by the smaller income groups in the East is smaller than what their counterparts pay in

the West. And a distinction was being made by the Opposition that income and rates are quite different things. Rates are different only in so far as they are paid to Local Government bodies, but both tax and rates stem from income. It is the same people who pay tax and rates in the long run. I would like to quote from the Western Region Law, in order to make the point clear:

Section 135 of the Local Government Law, 1957 (W.R. No. 12 of 1957)—Systems of rating—reads:—

“For the purposes of this Law there shall be three systems of rating, namely—

- (a) upon income, assessed in accordance with sections 138 to 153;
- (b) upon tenements, assessed in accordance with sections 154 to 164;
- (c) on a capitation basis, assessed in accordance with sections 165 and 166.”

Section 138—Rates upon income—reads:—

“(1) A rate upon income may be imposed upon all African individuals resident, during the year of assessment for which the system is adopted, in the area subject to the rate or upon any class of such individuals.

(2) Subject to the provisions of subsection (1) of this section, where a rating authority adopts the system of rating upon income, it shall specify the persons or classes of persons liable to that rate.

(3) Subject to the provisions of this Law, the rate shall be payable for each year of assessment upon the income of every person liable thereto, accruing in or derived from the Region in respect of—

- (a) gains or profits from any trade, business, profession or vocation for whatever period of time such trade, business profession or vocation may have been carried on or exercised;
- (b) the gains or profits from any employment or office;
- (c) dividends, investments or discounts;
- (d) any pension, charge or annuity;
- (e) rents, royalties, premiums and any other profits arising from property.”

Now, I would like my hon. Friend, the Leader of the Opposition, to compare the provisions with those of the Western Region Income Tax Law, 1957 (No. 16 of 1957) and he will find that the basis of imposition is the same.

Section 8 of the Income Tax Law, 1957, reads:—

“(1) Tax shall, subject to the provisions of this Law, be charged for each year of assessment at the rate hereinafter specified—

- (a) upon the income of any person in any Region or the Southern Cameroons accruing in or derived from the Western Region; and
- (b) upon the income of any person resident in or derived from any other Region or the Southern Cameroons.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1) of this section “income” shall mean income in respect of—

- (a) gains or profits from any trade, business, profession or vocation, for whatever period of time such trade, business, profession or vocation may have been carried on or exercised;
- (b) gains or profits from any employment of office including any allowance paid or payable in money to or on behalf of an employee or office-holder, other than in respect of medical or dental expenses or any passage to or from Nigeria;
- (c) dividends, interests or discounts;
- (d) any pension, charge or annuity;
- (e) rents, royalties, premiums and any other profits arising from property.”

I am to say that the rates we pay in the East in the lower income group are much lower than what they pay in the West.

Mr S. T. Akpan (Eket Division): Mr Chairman, I would like to tell you at the onset that all the law, and letters that are read on this issue, are not interesting to my people at home. The fact is that even the Attorney-General

[MR AKPAN]

himself knows that there is a reduction in his income tax. He knows that there is a reduction on his own but he himself is explaining law. He can do whatever he likes with the letters, we are not bothered about them. We are talking on the fact that if there is a reduction, this reduction should go to all classes of tax-payers.

Now, Mr Chairman, it is true this has shown us the extent to which this Government bears the welfare of the masses. And again, it shows us in the words of the Minister of Finance that his opportunity budget, as he says, has given the masses of this Region the opportunity to know how the Government think on this tax issue, and is giving the masses the opportunity to express their feelings in the language that the Government would understand. But I think, Sir, this Government has traded much on the ignorance of the masses. They are not right. What justice is there if the Government reduces taxes for those who have but not for those who have not. It is a political hypocrisy.

It should be remembered that all buy from the same market. Government has not established separate markets for these lower income groups; rather they have increased the prices of goods.

The people buy from the same market with them but because of fear, they are reluctant to say so. They have cleverly excluded some classes of people from the rebate yet they say the Government is a benevolent one. What type of benevolent Government is it?

Sir, in 1956 they introduced this Tax Law and what happened? The Minister who sends his son to school, say in standard six, pays £6 a year as any other person. The point is that many of them do not marry; they keep on running about (*Laughter*).

The Chairman: I beg to draw the attention of the hon. Member to Standing Order 25 (5): "It shall be out of order to use offensive and insulting language about Members of the House."

Mr Akpan: I withdraw, Sir. I do so on your instruction but I am not wrong.

The point is this, Sir, many of them do not have children whereas these people in the lower income groups have some two or three children and send all of them to school. They have to pay for their fees and are bearing the burden of training them in school. Some have two or three children in standard five or six: why then should the benevolent Government consider the higher income group and not these people?

An hon. Member: It is not true.

Mr Akpan: It is true. There should be no increase whatsoever. No single group of people should be let out. It would be very wrong for us to come here, in this hon. House, to debate how much rate our people should pay. Therefore the Attorney-General should tell us that and we cannot accept it. We do not come here to debate rates. It is for the District Councils to take care of rates and if the District Councils are prepared, after all the Local Government law stipulates that if there must be any increase in rates, the people must be consulted—they can increase rates. Therefore if the rate in the Eastern Region is barely 15s, that is the desire of the people at home. What we are concerned with in this House is to see that Government reconsider their stand on this issue and provide a general reduction for all classes and then this reduction should go chiefly to the people on the lower rung of income. This is our contention, and not to introduce rates to confuse the House.

Sir, at the moment, the present rate of taxes that we have here, according to this Schedule, means nothing but the Government's intention to milk and bilk the people of this Region and, therefore, we are in duty bound to oppose that as far as we are concerned. We strongly oppose this system and I am supporting the amendment to the motion.

The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke): Mr Chairman, I rise to oppose the amendment made by the Opposition. The essence of the amendment proposed by the Leader of the Opposition is, I think, just the design to confuse the people of this Region as they did during the U.P.E. period. It is extremely surprising to me that after listening to my Budget Speech on the reasons for bringing this amendment in the

House, respectable Gentlemen, like the Leader of the Opposition, despite his knowledge of Economics, will get up in this House merely to stir the people of this Region.

Many speakers who spoke before me from this side of the House have, of course, argued the case for me very fully but just to lay emphasis, I would like to make my own points. Firstly, I would like to repeat a section in my Budget Speech. With your permission, Mr Chairman, I quote:—

“In case my hon. Friends opposite should wish to confuse this very plain issue, I must point out that these figures include for the West, and do not include for the East, an allowance for a general rate imposed by Local Government bodies; since the maximum general rate in this Region is 15s, our rates for the lowest income groups are still lower than those in the West, even when the maximum of 15s is subtracted from the differences that I have just quoted. For the higher incomes, however, our tax is higher—and in general this is right.

The reason for bringing this amendment into the House is not to reduce the taxes of the masses who are in the lower income group, which are already lower than in the Western Region. I think the people of this Region are sensible enough to understand the principle behind the question of this amendment, no matter what politics they try to play up to the gallery in this hon. House. A lot of play has been made on the question of the difference between rates and taxes. This has already been defined by the hon. Attorney-General.

I would like to refer to page 63, paragraph 5 of the Report of the Fiscal Commission, which says:

“Since 1952 divisional, district and local councils have been developed in the Western Region. They are now financed mainly by a system of rating and by grants from the Regional Government particularly in respect of primary education, the Regional Government bearing something like 70 per cent of the recurrent cost of primary education. The rates are not progressive and are based

on an assessment of gross income carried out by local committees, on a valuation of property, or on a uniform rate *per capita*. All persons resident in the Region, other than non-Africans assessed under the Federal Income Tax Ordinance, are therefore subject to assessment by the local government councils, which are assisted in the work of income tax assessment by the Regional Department of Inland Revenue . . .”

The point here is that the Regional Government does the assessment for these rates.

In any case, Mr Chairman, I really do not see what point they are making. There is no Government in this world that introduces tax system and ignores the question of rates. In building up a tax system Government must take into consideration the question of rates. I was also surprised that when the Leader of the Opposition thought of making some amendments suggesting thirty-three and half per cent cut, and so on and so forth, in spite of the fact that he had ample time since he made the statement in the air that he would reduce tax if he was in power he did not even bother to work out what that reduction meant. He suggested that the lower income group be reduced by thirty-three and half per cent. It will come to about £½ million and which is a very big slice out of our Budget. The Leader of the Opposition should have told us how he intended to balance the Budget and to carry out all the programmes put before him. I want to say also that my Friends on the Opposite side have been contradicting themselves. They have said in one breath that it is because pressure was brought to bear on us that we are making this amendment. On the other hand they accuse us for not making any amendment for the lower income group. I would like them to tell me whether the pressure from the lower income group—from 1.2 million people—will be greater than the pressure from the higher income group consisting of only a few hundreds of people. We definitely would have reduced the tax of the lower income group. Government acted out of humanitarian feelings and to consider the bachelors and the married without children and so forth who are at the present time heavily burdened, they are the people considered. We were only motivated by this burden upon these few people. I also want to refute the point that we do not have any relief for our income tax group. We

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

107

[*Variations to the Schedules*

1 APRIL 1959

to the Finance Law, 1956]

108

[DR IMOKE]

have reliefs for every group—family relief. There is also relief on premiums paid on Life Insurance which is not the case in the Western Region.

As I said before, this amendment is only meant to play politics and so I oppose it very strongly.

Question put—Committee divided.

Ayes 16, Noes 58

Division No. 1

Ayes

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

2.15 p.m.

Mr E. O. Eyo
Mr S. G. Ikoku
Mr O. O. Ita
Chief I. I. Morphy
Dr W. N. Onubogu
Mr A. G. Umoh
Mr M. N. Yowika

Tellers for the Ayes:

Mr A. J. Ekpe
Mr V. K. Onyeri

Noes

Mr C. A. Abangwu
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 I. U. Akpabio
Mr D. O. Aligwekwe
Mr S. N. Alo
Mr J. W. E. Anaba
Mr R. O. Anoke
Mr N. L. P. Apreala
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
Chief J. H. E. Nwuke
Dr A. N. Obonna
Mr M. E. Ogon
Mr C. A. Okafor
Mr J. O. Okeh
Mr G. E. Okeke
Mr P. N. Okeke
Mr O. Oketa
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.

Main Question put. Committee divided.

Ayes 59. Noes 16.

Division Number 2.

2.25 p.m.

Ayes

Mr C. A. Abangwu
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 I. U. Akpabio
Mr D. O. Aligwekwe
Mr S. N. Alo
Mr J. W. E. Anaba
Mr R. O. Anoke
Mr N. L. P. Apreala
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
Chief 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 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 Ayes:

Mr K. Kiri
Mr J. E. Eyo.

Noes

Mr S. O. Achara
Mr J. A. Agba
Mr S. T. Akpan
Chief S. J. Amachree
Rev. O. Efiog, C.B.E.
Mr J. A. Etuhube
Mr M. U. Etuk

Mr E. O. Eyo
Mr S. G. Ikoku
Mr O. O. Ita
Chief I. I. Morphy
Dr W. N. Onubogu
Mr A. G. Umoh
Mr M. N. Yowika

Tellers for the Noes:

Mr A. J. Ekpe
Mr V. K. Onyeri.

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

111

[Variations to the Schedules

1 APRIL 1959

to the Finance Law, 1956]

112

The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):
Mr Chairman, I beg to move:
"That this Committee resolve that the
Fifth Schedule to the Finance Law, 1956,

be revoked, and that it be replaced by the
following schedule with effect from the 1st
day of April, 1959:—

THE FIFTH SCHEDULE

		<i>Single Persons</i>	<i>Married Persons with no Children</i>	<i>Married Persons with not more than 2 Children</i>	<i>Married Persons with 3 or more Children</i>
		s d	s d	s d	s d
FIRST PART: WEEKLY EMOLUMENTS					
Under £1 3s 0d		0 7	0 6	0 6	0 5
£ s d	£ s d				
1 3 0 or over, but under	1 7 0 ...	0 9	0 8	0 7	0 6
1 7 0 or over, but under	1 11 0 ...	0 10	0 9	0 8	0 7
1 11 0 or over, but under	1 15 0 ...	1 0	0 11	0 9	0 8
1 15 0 or over, but under	1 18 0 ...	1 2	1 0	0 10	0 9
1 18 0 or over, but under	2 2 0 ...	1 4	1 2	1 0	0 10
2 2 0 or over, but under	2 6 0 ...	1 5	1 3	1 1	0 11
2 6 0 or over, but under	2 10 0 ...	1 7	1 5	1 2	1 0
2 10 0 or over, but under	2 14 0 ...	1 9	1 6	1 3	1 1
2 14 0 or over, but under	2 18 0 ...	1 10	1 8	1 5	1 2
2 18 0 or over, but under	3 2 0 ...	2 1	1 10	1 6	1 3
3 2 0 or over, but under	3 5 0 ...	2 4	2 0	1 8	1 4
3 5 0 or over, but under	3 9 0 ...	2 7	2 2	1 10	1 6
3 9 0 or over, but under	3 13 0 ...	2 10	2 4	2 0	1 8
3 13 0 or over, but under	3 17 0 ...	3 1	2 8	2 2	1 9
SECOND PART: MONTHLY EMOLUMENTS					
Under £5 0s 0d		2 6	2 3	2 1	1 10
£ s d	£ s d				
5 0 0 or over, but under	5 16 8 ...	3 1	2 10	2 6	2 2
5 16 8 or over, but under	6 13 4 ...	3 9	3 4	2 11	2 6
6 13 4 or over, but under	7 10 0 ...	4 4	3 10	3 4	2 10
7 10 0 or over, but under	8 6 8 ...	5 0	4 4	3 9	3 1
8 6 8 or over, but under	9 3 4 ...	5 7	4 11	4 2	3 5
9 3 4 or over, but under	10 0 0 ...	6 3	5 5	4 7	3 9
10 0 0 or over, but under	10 16 8 ...	6 10	6 0	5 0	4 2
10 16 8 or over, but under	11 13 4 ...	7 6	6 8	5 6	4 7
11 13 4 or over, but under	12 10 0 ...	8 1	7 3	6 0	5 0
12 10 0 or over, but under	13 6 8 ...	9 2	7 11	6 7	5 5
13 6 8 or over, but under	14 3 4 ...	10 2	8 9	7 1	5 10
14 3 4 or over, but under	15 0 0 ...	11 3	9 3	7 11	6 5
15 0 0 or over, but under	15 16 8 ...	12 3	10 5	8 9	7 1
15 16 8 or over, but under	16 13 4 ...	13 4	11 5	9 7	7 8

This motion is a necessary complement to the resolution dealing with the First Schedule which the House has just passed. The Fifth Schedule specifies the rates of tax which are payable under the Revenue Stamp Card system by daily-rated employees who pay tax by means of stamps stuck on a card by their employer when he pays the wages. It is necessary to

specify the amount of the monthly stamp, in the case of a money wage payment, or the weekly stamp, in the case of a weekly payment. These figures are in each case one-twelfth or one-fifty-second, as the case may be, of the figures for a full year's salary, and a full year's tax; the table is therefore purely an arithmetical convenience. Hon. Members will note that it

goes up only to a figure of weekly and monthly wage which corresponds to an annual salary of £200 a year; this is because daily-rated employees never to my knowledge receive wages higher than the equivalent of £200 a year (mostly their wages are far less) and it is therefore unnecessary to extend any further this particular table, which applies only to daily-rated employees taxed under the Revenue Stamp Card System.

Mr Chairman, I beg to move.

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported.

(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)

The Minister of Finance: Mr Speaker, I beg to report that a Committee of the whole

House has passed the following resolutions: That the First Schedule of the Finance Law 1956 be revoked and that it be replaced by the new Schedule and that the Fifth Schedule 1956 be revoked and that it be replaced by a new Fifth Schedule.

Question: That the House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolutions, put and agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

And it being after 2.30 p.m., Mr Speaker adjourned the House without Question put pursuant to Standing Order 4 (4).

Adjourned accordingly at sixteen minutes to three o'clock p.m.

EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 2nd April, 1959

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

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

PAPER

Presented:

House of Chiefs in the Eastern Region (Eastern Region Official Document No. 1 of 1959). (The Premier).

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(1) The University of Nigeria

(Provisional Council) (Amendment)
Bill

Order for Second Reading read.

The Premier (Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe):

Mr Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to amend the University of Nigeria (Provisional Council) Law, 1959, be now read a Second time.

This Bill is a perfectly simple and straightforward one. It is designed to do the following things:

First, to set a limit to the number of members of the Provisional Council.

Secondly, to give the Minister some measure of control so that he can require the Provisional Council to keep proper accounts, to present an Annual Report and so forth. As will be obvious to hon. Members, this is necessary in the early stages, whilst the preliminary plans for the University are being drawn up. It is obviously necessary, for example, to ensure that the Council does not make plans for a University which are far beyond the financial resources of this Government and of the funds supplied by the Marketing Board.

Thirdly, this Bill is designed to give the Provisional Council power to co-opt members as necessary. This is important in order to enable them to call in academic experts, as recommended by the Cook-Taggart Report, which was published as a White Paper and

laid on the Table of this House as Eastern Regional Official Document No. 4 of 1958. Much expert academic advice will be needed in the planning of the Faculties and in surveying the needs of this Region and of Nigeria, which the University is designed to meet.

Mr Speaker, I would like to emphasise that the Provisional Council is intended to be, as the name suggests, an interim arrangement only. Its members are being appointed for a period of two years. There is no intention of fettering in any way the exercise of full academic freedom. As soon as the University is established and teaching starts, the Provisional Council will be replaced by a properly constituted Council of the University of Nigeria, which will have full freedom, just as much as the Council of the University College, Ibadan.

Finally, hon. Members may wish to know what progress is being made with the appointment of members of this Provisional Council. I can say this. The Provisional Council is in process of being formed at this moment, and we are now waiting for replies to letters which have been written making offers to the Inter-University Council and the International Co-operation Administration, inviting them to nominate one member each to represent them on the Provisional Council. Before this hon. House adjourns at the end of this present meeting, I hope to be able to make an announcement informing the House of the names of the members of the Provisional Council.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move. (Applause).

The Minister of Production (Dr M. I. Okpara): Sir, I beg to second.

Question proposed.

Mr E. O. Eyo (Uyo Division): Mr Speaker, the House is fully aware of the attitude of the Opposition to this project of the University of Nigeria. The amending Bill seeks certain things for the Provisional Council which the hon. Premier has said will be an interim measure. May I say that all along, we on this side of the House have regarded this project as a personal affair of the Premier. I say this because the project is a result of one of the recommendations of the Economic Mission undertaken by the Premier and Mr

Ojukwu early in 1954. That is a fact and you will observe, Sir, that all along, it has exclusively been the duty of the Premier to handle this subject.

We would have thought that the Minister of Education would have been the proper person to handle this project. You will observe, Sir, that under clause 2 of the Amending Bill that the Minister who will be in charge of this Provisional Council will not be the Minister of Education; it will be somebody who will be charged with the responsibility for the University of Nigeria. We just want to know how much the Ministers and the Parliamentary Secretaries know about this project. If they know everything, well I hope they will support the suggestion that this project be now placed under the portfolio of the Minister of Education. We want that and we only want, Sir, to erase certain impressions from our minds. The Premier should hands-off this project which we regard as a personal affair of the Premier and allow the Minister of Education to take charge of this project.

May I draw your attention to what is contained in His Excellency's Speech at page 5, paragraph 22. It reads:

"They recommended that the hon. the Premier and certain advisers should study at first hand the administration and organisation of British universities, and should pay a visit to Michigan State University and other land-grant universities in the United States in order to observe the application of the principles of higher education to the problems and needs of the areas which such higher institutions serve."

Here again, Sir, we have evidence to show that it is the Premier who is in the forefront of this project. Why must it be the Premier who is to take advisers to the United States of America and particularly to Michigan State University? Take, for instance, the University College of Ibadan; it is placed directly under the Federal Minister of Education. This is an educational institution which should have been placed under the portfolio of the Minister of Education.

I shall now proceed to discuss the Bill which seeks to empower the Minister to give to the Provisional Council directions of a general or specific character; and what is of more importance to us, Sir, is, to vest the Minister with power to appoint auditors for this Provisional Council.

Now, Sir, the normal practice is for a corporate body like this, or the Marketing Board or any Statutory Corporation, to be vested with power to appoint auditors subject to the approval of the Minister; but to vest the Minister, in the first instance, with power to decide on who should be auditors to this Provisional Council is not acceptable to us. And more, Sir, Clause 22 provides that money standing to the credit of the Council may from time to time be invested in securities and later on the Council may sell any or all of such securities.

Now, Sir, you may be aware of the history of the financing of this university project. The East Regional Marketing Board has undertaken to make available to the University a sum of half a million pounds a year spread over ten years. That will amount to £5 million, and already, £2 million has been set aside for this purpose. I draw your attention to the Development Programme 1958/62, that is the Official Document No. 2 of 1959 at page 10 paragraph 30—

"The financial years of the Eastern Regional Marketing Board end on 31st December; and by the year ended 31st December, 1958, the total amount reserved in the accounts of the Marketing Board for this purpose was £2,000,000.

Is it being seriously suggested that Government will, as a matter of policy, urge the Regional Marketing Board to hand over this £2 million to this *ad hoc* body to be known as the Provisional Council? What is the whole idea behind the proposal to authorise this body to invest this money in securities, and then at a later stage to sell these securities? I really consider it a very serious matter.

You remember, Sir, that in 1955, when the Eastern Region Finance Corporation decided to release £2 million offered by the Marketing Board this Region suffered a very heavy loss over the sale of these securities

[Mr E. O. Eyo]

in London to make money available to the Finance Corporation. We would not like to see this happen again. Government should consider this very seriously. If the Provisional Council wants money surely it would be at liberty to call for money at any time. To propose that the reserved sum of £2 million made up to the 31st of December, 1958, would be made available to this Provisional Council and that this Council would be empowered to invest this amount in securities is what we cannot support. At short notice money invested in Treasury Bills could be redeemed. Is it going to a trading concern? What we are trying to avoid is that this so-called Provisional Council should not meddle with this large sum of money which belongs to the farmers.

If the Council wants money, Government should direct that money be made available from time to time to it. I know, Sir, some Ministers will try to make reference to other laws of the Region. In the case of an established Statutory Corporation, there is no harm vesting the Corporation with power to invest money in securities; but the point I am making, Sir, is that the Council is an *ad hoc* body according to the Premier.

The Premier: I did not say that.

Mr E. O. Eyo: I thought I heard him say that the Council was to be an *ad hoc* body and that he was drawing his example from that of the University College, Ibadan.

Well, Sir, our objection is against vesting this Council with power to invest money in securities and later to sell these securities.

Mr S. O. Achara: (Okigwi Division): Mr Speaker, I think that the matter raised by the Opposition Chief Whip is such that does not call for comment whatsoever. I want to say this, Sir, that it is in the interest of the Premier himself, I repeat, in the interest of the Premier himself, that he should hands-off the affairs of this University and transfer the entire responsibility to the Minister of Education. It is interesting, Mr Speaker, that this Government has got several schemes, such as the Rural Water Scheme Project.

It will also be interesting to note, Sir, that the rigorous road policy of the Government has been suffering delay and nothing has happened to it. Why is it that of all the projects that the Government has, the Premier only talks of taking over and controlling—under his portfolio—the University of Nigeria project? Mr Speaker, I have said this advisedly in his own interest because there are stories about this University.

Several hon. Members: Tell us the stories.

Mr E. O. Eyo: On a point of Order, Sir. May I draw your attention to Standing Order 27 (5).

Mr Achara: I was saying, Sir, that it is in his own interest that all these side stories about the University should not continue and that he should hands-off and transfer the responsibility to the Minister of Education.

Government supporters: Transfer it to Mr Achara.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Works (Mr R. O. Anoke): On point of Order, Sir, may I refer you to Standing Order 25 paragraph 2:

“A member must confine his observations to the subject under discussion and may not introduce matter irrelevant thereto.”

Mr Speaker: Mr Achara, please continue.

Mr Achara: Mr Speaker, thank you. After all, these back-benchers have no jobs.

The next point, Sir, is that, as the Opposition Chief Whip has said, there is no need whatsoever for the sum of £2 million to be made available right away to this *ad hoc* Committee. As he has rightly said, Government with their Marketing Board and all their agencies can at any time they require twenty, thirty or forty thousand pounds call for such sum of money to be made available to the so-called University Provisional Council. I am not even sure, Sir, that this so-called Provisional Council is capable of handling this £2 million. And as regards investment, even if this were a statutory body and they came to this House to

ask this hon. House to give such statutory body the permission to invest money, we on this side would oppose such investment.

The Minister of Production (Dr M. I. Okpara): What will be the fate of the Opposition?

Mr Achara: We do not care. We shall oppose that bearing in mind what has happened to similar investments in this Region. This is not a Government that can be trusted to invest public money wisely.

Several hon. Members: What of the "Greater Tomorrow" affair?

Mr Achara: Take action if you are not satisfied. We shall also call for the account of the £13,000 of the Pan-Nigeria/London Delegation of 1947.

Mr Speaker: Order! Order! I would like the hon. Member to develop his arguments. This House should not be used for exchanging words. Please develop your argument.

Mr Achara: Mr Speaker, Sir, when hon. Members on the Government Bench raise side issues which are controversial and they are not replied to, the impression will be left that those issues are true. For that reason, they have got to be replied to. The intention, Sir, is to make it impossible for me to tell them what I know. We cannot allow this sum of £2 million to go to this so-called Provisional Council or to allow the Government to go and invest the money unwisely. The affairs of the investment of £2 million from the Marketing Board through the Finance Corporation in 1955 into the African Continental Bank have not inspired any confidence in anybody to rely upon this Government undertaking any further investments. It is inefficient, incapable and unreliable and thus we do not want to trifle with public money.

The question of asking a Minister to appoint auditors to audit the accounts of the so-called Provisional Council is unacceptable to the people of this Region. We want the Provisional Council, when it is properly set up, to be free from any Ministerial control so that it will be able to appoint a reputable firm of auditors to audit the accounts of this University. I think

these are the points I want to stress and to make it certain that on these issues we are not going to budge at all.

Finally, Sir, let the Premier of this Region transfer everything about this University to the appropriate body and thus remove the impression that is now circulating everywhere.

The Minister of Commerce (Mr J. U. Nwodo): On point of order, Sir, I refer the House to Standing Order 25 (7). The hon. Member is giving the impression that this issue of the University of Nigeria is a personal affair of the Premier. The Premier undertook the Economic Mission just as the Premier of the Western Region undertook an Economic Mission at one time. Mr Speaker, Sir, we cannot accept the suggestion that it is the personal affair of the Premier; it is an improper motive.

Mr Speaker: I wish to remind you, hon. Members again, that this is a purely hon. House and debates must take the form of debates in an hon. House. This is not a House in which you exchange words; it is a House where you have to develop your argument. Anybody who feels he has a very sound argument to make should sit down quietly until it is his turn when he puts forward his argument. I would like this House to continue in the way that befits it. Many of the things we have just heard are not very decent for this House, and I would like hon. Members to take note of that.

The Minister of Production (Dr M. I. Okpara): Mr Speaker, I wish to preface my remarks by saying that it is most unfortunate that the Opposition continue in making unfortunate insinuations about this University. They only expose themselves to the charge that they are an irresponsible Opposition. Time has come now when we should take away foolish things from this Region. This Region is now self-governing and all these foolish pranks must stop.

Surely, Sir, the allocation of portfolios as is generally known all over the world, and known by the Members of the Opposition, is entirely the responsibility of the Premier. If he wishes, he can in fact handle all the portfolios himself and allow all the Ministers

[DR OKPARA]

to be merely advisers. If he also wishes, as has been done in other parts of the Federation, he may not handle any portfolio at all. He may just be a sort of Supervisor-General. It is entirely in his discretion to decide which and which subjects are allocated to any Minister and such elementary points should not be used to waste the valuable time of this hon. House.

If the Premier decides that the subject of the University should be in his portfolio, that is all well and good. This University is a very major project involving not just the Ministry of Education but in fact all Ministries. The University will train, we hope, Doctors, Engineers, Administrators, Surveyors, Educationists: it will train practically all the people who will man the various Departments of the Government and many other Departments are involved in this University. The Marketing Board is involved; the Ministry of Town Planning is involved; the Ministry of Education is also involved, and surely External Affairs, if we have to deal with many Universities and other Institutions of Education. And when we have a composite subject such as this, it is only reasonable that we avoid clashes between the Ministries. The Premier should handle it, and I think, in fact, it will be an error if this subject were assigned to any but to the Premier's portfolio. The analogy of the Federal Government is irrelevant because, in the first place, the Federal Government is not self-governing; so that it is still controlled by the Governor-General which is virtually not the case here. I wish to remind the Members of the Opposition that the University College at Ibadan was built before the Ministerial system of Government came into operation in this country. We are only starting now and the initial difficulty can only be properly handled by the Premier's Office. In any case, I am happy to note that the Opposition is no longer quarrelling with the building of the University. (*Hear! Hear!*). They are only quarrelling with the allocation of various portfolios in the Cabinet.

I now come to the matter of the investments in the University. There are six Provisional Councils as investment bodies and autonomous bodies and as such they are fully qualified to invest or sell their securities. Nobody would

wish, as the Opposition would, to control any public Corporation much less a University. They must be free to operate within the limit of their investments or to sell their securities. On the question of selling securities, it has an elementary and economic effect because these securities fluctuate in value even from day to day.

A wise Provisional Council will seize an opportunity at any favourable moment to sell or re-invest securities in whatever particular securities that are profitable.

The quarrel with the appointment of auditors by the Minister is again misguided. The Chief Whip of the Opposition helped to get through this House a host of Corporation Bills that a Minister should appoint the auditors to audit the accounts of the Corporation.

Mr E. O. Eyo: Where is that ?

Dr Okpara: All right, I will give you the reference: Eastern Regional Marketing Board Law, No. 5 of 1954, Section 32—"The accounts of the Board shall be audited by the auditors appointed by the Minister".

Mr E. O. Eyo: Where is that ? I ran the Government then.

Dr Okpara: Why is it that so late in the day now you think that that provision will no longer apply ?

Finally, I wish to state that this is, without doubt, the sanest Government in the Federation. We are self-governing, financially responsible, and irrevocably determined to build the University, come what may. We will not abdicate our power to an irresponsible Opposition. We are going to appoint these auditors. The Marketing Board will handover the appropriate power to the Provisional Council and no amount of imputation of improper motives will deviate us from the course we have set ourselves to. We know a lot of politics has been made out of this University; that won't help anybody now. We are going to build this University in Nsukka (*Hear! Hear!*) and I would say that within a few months, work will begin.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to support the amendment.

Mr A. G. Umoh (Enyong Division): Mr Speaker, the Bill before the House this morning is a short one and should not call for much debate, but one cannot help feeling sad at the way the Government Bench is driving the Premier, all the time, into difficulties, and it is really from this point of view that I feel I should say something this morning.

I happen to know that £2,000,000 is generally a wrong sum to give this Government to expend because it always gets into wrong channels. Today, I have seen people helping the Premier to say that there is nothing wrong with what he is about to do, and they were the very people, I know, who said that the Premier should go when he was involved in the last Tribunal. They have all become his friends today. (*Interruptions*).

I am surprised at the last speaker himself (Dr Okpara) for he was the foremost person who said: "The Premier must go; we will not dissolve this House any longer because of him". Now he is the good boy of the Premier. The Opposition was never opposed to the idea of the University as such. We are always looking for a chance of furthering our children's education, but the timing and the site are what we are quarrelling with. We cannot help telling the Government that we on this side of the House still feel that as there are thousands of our children who cannot attend the primary schools because of lack of money, it is untimely to build this University now.

I want to say why we are really very anxious about these securities. We feel that the Government is looking for a chance to divert this money into some other business. If this is not true, why does the Government not keep to the original plan of withdrawing £500,000 yearly for ten years? There is nothing to prevent the Government from getting the money from the Marketing Board at any time. We do not know why the £2 million must be invested in securities. It is our wish that the money should not be handled in that way.

Whatever I am saying here, Mr Speaker, I am saying on behalf of my people. This

money is going the wrong way. Government should listen to the Opposition when we tell them to keep to the original arrangement of getting £½ million yearly.

Mr R. O. Ukuta, M.B.E. (Nsukka Division): I support the amendment and I have to say that this House should not listen to the fallen angels (*Hear! Hear!*). I mean disgruntled men who have been removed from parliamentary office and are now falling. I know that we have a few gentlemen in the Opposition. I have to name some people. A man like Achara—let me put this to him, Mr Speaker. Mr Achara should listen. "A man who is not grateful for God's grace, will be grateful for God's hell fire". Mr Achara has no new word to give this House. Since the University issue was brought up in this House, Opposition Members have been repeating themselves to please their parties. We should come here to talk sense and not to say nonsense.

Several Opposition Members: And what are you saying?

Mr Ukuta: I am saying what I am saying.

Mr J. A. Agba (Ogoja Division): On point of Order, Mr Speaker. Standing Order 25 (2).

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

Mr Ukuta: A lean man!

Mr V. K. Onyeri (Port Harcourt Division): I protest very strongly on this irrelevancy.

Mr Speaker: Is it on a point of Order?

Mr S. T. Akpan (Eket Division): Yes. Standing Order 25 (5). It should be withdrawn. Yesterday, Sir, you ordered me to withdraw. I think my hon. Friend, Mr Ukuta, should withdraw in this case.

The Premier: On a point of order, Mr Speaker. With your permission I beg to refer to Standing Order 26 (1), which reads as follows:

"Any Member deviating from the provisions of these Standing Orders may be

[THE PREMIER]

immediately called to order by Mr Speaker or the Chairman, or by a Member rising to a point of order. A Member rising to a point of order shall simply direct attention to the point he desires to bring to notice and submit it to Mr Speaker or the Chairman for decision."

In this instance, the hon. Member has not referred or directed your attention to the point he desires to bring to your notice.

Mr Speaker: Has the hon. Member any point of order to make ?

Mr Akpan: Yes Sir, Standing Order 25 (5).

Mr Speaker: I do not think that your point of order comes within that part of the Standing Orders.

Mr Ukuta: I have not much to say to the House. Hon. Members on that side of the House—I mean the Opposition Bench—can always stir my feelings when I try to keep to myself. The amendment is a straight-forward one, but the Opposition Bench will always cavil at anything or nothing. Mr Speaker, without belabouring the House, I beg to support the amendment.

Dr A. N. Obonna (Owerri Division): Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the amendment Bill. In doing so, I want to lay stress on what the Opposition has said on this matter. In fact, I expected the Opposition to tell this hon. House what was wrong in the Bill; whether it was a strange innovation to introduce a Provisional Council or whether it was strange to vest power in it for the efficient running of the University. I expected them to tell us that such a Council never existed anywhere in the world. So far, they have failed to prove their case and one sees them side-tracking the issue and bringing in personal feelings. Some of them have gone to the extent of saying that it is the personal affair of the Premier. How on earth could it be the personal affair of the Premier? Everybody in this House should support this Bill. I do think that the decision for a University cannot be the personal affair of an individual.

Another question is that some of them sought to know why it should be in the hands

of the Premier. The captain should see where the defences are weak and take steps to balance squarely. On the other hand, Sir, the hon. Member for Okigwi Division (Mr Achara) has said in this House that this Government has not proved to be efficient to handle the investment. I want to put it to him that he will in due course support the financial policy of this Government. (*Hear! Hear!*). We shall stand by our words. I want to say that since the D.P.N.C. has come into being there is no corner in this Region that they have not got to in order to disseminate false propaganda. The people have supported the University project so that the Opposition must understand now that it is the wish of the people of this Region to establish this University. The Government will not give them the right to run against that University. We know right from the start about their support of the University. They want to live to understand that the minority will have its say but the majority will have its way.

Mr M. U. Etuk (Uyo Division): Mr Speaker, I have listened with pains to Members and I profoundly regret to hear even somebody of ability like the Minister of Production calling the Opposition irresponsible. It is a well-known fact that whenever a man is speaking with threats he is actually firing another person to do something bad. It seems that most of the Members are not serious on this matter. They only talk and talk. They want to be heard; but what the Opposition is calling the attention of the Government to is something of great significance. Be serious! listen in order to help Government to rule better. The Opposition's contention, as has already been made clear, is to avoid doing a good thing in the wrong way. As suggested by the name itself "Provisional Council" is not a lasting body. It is a temporary structure. So we are asking the Government that whatever they do it should be done in the right way. The Government, from what I understand from the speeches of most of the Ministers and hon. Members of the Government side, seem to regard themselves as dictators. We must do this, we must do that, but that is not the way. Are they doing the right thing? Definitely, they are not doing it in the right way; but when they are instructed on how to proceed on the right way they become offended.

Several hon. Members: What is the right way?

Mr Etuk: The right way, Mr Speaker, is this: The Government has decided to build this University and the only thing, as the previous Opposition speaker said, is that it is not timely that they must proceed with it now. They have decided on it and made all necessary preparations. Why do they suggest that this £2 million should be handed over now; why not keep it in the safe custody of the Marketing Board?

Several hon. Members: It is not in the Bill.

Mr Etuk: It is in the Bill, that the money standing to the credit of the Council may from time to time be invested in securities.

Now it was not known till this moment that there has been £2 million standing to the credit of this Provisional Council so that the Opposition is urging the Government that there is no need withdrawing this £2 million, but they can call for it from time to time to defray their expenses; it should not be invested.

Several hon. Members: Are you the Government?

Mr Etuk: We may not be the Government but we can advise the Government.

Furthermore, Mr Speaker, many Members have also wandered from the point when the suggestion was made that this duty should go to the Ministry of Education. Well, nobody quarrels with the Premier, who most of us consider is qualified to handle this project. (*Hear! Hear!*)

An hon. Member: You are a changed man!

Mr Etuk: But there should be a proviso not to give one Minister too much power which has always been the contention in the past; so that while personally, I would accord that to him, I will not agree that he should take over and give all directions without a Council; that is the main point.

Mr Speaker: I would like to say to Members that it is not correct to make unseemly

interruptions in this House. I would also draw the attention of Members to Standing Order 27 (5):

“Members shall not make unseemly interruptions while any Member is speaking”. You should not do it intentionally and I believe you will get to know this so that the reporters will be able to follow and make a correct report.

Mr G. C. Okeya (Owerri Division): In supporting this amendment, Sir, I would like to say that the ignorance of the critics of this University beats my imagination. I am also surprised that with the learned men there—there are about three graduates there—such comments should be made at all. Many of them have criticised the site of the University and have stated that the Universal Primary Education scheme should first of all be developed before the University Scheme should be thought of. I want to answer these points now.

Sir, as regards site, it is the prerogative of the Government to choose the site. It is not the right of the people to question that prerogative. If you consider the site of all the Universities in the world, you will observe that Government has the prerogative. Think of the University of London and where it was founded. That University was founded at Gower Street and called a godless institution. Take Welsh University College into consideration. The University College of Aberystwyth was founded at a corner, in a small corner of Wales. The Welsh people did not go first to Cardiff the capital of Wales.

If we go to reckon with the history of the Universities of America, hon. Members will see that there was no problem of site, West or East of the Continent and for that matter, there is no reason why if Government decides to site the University at any particular place, there should be such opposition and criticism.

Some of the Opposition Members talked of developing the Universal Primary Education Scheme before the University project. I am sure that the learned men among them should know the answer to this. Should we have University before developing our Primary Education or should we have Primary Education before University Scheme? This is

[MR OKEYA]

the position: when a country like Nigeria has got enough Primary Schools, then there will be Universities.

Now, some hon. Members will bear me out on the need for a University. Even in the past we learned geography, definitions of geographical terms without knowing geography. But when people went to the Provincial Universities in Great Britain, they came back with new and rich ideas and visions, and found that the system of education and the content of education needed changes as they belonged to the past. Therefore, you can see that if in this Region we want a University we must need experts—special tutors—who will come back to improve our education.

If hon. Members read the Provisional Council (Amendment) Bill, they will find that Clause 22 reads as follows:—

“Money standing to the credit of the Council may, from time to time, be invested in securities approved either generally or specifically by the Governor in Council and the Council may from time to time sell any or all of such securities with the approval of the Governor in Council”.

The Government of the Eastern Region is running the Region as Governor in Council. If the Governor in Council is able to spend over £18 million this year for the Region only, why can it not spend £2 million wisely to build a University. Some Members think that £2 million is too much. There again their ignorance strikes my imagination.

The University College of Ibadan incurred expenditure on passages for the following years:

1950-1951	...	...	£	213,000
1951-1952	...	...	£	265,000

From 1950-59, total expenditure on passages alone was £5.2 million. But this Region is only asking for £2 million to be paid by securities to run a University.

We on this side of the House have a motion and there and then we would supply proofs and facts and figures to support why it is necessary to build a University.

Mr S. G. Ikoku (Enyong Division):
Mr Speaker, it was not my intention to speak in this debate. But I have one or two points to make which require, I think, some clarifications from that side of the House. The hon. the Leader of the House gave the impression that the Opposition had abandoned its stand on the issue of the University. I want to make it very clear that in supporting what the hon. Etuk has said, we are still opposed to the timing and siting of the University. That is our stand from the word “go”. We do not think that this is a very opportune moment, looking at it from the financial point of view, for us to embark on a major project like the building of a University.

I agree entirely with the last speaker, the hon. Okeya, that to put up a University is a very expensive business. It is and it must be. After all, a University must be worth its name. That argument reinforces the stand of the Opposition that we should be more cautious. We should weigh our financial state thoroughly before we ever carry on with this project. I have no doubt in my mind that if we want to make this University a real University, it is going to cost much more than £2 million. I have not the slightest doubt in my mind about that. I have been lucky to spend some few years of my life in a University, and I know what it is. This Region will not be able to build any reputable University on £2 million. It cannot do it.

The reason why we are calling for caution is that the Government should give due consideration, due weight to the finances of the Region, before embarking on this project and that is why we say that time limit should be inserted in this report. On the question of site—we do not need to argue about that. The same goes for the question of the expenses called for the opening of the University. The report harps upon that point, “caution! caution! caution!” and if that is the attitude of the experts, we do not see why Government should adopt such methods towards the University scheme.

Secondly Sir, the hon. the Leader of the House has made great a point about what he called the autonomy of the University—the

Provisional Council. That word "autonomy" is very attractive in academic circles. All University Councils want to be autonomous and they are always fighting for it. It is a traditional thing in Britain. In fact, it is so traditional that the Minister of Education in Britain generally accepts the views of Universities if they object to anything he wants to do for them. That is becoming the tradition in Britain. But what the Leader of the House has told us about the autonomy was not borne out by his argument. The Council is not autonomous and I will draw your attention, Sir, to sections of the amendment.

The hon. the Leader of the House developed this argument of autonomy in order to prove that the Minister, the Cabinet will have little or nothing to do with the investment of funds. That is the strength of his argument and I am trying to say that there is no such autonomy. If you look at clause 16 (1) it reads:

"The Minister may give directions of a general or specific character as to the exercise and performance of their functions, and the Council shall give effect to such directions."

So much for policy. The Minister can give directions of a general as well as of a specific nature and the Provisional Council must toe the line. There will be no question of autonomy as regards policy. In clause 18, Sir, we are told, here again I read:

"The accounts of the Council shall be audited by auditors appointed by the Minister."

I do not think the hon. the Leader of the House will consider himself as enjoying much autonomy if I have the right to appoint somebody to audit his Bank Account. Again, Sir, clause 22 harps on this very question of investment:

"Money standing to the credit of the Council may, from time to time, be invested in securities approved either generally or specifically by the Governor in Council . . ."

It means, Sir, that even in this question of investment the Council is merely acting as a medium of the Cabinet. That is all it means. The Council is merely a channel through which the Cabinet invests the funds supposed to be for the Provisional Council and we do not want

the Government to go and fool the people and say the Council is autonomous while in actual fact they invest the money. Let the Government be bold enough to tell this hon. House that they have made up their minds to fire ahead with this University. They will be honourable men if they do that. That is all we are querying. Mention was made here of the Provisional Council of the University College, Ibadan. As far as I know, there was a Provisional Council and no less a person than Sir Sydney Phillipson was put in charge and he and his team of advisers were to carry out all the planning projects until the University was fully equipped when they would hand it over to the appropriate authority. This is what a Provisional Council should be like.

There was an incident in the University College as regards discipline of students. The hon. the Federal Minister of Education confessed openly that he had no powers to intervene. The Principal could deal with the students as he liked. That is autonomy in the real dictionary sense. The autonomy that is being proposed here is autonomy in the Eastern Region. The Eastern Region is well-known for having its own interpretation to everything. We do not accept it.

There was a challenge here, Sir, that the Provisional Council will not have £2 million to invest from the Opposition Chief Whip. May I, Sir, draw your attention to the Development Programme 1958-62, Eastern Region Official Report No. 2, page 10, paragraph 30. It reads:

"... the total amount reserved in the account of the Marketing Board for this purpose was £2 million . . ."

That is their own paper. So that the Provisional Council is entitled to this money which is standing in their credit and in their name. We want a Provisional Council which should concern itself with the programme of siting, planning and so forth. We are not going to have a Provisional Council whose primary duty is to act as a Board of Directors to invest funds and which will be given specific and general directions from the Cabinet.

Something has been said in this House about imputing motives and that the debate in this House is generally degenerating. It is not our intention to impute improper motives in this matter. I can give you this assurance.

[MR IKOKU]

In conclusion, I would like to appeal through the Speaker to the hon. the Leader of the House to stop this reference to what he calls "an irresponsible Opposition". We do not want him to use or to misuse English words in this way. We do not like it and when we make our criticisms we back our criticisms with facts at our disposal. Now, if we go on the way we have been carrying on, the chances, Sir, are that we are going to generate so much heat in this House that I wonder what will be the next stage. We may resort to fisticuffs. But I would like to remind the Government Bench and particularly the Leader of the House of Sir Winston Churchill's own idea about the object of Parliament. He said, Sir, that the object of Parliament is to substitute argument for fisticuffs. Unfortunately, the hon. Gentlemen opposite are treading the path of fisticuffs and I can assure you, Sir, that from this side of the House, we will co-operate with you in the interest of all, to see that the use of unseemly language should cease.

But I want the hon. the Leader of the House to know that if this House is going to be a dignified Legislature, he particularly has a very important role to play, and when he, as the Leader of the House, begins to be loose in his vision, he is merely inviting trouble.

The Premier rose.

Mr Speaker: The hon. the Premier, may reply.

Mr E. O. Eyo: Mr Speaker, Sir, may I invite your attention to Standing Order 25 (12) and to *Erskine May* page 429 (Fifteenth Edition)

"Right of reply and reservation of speech.

—A reply is only allowed to the Peer or Member who has proposed a substantive question to the House; and this privilege is accorded to the mover of a substantive motion for the adjournment of the House. It is not conceded to a Member who moves an order of the day, such as a motion that a bill be read a second time; . . .".

Mr Speaker: I am inclined to allow that, Mr Eyo, but I consider this is a Motion of a kind and I suppose it is the custom in this House that the case under Standing Order 25 (12) and (13) should stand.

Mr E. O. Eyo: No, Sir, I am relying on Standing Order 25 (12) which is quite clear. If you are in doubt, you have got to be guided by *Erskine May*. The mover of the Second Reading of the Bill is not entitled to a right of reply.

Mr Speaker: The hon. Member should understand that I have made my ruling.

The Premier: Mr Speaker, Sir, I agree with my hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition that it is necessary that we should give a favourable impression to the outside world in respect of our sense of responsibility in this hon. Legislature, but I disagree with him that the Leader of the House is wrong to identify the Opposition as irresponsible especially if certain Members of the Opposition make it a point of duty to give evidence of irresponsibility. It is a pity that we have to generalise but there are certain Gentlemen on the Opposition Bench who do not necessarily see eye to eye with the demeanour of their colleagues, like my Friend, the hon. Member for Uyo, Mr Etuk. If others had taken the same line of action things would have been different. We have to say, therefore, that it is incumbent on us to say that, from day to day, people come from the outside world to watch how we behave and we should not choose to use this House as a platform for character assassination. We, as the Government, have responsibility to prove to the outside world that we do not condone such an act and that is what we expect the Opposition to inculcate in the minds of their members. In fact, it is necessary that we should work hard in order to give a favourable impression to the outside world that we are ripe.

I will start by saying that I was very much surprised at the way and manner this Motion was received by the Opposition with the exception of the hon. the Leader and the hon. Etuk. I expected the speakers to point out the flaws in my argument in presenting the Amendment or to point out the flaws in the clauses of the Bill; but instead of that, we had a rehearsal of the whole debate we had here since 1955. The Leader of the Opposition said that they were opposed to the timing and siting of the University. May I respectfully submit that this particular argument of his is irrelevant, having been overtaken by events.

The University of Nigeria Law, 1955, came before this House as a Bill. Then during the Second reading of that Bill, it was debated whether we should have a University or not, and the Legislature resolved in the affirmative. This resolution has been definitely made known and collectively expressed so that the decision is no longer in doubt.

Coming to the question of siting, this is not necessarily a thing which should be dragged out every time here. The Government had decided on the siting. Several times we have argued here across the Benches as to siting and the will of the Government has prevailed and has been collectively expressed by the Legislature. I therefore submit that the hon. Leader of the Opposition's argument does not arise. Nevertheless, his argument has been overtaken by events.

I will deal with the question of timing before I come to the main arguments by the other critics of this Bill. It is the submission of my hon. Friend that autonomy does not exist, and he joined issue with the hon. Minister of Production, because the latter said that the Provisional Council can, at its discretion, carry out its functions. I want to remind my hon. Friend that this Bill is an amending one. There is a substantive Law, the Provisional Council of the University of Nigeria Law, and this House debated that Bill which created the Provisional Council as a statutory body.

With your permission, Sir, the relevant Law is Law No. 18 of 1958—the University of Nigeria (Provisional Council) Law, 1958, and sections 10, 11 and 12 show that it is an autonomous body:

“10 (1) The Council shall have power to do all things which appear to it to be requisite and necessary for the establishment of the University of Nigeria in accordance with the provisions of the University of Nigeria Law, 1955. . .”

My point is that no useful purpose is served by our coming here to argue whether a statutory body is autonomous or not. All statutory bodies are autonomous but when we use the expressions, “autonomy” or “autonomous”, we do not use it in the abstract sense; we use it in the relative sense. The Steel Board in

England is autonomous, but surely the Government of the day feel that they dare not carry out any policy until they have been directed, in spite of its autonomy. I think, therefore, that both the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the House are really agreed that there is an element of autonomy and that there is an element of control, which is the basis of democratic Government. Assuming that £2 million are available to the Provisional Council and we appoint four or five members to form the Provisional Council, this will mean a great deal, and what kind of Government do you think we are if we shall allow that Provisional Council to do whatever it likes, and knowing that we shall eventually come before you in this House to take the rap?

It will be a most irresponsible Government and therefore it is necessary that we make them autonomous bodies within a framework. I hope Members of the Learned Profession will bear me out in my interpretations.

May I respectfully submit, Mr Speaker, that the stand of the other speakers of the Opposition has been influenced by three factors:—(1) Ignorance of Cabinet procedure; (2) It would appear that they are unmindful of the fact that, as far back as 1955, we have the University of Nigeria Law which made a provision for the College Council which will run that University; and later on, it was discovered by the former Attorney-General that it could not be implemented and that it would require a Provisional Council to act as a caretaker body between the enactment of that Law and the creation of the University.

When we introduced the Bill to this House for the creation of the Provisional Council it was done on the understanding that the Provisional Council would later transfer all the assets which it may acquire in the course of its operation to the College Council proper. The two laws now exist side by side, the only difference is that the University of Nigeria Council Law cannot come into effect until the Provisional Council had handed over and if my Friends, most of the Members of the Opposition, had remembered this they must not have opposed this Bill in the way they did.

The Members of the Opposition who attacked the Bill gave the impression that

[THE PREMIER]
they were unmindful of the precedents established in this House with respect to certain statutory bodies especially when it comes to accounting, and under Ministerial powers, the auditors are appointed. We have precedents of law to establish the Marketing Board Law, and when the Eastern Region Development Corporation Law was enacted—we inserted the very word “power”.

With your permission, I refer to the Eastern Region Marketing Board Law, 1954. There it was enacted definitely that the accounts of the Board shall be audited by auditors appointed by the Minister; the only change in this Bill is that the accounts of the Council shall be audited by auditors appointed by the Minister; the same with the Eastern Region Development Corporation. We established the precedent. Why I mention this precedent is to show my Friends on the Opposition that there was no ulterior motive. It was established here and we are right in this case because we have the same right over other statutory bodies, and there is no reason why we should not do that.

Government feels that it is necessary for the Minister to appoint auditors, and Government is taking the stand. As we have no Provisional Council which will handle the money, there is no reason why the auditors for the Council should not be approved by the Minister. After all, the Minister is responsible to this House. There is no reason why the Minister should have no power in that direction. We hold the view that the majority of the speakers on the Opposition give the impression that they are ignorant of Cabinet procedure. They were unmindful of the fact that the Council comes under the Nigerian Law, and that gave the impression that they are unmindful of the precedent established in this House. Now may I analyse these points serially:—

Ignorance of Government procedure does not necessarily mean that we do not understand the implications. I only mean that it is possible that some of them do not appreciate the implications of a Cabinet system of Government in a parliamentary democracy. The Premier, certainly, has the power to allocate portfolios. Whereas I will concede to the Oppo-

sition the right to make suggestions to me, nevertheless, I will contend very seriously with their right to come to this House and dictate to me how I should allocate my portfolios. While I do not object to taking dictation from anyone, I will consider it if it is given to me in the form of a suggestion. But I would remind them that when it comes to the question of portfolios for Universities, some of them may not be aware of the fact that in the Mother Parliament—by that I have in mind the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland—Universities fall within the portfolio not of the Minister of Education but of the Treasury. And you know that the Prime Minister of Great Britain is the First Lord of the Treasury. (*Hear! hear!*).

I will not be provoked to bandy words with my hon. Friends opposite, but we do know that from time immemorial the First Lord of Treasury is the Prime Minister. He has the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who has his own responsibility, but the ultimate responsibility for the Treasury is that of the Prime Minister. In 1957, this Government laid on the Table of this hon. House a White Paper. Thereon we indicated that the Premier is the Head of the Treasury. My Friends opposite criticised it; it was debated and ultimately it was resolved by this House and the White Paper was finally adopted. We have been implementing that policy. So, I feel that those Members of the Opposition who have indulged as to the *de facto* or *de jure* of allocating the portfolio of the University of Nigeria to myself and not to the Minister of Education have misdirected themselves in this particular respect. I therefore submit that, bearing in mind the practice elsewhere, the Prime Minister takes up the portfolios of Defence and External Affairs. In the Western Region there, the Party which my hon. Friends opposite represent, you will notice that at one stage the Premier of that Region was also Minister of Local Government, and at another stage, he added Finance. He presumably found the work too heavy then, and passed the portfolios to other men. So that those who criticise should have a second thought when they point an accusing finger at me in this House. If the Premier thinks it is necessary to control the portfolio of the University of Nigeria nobody has the right to criticise it. They have the right to make suggestions to me, but I am not bound to take those suggestions.

I would like to submit, Sir, that assuming that I meant their criticisms to be advice, and that it is possible that I might transfer the portfolio of the University of Nigeria, there are certain difficulties attendant upon such arrangement. Originally it was in the portfolio of the Minister of Education, but there were administrative difficulties. There were delays; minutes from one group to another, and finally it was found necessary that the Ministry which was responsible for the co-ordination of all the other Ministries and Departments should take over the portfolio.

May I point out that since the University of Nigeria Law was enacted the following Ministries have been involved in one way or the other with the University of Nigeria project itself: The Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Production (that is where the fund comes from), and the Ministry of Finance. How the funds are to be used for the Provisional Council, the architects have to be paid for the arrangements, etc. The Minister of Health knows that the public health must be safeguarded. You will notice in the Report that very few people know of artistry of the University and it is necessary to plan how the world should be given information as to the policies of the University. Then Local Government; Nsukka, itself is located in a Local Government area, the Igbo-Etiti District Council area. And where then? The Town Planning, for the planning authority and welfare—after we have planned these areas, how we go into them, where we put schools, plus many other matters connected therewith. Obviously, the only Ministry capable to handle, with greatest ease, the University of Nigeria is the Ministry which is responsible for co-ordination and that is, all are agreed, the Premier's Office.

It is not a pleasure to do a lot of work but we must co-operate and at the same time ensure efficiency in the execution of the will of this Legislature and if we do not do it, the very people who are now criticising will come here before the House to accuse the Government of incompetence. Talking of incompetence, I am very sorry that my hon. Friend, the Member from Okigwi Division, used the word incom-

petence. I am not going to use any "big" word. I do not intend to be offensive. (*Applause*). It beats imagination that he has the courage to come here and criticise this Government for alleged inefficiency, incapability. Whereas I concede to him the right to his opinion and he could come here and intervene with the Government Bench, nevertheless, I feel that if he would only have a second thought and realise that he owes his life to this Government, he would have been more charitable in the charges made by him against this Government. I can remember when he was at the point of death, the then Minister of Health who is the Leader of the House here got in touch with the specialist and he suggested that the only way to save his life was to fly him to England within 48 hours, otherwise he would have been gone. The hon. Minister took it upon himself to collect the other Members' advice and Government agreed that he should be flown to England. Most of us were there. I was there myself. I saw him. He did not know what was happening. (*Applause*). It is a fact, and I am only trying to make my point that of all people who come here and have the courage to criticise this Government he would not be allowed to do so. My point is that this Government saved his life and it is a fact. The Government spent about £800 for his fare.

Mr E. O. Eyo: You are wrong in point of fact.

The Premier: Please do not interrupt me because I will not yield. Even so, Mr Speaker, I do not intend to join issue with my hon. Friend if he takes that point. I can still say, Sir, that we of the Treasury Bench will not take his criticism seriously because like the two previous speakers, they all held Government posts. Mr Achara was a former Parliamentary Secretary, Mr Umoh was a former Parliamentary Secretary, Mr Eyo formerly Government Chief Whip and they are not fair to themselves. (*Laughter*).

Mr E. O. Eyo: We will not make any more criticisms.

The Premier: I do not say you should not criticise, but you should do it intelligently.

[THE PREMIER]

Finally, Mr Speaker, on the question of investment. I do not wish to take into consideration the accusations about investments, but I do intend to say that it is to the best interest of the University to invest in securities; it may be Treasury Bills. If the hon. Member, the Opposition Chief Whip had made that suggestion that such investment should be Treasury Bills, then the Government could give this a consideration, but the question that Treasury Bills had been discounted by the Government, I think is most unfair because as far as I know, when we have a Provisional Council and £½ million spent and about £½ million available, a prudent Council will invest in Treasury Bills. We do not want to have investments which will be for a year or five years when the money is going to be used in building a University within a year or two. What other forms of securities do you expect other than Treasury Bills?

I do not wish to belabour the House when I repeat what I said when introducing this Bill, that it was prepared in good faith. A Member of the Government had said that it had cost the Government much to bring somebody from the United States to be a member. As a matter of fact a sum of £5 million has been ear-marked for the University over a period of ten years from 1955 so that by the end of this period there will be adequate funds.

How can a responsible Government appoint a Provisional Council, give it powers and then place £2 million at its disposal and then have no control over it, especially in a self-governing Region? We cannot do this; it may be done in other Regions. As a matter of fact, the fact that we intend to control the Provisional Council is not a justification for my hon. Friends opposite to assume that we intend to make use of the fund and abuse our powers under the law. The law has been enacted and we want to put it into effect. We want to control the Provisional Council so that they will implement the policy of the Government of the day, and that is the usual practice.

Mr Speaker, I submit that the Opposition has given the abuse and I would like to accept the explanation of the Opposition Chief Whip that he meant no offence when he said it was a personal affair and that what he meant was

that as the Premier of this Region, I was interested in founding a University which will be a lasting monument to my Government, (*Applause*) so that when we are gone and we are no longer here, five years, ten or hundred years, it will be remembered that when this particular Government was in control, it created a University of Nigeria. I would like to believe that that was what my Friend had in mind and because of that, I will answer when he asked why did the Premier take an Adviser to the United States of America? Because as head of Government, he is interested not only in founding a University but because he headed a delegation which went to the United States in 1955, when he and the then Minister of Education visited the United States and the United Kingdom in order to confer with authorities who advised them, and on their return they introduced the Bill for the University of Nigeria Law. I therefore feel that the fears of the Opposition, where they are justified, have been clarified.

I have shown that Cabinet practice is for the Premier to use his discretion reasonably and I have used that reasonably because I referred you to the practice in the United Kingdom, although somebody talked about the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but even then, if he intended that it should be within the portfolio of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, not one Member of the Opposition has suggested that it should be passed to the Minister of Finance.

I have also shown here that my Friends opposite have been unmindful of the fact that as far back as 1955 we created the University of Nigeria Law and also incorporated in that law a College Council which would take over the management of the University as soon as the University was created. So there is no fear of the Provisional Council not being temporary or not being able to hand over its assets to a responsible governing body and, of course, the College Council will be completely autonomous. The only difference is in the adjective. It will be absolutely autonomous because when it will be able to exercise academic freedom to the full, the Government will no longer interfere with the running of the University.

Lastly, I believe also that my Friend's real intention of being unmindful of the precedent for creating a certain Statutory Body and

appointing auditors with the approval of the Minister has no other meaning.

Question put and agreed to.

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

Sitting suspended 12.10 p.m.

Sitting resumed 12.40 p.m.

Bill immediately considered in Committee.

(In the Committee)

Clauses 1 to 4 agreed to.

Bill to be reported.

(Mr Speaker resumed the Chair)

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

(2) The Classification of Chiefs Bill

Order for second Reading read.

The Premier (Dr N. Azikiwe): Mr Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to provide for the classification of Chiefs in the Eastern Region for the purposes of the Eastern House of Chiefs be now read a Second time.

This Bill simply puts into law what was agreed at the Resumed Nigeria Constitutional Conference. It follows exactly paragraph 61 and Annex IV of the Conference Report, with one exception only. As hon. Members will be aware, this Government intends to create twelve provinces, not nine, as stated in the Report. It has therefore been decided that in addition to the eight Traditional Paramount Rulers who will be First-class Chiefs, there should be twelve First-class Chiefs representing each of the twelve Provinces. There will thus be a total of twenty First-class Chiefs in this Region.

In order to make the necessary adjustment so as to bring the total membership of the House to not more than eighty as agreed, the number of Second-class Chiefs has been reduced by three to fifty-five. The formula for the selection of Second-class Chiefs, as agreed at the Conference on the Classification of Chiefs, to consider this question, has not been changed.

Mr Speaker, I need not say more about this Bill, which is quite straightforward. But I should ask that it should be studied by hon. Members along with the White Paper on the

Creation of the House of Chiefs, which has been laid on the Table of this House. This White Paper gives an historical review of the steps taken to create a House of Chiefs in the Eastern Region, and it sets out the details of the distribution of the fifty-five seats for Second-class Chiefs amongst the Divisions of this Region.

The details of the method of procedure for the selection of the Second-class Chiefs will be embodied in regulations to be made under Section 18 (2) of the Legislative Houses Law. The Bill for the Legislative Houses Law will be debated by this House at a later stage and the regulations will be published in the *Gazette* shortly.

This Bill is not controversial because the ground has already been covered at the Conference. Hon. Members will be glad to know that we have written to the Secretary of State, sending him a copy of this Bill and asking that he should make constitutional provision under the Nigeria (Constitution) Orders in Council 1954-59 for a House of Chiefs in the Eastern Region, so that the first meeting of the House can be called without delay.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

The Minister of Production (Dr M. I. Okpara): Sir, I beg to second.

Question proposed.

Mr Ikoku: Mr Speaker, Sir, I must say that the Opposition Bench is very happy indeed that at last there seems to be a move to establish a House of Chiefs in this Region. We are happy because it is the consummation of a long struggle, according to the Premier himself. It is the consummation of a long struggle by the Opposition. (*Hear! hear!*). This struggle, Sir, could be traced as far back as 1952. Ever since the Opposition has been agitating for the creation of a House of Chiefs in the Region. It is true that the other Regions have something in the neighbourhood of eight years start ahead of us yet we hope that within a month or two we will have entered this stage of advancement.

Mr Speaker, Sir, this Bill is a short one and I would have liked to congratulate the hon. Premier for a good Bill, but frankly, Sir, I have found it difficult to do so for two good reasons.

[MR IKOKU]

Firstly, it seems to be short of a provision of two ideas. The first is the classification of Chiefs in the Eastern Region; the second is the selection or election of Chiefs for the House of Chiefs. I think these are two distinct processes and the classification of Chiefs in the Eastern Region is something which is important in itself, irrespective of whether or not these Chiefs qualify or can become members of the Eastern House of Chiefs.

I think I am quite right if I make the point, Sir, that at the 1957 London Conference the view, the decision, the agreement, was that the Government and the Opposition should agree on a formula for the classification of Chiefs in the Eastern Region and this formula should be accepted by his Excellency the Governor of the Eastern Region. It was also agreed that this formula should serve as a basis for selection or election of Chiefs to the Eastern House of Chiefs, and I should have thought that the hon. the Premier would have handled these two ideas as things important in themselves. First, there should be a section or part of the Bill dealing with the classification of Chiefs, and the other part of the Bill dealing with the selection of Chiefs for the Eastern House of Chiefs.

The second reason, Sir, why we find it difficult to accept the Bill as it stands is that there are major fundamental departures from agreed conclusions arrived at both at the London Conference and at the Conference for the classification of Chiefs held in the Eastern Region on the 26th of May, 1958. We feel, Sir, that in keeping with the London decision of 1957, the whole question of the Eastern House of Chiefs should be resolved by way of agreement between the Government and the Opposition, that the hon. the Premier in drafting this Bill would have been meticulous in seeing to it that the clauses of this Bill reflect the decisions of the London Constitutional Conference.

I would like to draw attention to some of these fundamental departures, but before I do so, Sir, with your permission I would like to refer to this great authority again—Sir Winston Churchill—on this question of agreement. Speaking in the House of Commons in 1917, Sir Winston Churchill said:

“When an agreement has been reached every one who is a party to it is bound by it,

and previous misgivings and differences of opinion are blotted out and ought not to be referred to. In every walk of life, in every sphere of human activity, this is the invariable rule and it is the only safe and honest rule.”

We believe that, and we would like to agree that the Premier has been so busy that he has not personally, you know, given much time to checking the provisions of this draft Bill with the decisions arrived at, both at the London Conference 1957–58 and at the May 26th 1958 Conference on the classification of Chiefs in the Eastern Region, because we would not like to give the impression, Sir, that we have persistently tried to depart from these decisions.

Firstly, Sir, in clause 4 of the Bill the last two lines read: “Chiefs appointed by the Governor in Council from each of the Provinces in the Region”. I do not think we ever agreed that the First-class Chiefs should represent each of the projected Provinces in the Region and that they should be appointed by the Governor in Council. In fact, this matter was so important that it was referred to His Excellency the Governor. His Excellency had several interviews with the Opposition and I am sure with the hon. the Premier on this matter, and His Excellency's views were that Local Government bodies in these Provinces should have a hand in the selection of First-class Chiefs to represent each Province. I think this matter was also raised in the London Constitutional Conference. I do not want to quote from the Conference Minutes but I want to draw the attention of the hon. the Premier to the proceedings as regards the Eastern House of Chiefs.

Secondly, Sir, clause 5 gives the impression that Second-class Chiefs shall consist of Chiefs elected from among the clan heads and village group heads. In other words, the impression is given, Sir, that if you are a clan head or a village head, you can be a member of the Eastern House of Chiefs. That was not our decision. Our decision is that members of the House of Chiefs must be either First-class Chiefs or Second-class Chiefs. We agreed that Second-class Chiefs should only be Clan Heads and in fact it is mentioned in this document—*Eastern Regional Official document No. 1/59—House of Chiefs in the Eastern Region.*

At page 10, Sir, the Conference decision is recorded as follows:

“The Conference agreed on the following recommendations:

- (1) that Chiefs in the Eastern Region should be graded First, Second, Third and Fourth-class Chiefs;
- (2) that all village Heads should be Fourth-class Chiefs;
- (3) that all Heads of Village Groups should be Third-class Chiefs;
- (4) that all clan Heads should be Second-class Chiefs . . .”.

Again, Sir, there is a point which it will be wrong for me to say that the Government has departed from the agreed conclusion: I think it was an oversight both on the part of the Government and on the part of the Opposition. It is this question of classification of Chiefs in areas where you do not have Clan Heads, Group Heads and Village Heads. Let us consider these two areas: Rivers Area of Degema Division and the Area of Calabar Division. Instead of having Clan Heads, Group Heads and Village Heads, we have the House System. I have searched through our paper, Sir, and there is no provision for that. In fact, this is not a question of an omission by the Government but an oversight by both the Government and the Opposition, and I think the hon. the Premier should take steps to rectify the situation.

What I am drawing attention to is that in these two areas, you have Compounds, Houses, etc. That is, you have House System and, in fact, mention is made of it in Jones's Report but we have been swept away by this Village Heads and Clan Heads. The people of these two areas may think that we oversighted them because they are small groups. So I think the Premier should hasten to bring them to the field so that we may escape the accusation of ignoring the small areas.

Thirdly, Sir, in clause 5, reference is made to fifty-five Second-class Chiefs. I must say, Sir, that this is not our decision. At the Enugu Conference, we agreed on forty-seven Second-class Chiefs. Admittedly, at the London Conference, we agreed that the total membership of the House should be enlarged from sixty to eighty. We had to take that compromise decision in order to accommodate both the Government and the

Opposition's views on First-class Chiefs but we certainly did not agree that Second-class Chiefs should be fifty-five. The Second-class Chiefs now need to be fifty-eight in view of the enlargement of the membership of the Eastern House. At Enugu, here, on the 26th of May, 1958, we agreed on distribution of forty-eight seats. It follows, therefore, that there are ten new seats which should be allocated and we have not yet met to agree on the allocation.

I notice, Sir, that turning to the White Paper *House of Chiefs in the Eastern Region—Official Document No. 1 of 1959*, page 14, that the Premier has taken the initiative of allocating the extra seats. I notice, looking at Annexure 3, that they have given one extra seat each to Aba, Abakaliki, Bende, Nsukka, Onitsha, Orlu and Owerri Divisions. It may well be said that when we held discussions in London that might be the most equitable distribution. My point is that we have not heard anything, Sir. I do not know if the hon. the Premier remembered that at the London Conference it was agreed that there should be agreement between the Government and the Opposition. The corollary of that point is that we now have 12 Provinces, and that is instead of nine Provinces as agreed in the London Conference. That is that we now need twelve First-class Chiefs representing the twelve Provinces, instead of nine.

Now, if you turn to the Report of the London Conference 1958, page 41, Annexure 4, you will see the schedule agreed upon as eight traditional rulers—what we might now colloquially call First-class Chiefs. What we now have is a departure from that agreement. I am not saying that if the Opposition were consulted we would have been adamant. We have not been consulted. If the Premier is not prepared to consult us our stand is to stick religiously to the decisions of the London Conference. I do not know if the hon. the Premier has written to the Secretary of State and I do not know what the Secretary of State said on the question of twelve instead of nine Provinces. I can assure you that, if the Secretary of State departs from the decisions of the Conference, we are going to use all the powers of our people to get him to keep to the decisions of the London Conference. It is very easy, when we sit in this House, for people to higgie and niggle.

[MR IKOKU]

We did not use the fund to go to London Conferences for fun. I am not sure the Secretary of State is going to change the decisions of the London Conference. The hon. the Premier is fully aware of what I am driving at. I am not saying that the Opposition should take a stand of absolute opposition to increasing the number of Provinces. If that was the case, in order to avoid so many petitions and troubles, we must do it on agreement. I still attribute the non-consultation with the Opposition to the fact that the Premier has a reason and intention to do so.

My next point, Sir, is that there ought to be in this Bill a Schedule—a Second Schedule—stating clearly the number of seats to be allocated to each Division. That is to be found in the case of the Eastern House of Assembly Law.

An hon. Member: But it is there; read your White Paper.

Mr Ikoku: It is not there. The White Paper is no Bill.

What I am saying, Sir, is that there should be a Second Schedule in this Bill incorporating another Annexure at page 14 of the White Paper after it has been duly amended. That is, when we agree on the allocation, because the reason is there. You will find that the total is given as 48. This is the number originally agreed upon as First-class Chiefs. At page 14, Sir, you have in the last column the total as 48. It is incorrect; the total is 55. As a result of this anomaly, the London Constitutional Conference decision arises. At the Enugu Conference we agreed on the allocation of 48 seats. The result of the London Conference is that we have extra 10 seats to allocate. What the Premier has done with the extra 10 seats is to take 3 away and hand over to the First-class Chiefs in order to accommodate 12 instead of 9, and to proceed to allocate the remaining 7 to the Divisions which I will mention: Aba, Abakaliki, Bende, Nsukka, Onitsha, Orlu and Owerri.

We think the Premier has gone too fast, and he should try to take the Opposition into confidence. When the Schedule agreed upon, as to how to allocate the 55 seats for Second-class Chiefs, is printed, it should be attached as Schedule No. 2 to the

Bill now before this House. We are certainly not going to accept the explanation that the Schedule is in the White Paper; the White Paper is no Law. If you look at the back page, of the Bill, you will find there is no such Schedule.

Coming back to section 5, you will notice that no mention is made as to how these Chiefs are to be selected; that is, the process of election. Of course, the Premier in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, informed us that he was going to bring a regulation which will state clearly how these Chiefs are to be elected. I hope the regulation will be in keeping with the decision of the London Conference. The important point is this: at the London Conference it was clearly laid down that all the classified Chiefs in the Divisions should constitute the electoral college which will enable these Second-class Chiefs to represent each Division in the House of Chiefs. So, I am very delighted to hear the Premier agreeing that the regulation will bear that point out. It looks a small point, but it is important. We want to give these Chiefs the impression that they are Chiefs as of right and not Chiefs because politicians want them to be Chiefs. Members of the Government have tried to create Chiefs and in reply the Opposition created their own Chiefs. *(Laughter)*.

The important point is that we will be riding on the institution of chieftaincy in this Region if the hon. the Premier allows his supporters, as well as his opponents, to meddle in the appointment of these Chiefs. What is happening now, Sir, is that when some people find that things are becoming tough in their Divisions, they set up their own Chiefs and say that they will be Members of the House of Chiefs. That point, I remember, was raised by one of the delegates at the London Constitutional Conference and the hon. the Premier gave the assurance that he would be guided by the decision of the Conference. We only hope that the Government will be fast enough to implement the decisions of the London Conference so that we can say with clear conscience that we have been able to keep to the agreement. A House of Chiefs is not a circus where politicians go to do things as they like. I hope the hon. Minister of Finance knows what to do. I say this because I was surprised that he did not mention the House of Chiefs in his Budget Speech.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Mr J. H. E. Nwuke): Mr Speaker, Sir, in the political history of this country, the concentration of students on external factors, such as the suppression of slave trade, the era of the explorers, the forts and settlements along the coasts, the policies and personalities of the various Foreign and Colonial Secretaries, have tended to submerge the history of the indigenous people—particularly the great principalities—and bestow undue prominence on the activities of the invaders.

In the Eastern Region, our customs and traditions were trampled down, our rulers and monarchs were dethroned and in their places, the imperialists set up their stooges under the guise of warranted Chiefs. While in the North and West, the institution of chieftaincy was respected and maintained, the East was regarded as a chiefless section. This, Sir, had for a very long time placed the Eastern Rulers in a very unhappy situation. Chiefs were ridiculed and derided. I am happy today, that those who have held the Eastern Chiefs in contempt will now have to change their minds, because God has worked his miracle by sending to this country Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, who has done again a very wonderful thing.

The Prime Minister of Ghana, in his policy statement was quoted to have said:

“We can only make our contribution significant, if we succeed in showing how an African Society can be transformed without losing its essentially African character. We must seek methods by which the old and the new can be blended”.

To my mind, Sir, the establishment of the Eastern House of Chiefs is one of those methods, to harmonise the old and the new. We, whose ancestors have been associated with chieftaincy and who at present believe in the revival of this institution are particularly happy and grateful to the Premier and his Colleagues that they have found it possible to do honour to the Chiefs and Natural Rulers of this Region, and to bring them into the same level with their counterparts in the other Regions of the Federation.

Mr J. A. Agba (Ogoja Division): I wish to refer you, Mr Speaker, to Standing Order 25 section 1.

Mr Speaker: I do not think the hon. Member is reading his speech.

Mr Nwuke: The fight to regain the lost prestige by the Chiefs and Natural Rulers of this Region, has been a very long one. I do not agree with the Leader of the Opposition, that his Party did anything to further the course for the establishment of the House of Chiefs in this Region. I quite remember that it was the father of the present Leader of the Opposition—Mr Alvan Ikoku—when while he was a Member of this House, persistently opposed the creation of the House of Chiefs. It seems the mist is now cleared, and opportunity has been created for Chiefs to make their own contributions towards the progress of this Region. I know some may quarrel with the classification, but I feel a start has been made, which is subject to revision. I know that when an experiment has been made the need to expand the membership of the House will be inevitable, to allow for representation of all Rural District Council heads in the Region. One thing I will suggest is that every Rural District Council Head should be accorded a second-class status irrespective of whether or not he is a member of the House of Chiefs, so that all the second-class Chiefs in the Eastern Region will be members of the House. It might then be possible to consider the enlargement of the Eastern House of Chiefs.

There is a point made by the Leader of the Opposition attacking the Bill. I do not share that view because I feel that what we have at present should be temporary because we cannot at present give accurate figures of the population of the Eastern Region. Maybe by next year when the Federal Government will be taking up the question of census we shall be in a position to make proper distribution.

Now, Sir, turning again to the White Paper—I was just trying to say that Government should bear in mind, that is, if you refer to Annex 4, that we have here enlisted the possible places which will have First-class Chiefs—it appears to me that the whole of Ahoada was omitted.

Mr E. O. Eyo: Even your name, too!

Mr Nwuke: The hon. Member does not know whether it will be final. What I am saying Sir, is that already in Ahoada Division, we have so many clans and we have so many Ezes. I I want to mention, Sir, the Oku of Abua. This natural ruler signed an agreement with Her Majesty's Government as far back as 1891. I would also like to mention the Oba of Ogba as

[MR NWUKE]
 one of the responsible rulers. I also mention King Chukwu Igwe of Ikwere. It was this Chief who made it possible for the white man to land at Isiokpo and to land at other places, where it could not have been possible.

I want also to let Government know that we have also the Eze of Eche. I am placing these facts on record. I really would like to refer to the Jones Report, paragraph 151. I want to read it. With your permission, Sir, I will read it. He said, (he was referring to other Ibo areas):

“This characteristic structure of the village group changes as one moves eastwards to the Cross River or southward to the southern part of the Owerri Province and its extension into the Ahoada Division of the Rivers Province. The villages either become more numerous and dispersed as in the Ahoada Division or the Bende Division, or they follow the Ibibio pattern of dispersion as in Ngwa tribe (clan) of the Aba Division. Or again, as in Nkanu area of Udi Division, they become much larger in size, or finally as in the Abakaliki Division they become sub-tribes (clans) with an exceptional type of land tenure and local residence (*the ownership of the land is vested in the sub-tribe and a member of the sub-tribe resides anywhere in the sub-tribal territory where he can find land to farm. Thus the members of a single extended family (lineage) live dispersed in a number of villages and not all together in a single village as they do in other parts of the Eastern Region, while a village instead of consisting of a small number of corporate land-owning lineages as it does in most other parts of the region, is composed of a large number of individual householders with rights to farm land in the neighbourhood of a number of villages scattered over the territory*) whose members are dispersed over the whole sub-tribal territory in a very large number of small villages (Ndiagu)”

As far as chieftaincy is concerned, this marginal Ibo area can be divided into two parts. In one, people maintain they have no Chiefs at all, only elders. In the other, people follow the normal Ibo pattern of having a recognised Chief or head of the component segments of the group, normally the village, with the head of the senior segment as the head for the whole group.

The chiefless part comprises most of the Eastern Plane, that is, the Abakaliki Division, the Nkanu area of the Udi Division, the northern part of the Afikpo Division, and also the Awgu Division. In this area functions of headship are reduced to a minimum, village group and, where it exists, tribal government is thought of as the collective rule of the senior age grades.

The point I am driving at is that in the Ahoada Division we have an organised system of Chieftaincy as approved by Mr Jones, unlike the chiefless Ibo section. I would like that whenever the Government is considering this question of First-class Chiefs, it may take the Ahoada Division into consideration.

Mr Speaker, I beg to support.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Town Planning (Chief S. E. Onukogu): Mr Speaker, before I say anything, I would like to eradicate one impression made by the Leader of the Opposition. He said that in 1952, they the Opposition, started to champion the course for the creation of the Eastern House of Chiefs. I want to tell him that in 1952, he was not in this House and in fact, he was not in this Region.

The Chief Whip of the Opposition could bear me out that in 1952, the Eastern Chiefs Conference started the agitation. In his speech, he accused the hon. Premier of making allocations without consulting him. I like to remind him that I was present when the meeting was held. We agreed that the allocation to the Eastern House of Chiefs should be on population basis and that each Province should have a First-class Chief.

I should like to seize this opportunity to thank the Government especially the hon. Premier, a God-sent saviour, and this I do, on behalf of my colleagues. My colleagues are the Chiefs of the Eastern Region. I have to thank the Premier because we started this agitation when the U.N.I.P. Government was in power. I can easily quote how many applications and the number of letters we submitted to the then Government, which were turned down; but this God-sent saviour redeemed us.

In congratulating the Government, I am glad to say that we have been placed on the

same footing with our colleagues in the other Regions of Nigeria. When we started the agitation during the Eyo Ita Government people made a mockery of us. Some of such people now claim and are installing themselves as what I may call "afternoon" Chiefs. During the Eyo Ita Government, many of them, if they will only speak the truth, and those of them who were in this House in 1952, were saying that we had no Chiefs. Now, Sir, it is such people who have at present come to claim this and that in order to reap where they did not sow, although we are not labouring to benefit ourselves but for the generations to come.

Of course, we do not mind what they say in demanding First or Second-class Chiefs at present. But I am pointing it out to them that they are trying to reap where they did not sow.

I would like to point out, Mr Speaker, that in Ibo land, according to my hon. Friend who has just spoken, we have Traditional Rulers everywhere. The other people claim that they alone have Traditional Rulers; but I am glad to hear in this very House that their Traditional Rulers were only and merely the Members of the House of Chiefs. Now, they come here to claim that such "House" rulers are Traditional Rulers.

My request on behalf of the Chiefs of this Region, Sir, is that the appointment of Traditional Rulers should be extended to everywhere in Ibo land. It was the Chiefs of Ibo land who started this agitation which made the Eastern Chiefs Conference what it is today; but in the long run, how many of them are Traditional First-class Chiefs?

Several hon. Members: None!

Chief Onukogu: I am telling the Government to give this a second thought whenever any provision or any consideration is to be given to Traditional Rulers in Ibo land.

Now, Sir, I do not intend to waste the time of this House. On behalf of the Eastern Chiefs Conference, I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the Government once more, for taking this important decision to create the House of Chiefs. The Government will therefore always have the support of the Eastern Chiefs Conference.

Chief I. I. Morphy (Ogoja Division): Mr Speaker, Sir, I was thinking that after the hon. the Leader of the Opposition, Mr S. G. Ikoku, had

made an intelligent speech covering all grounds, the Premier could have replied rather than other Members mostly N.C.N.C. back-benchers.

Speaking to the debate on the Chiefs' Bill, the only point I want to add to what the Leader of the Opposition had said is that since all Chiefs are going to be recognised and they will be the agents of Government, all Chiefs should be paid. I repeat: all Chiefs should be paid either directly by Government or some by their Local Councils. Government also tells us that these Chiefs are going to maintain law and order.

Mr J. O. Ihekwoaba (Orlu Division): Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to add one point. While I congratulate Government on its decision to implement its policy on the House of Chiefs, I would like to observe that almost all the eight First-class Chiefs come from the Rivers Area, namely, the Amanyanabo of Bonny, the Amanyanabo of Kalabari, the Amanyanabo of Nembe, the Amanyanabo of Opobo, the Eze of Arochuku, the Obi of Oguta, the Obi of Onitsha and the Obong of Calabar. May I know whether the Rivers Chiefs are being compensated by giving them almost all the First-class Chiefs of the Region? I would like to know whether the Chiefs from the hinterland will have to surrender their rights for the Rivers area. Government is not therefore fair to us.

We are laying a foundation whereby the children that are coming behind are going to lay their hands on. We should think twice when we are doing things such as appointing First-class Chiefs which will dominate others. I quite agree with the White Paper which shows there are Second-class Chiefs, but since I was born, Sir, I have never come across where any Chief from Orlu Division, or Owerri or from any other Division in the Eastern Region, subjects himself to any Chief in the Rivers area. There was never a time; we do not take notice of their existence how much more (*Interruptions*) as First-class Chiefs.

Mr Speaker: Will Members do try when they make some noise to stop a little to give the debater the chance of being heard; and I also ask the Member who is making the speech to stop a little until the noise subsides, so as to give the verbatim reporter the chance of hearing the proceedings.

Mr Ihekwoaba: The point I am making, Sir, is that under clause 2 of this Bill which calls for the recognition of Chiefs the definition says: "Chief means any person who is for the time being recognised by the Governor in Council in accordance with the Recognition of Chiefs Law, 1956, as may be amended from time to time".

So, Sir, I want to know, whether it is only this set of people who come from the Rivers who are being recognised as First-class Chiefs, for us to surrender our rights to them. I could understand, Sir, that even in my own Division, Orlu, over 10 chiefs were recognised as natural rulers and in this Bill, Sir, there is not even one of these Chiefs who is recognised as a First-class Chief.

I suggest, Sir, that at least one First-class Chief should be appointed from each Division. I see no reason why the Chiefs will not be drawn up from all the Divisions in the Region. We have 27 Divisions. It now means that some Divisions will surrender their rights to others. There is no Orlu Chief who recognises the Amanyanabo of Opobo. We do not even bother to know whether he exists.

Mr Speaker, Sir, some of the areas to be considered for First-class Chiefs have not been considered. You may give me one hundred people to be Second-class Chiefs but what my Division wants is First-class Chief. That is the point I am making.

Rev. Okon Efiog (Calabar Division): Mr Speaker, I have first to congratulate the House, particularly the Government, for introducing this Bill in order to create concretely the House of Chiefs. In 1949, this question of House of Chiefs came up in this House and I stated categorically that in Calabar we do not only have Chiefs but higher institutions. So that it is not a strange thing to us. We have been looking forward to having the House of Chiefs in the East for all these years.

The point I want to make is what the Leader of the Opposition has made mention of as certain agreements—agreements in the London Constitutional Conference, agreements made on 26th May, 1958, and that those agreements should be honoured and we should not deviate from them. I quite agree that the Premier, owing to multiplicity of work and so on, might inadvertently overlook this particular point, and I agree with the Leader of the

Opposition that consultation should be held with the Opposition so as to arrive at a mutual conclusion. For instance, I say that in the London Constitutional Conference we were to add nine more First-class Chiefs to those appointed at the Conference but here we have twelve. That could be ironed out at our consultation.

I want to say further that we should not play politics with this question of Chiefs. It is a traditional institution. The Leader of the Opposition made mention that the Government must agree to create Chiefs as well as the amenities connected with it. I want it to be clear that we would be causing endless trouble in this Region if we try to create Chiefs where there were no Chiefs at all. I am equally concerned that where there are Chiefs, we should not neglect them.

Mr Speaker, Sir, in the Rivers Province as well as in Calabar Province or Calabar Division, I would like to say that the classification of Chiefs should include Chiefs in the main Houses as well as Chiefs in other Houses. This is not necessarily to qualify them to enter the House of Chiefs, but that their position should be preserved. Similarly in Calabar we have the Obong, Etuboms, Ndidaha and other Chiefs whose positions should be preserved not necessarily for the purpose of entering the House of Chiefs.

I want to say that I support the Bill for the creation of the House of Chiefs and I suggest further that during consultation, we might make amendments which will bring us to harmonious decision on this subject.

I thank you very much.

Chief G. N. Agbasiere (Orlu Division): Mr Speaker, I beg to support the Bill entitled "The Classification of Chiefs Bill, 1959". By creating the House of Chiefs here in the East, the Eastern Regional Government has returned to the people of the East and to the Chiefs in particular, the traditional right of chieftaincy.

Mr Speaker, Sir, you know that without this Government, we will have no House of Chiefs. I therefore very much thank the Government of the East and in particular, the Premier, who will be the Prime Minister for the Federation of Nigeria. (*Hear! hear!*).

Opposition Members: How do you know?

Chief Agbasiere: As far as I know, he will be the Prime Minister in the Centre, notwithstanding anything. Also, I know how the Premier worked hard in this House. I think that he will be the Prime Minister in the Centre. The position of Chiefs in the Eastern Region has been classified and we First-class Chiefs have accepted the classification.

An hon. Member: What class are you?

Chief Agbasiere: I am a First-class Chief. (Laughter).

Mr Speaker: Order! order!

Chief Agbasiere: I promise the Eastern Region Government that after the establishment of the House of Chiefs, there will be no opposition in the East; the opposition will die away. I am speaking with authority. You know that I am one of the Chiefs in the Eastern Region and that my voice is always ringing in something useful to the Region.

Mr Speaker, I want to make a small suggestion to the Premier and the Ministers. There should be a ballot in the choice of Second-class Chiefs. Mr Speaker, I know the reason why the small Rivers area dominate; they have so many powers given them because everything Government proposes by way of increasing powers always goes to the Rivers—the smallest area in the Region. That makes them to become the government of Ibos—that part of the world where they say there is nothing. Instead of thanking the Government for its good-naturedness, they go to abuse the Government for both good things and bad ones, if any. Some of them say there are no chiefs in Ibo land. Who are they?

Mr Speaker, I will tell you that in the olden days these people were victims. Mr Speaker, the people of this Region are fed up with them. It is a sin; why do they say there is no Chief in Ibo land?

Mr Speaker, I support all the papers establishing the Eastern House of Chiefs and would ask that Government should consider and stop giving this small Rivers people power to control all Ibos. Apart from the Obi of Onitsha and others, I do not see any other

Chief ranking up with me, especially in the Rivers area.

Chief S. J. Amachree (Degema Division): Mr Speaker, apart from the observations made by the Leader of the Opposition, I have to thank the Government for presenting this Bill to the House. Most Members here do not know what the word "Chief" means, or a "Head of a House". They think these things are mere trifles or that the word "House" is a common house where a man is a head.

The head of a house to which I refer is a house where an individual person buys sufficient slaves, buys cannons, machine guns, creates a Navy in defence of his country. That man can never be acclaimed as a Chief until these things are provided. At the same time a man, in order to be acclaimed as a Chief and a defender of a nation, must have sufficient arms too. That is how the House of Chiefs came into existence in the Rivers area.

Before the advent of the British Government the trader's son sought the powers of the Rivers Chiefs in anything that he did. Today, everyone is a Chief, but I do not intend here to go into details of what Chiefs were; I only want to point out that this Bill does not bring out the Chieftaincy ruling system in the Rivers Province. The classification is shown in clauses 2 and 3 and the definition of what those clauses are in clauses 4 and 5. These are Clan Heads, Village Group Heads and the Village Heads. We have no system like that in the Rivers area. We have Chiefs of Main Houses and then Heads of Houses.

Mr K. Kiri (Degema Division): Mr Speaker, Sir, as the last speaker has said the Bill is considered very important. Chieftaincy, if it is unknown in certain parts of the Eastern Region, is known to the Rivers people. What the Bill seeks to establish is a system of classification that would affect all the Chiefs in the Region. We did not have the House of Chiefs in time and the problem that the Government is bound to face this time is the establishment of the Eastern House of Chiefs. I hope hon. Members will co-operate with the Treasury Bench in all matters affecting the status and well-being of the Chiefs.

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

163

[Adjournment]

2 APRIL 1959

[Adjournment]

164

And it being 2.15 p.m. Mr Speaker interrupted the business and the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed on Wednesday, 8th April, 1959.

(3) The Finance (Amendment) Bill, 1959—
Second Reading. *Deferred until Wednesday, 8th April, 1959.*

(4) The Loans (Development Programme) Bill 1959—Second Reading. *Deferred until Wednesday, 8th April, 1959.*

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, That this House do now adjourn.

(The Minister of Production, Dr M. I. Okpara)

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

EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Friday, 3rd April, 1959

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

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

PAPER

Copy presented: Annual Report of the Co-operative Department, Ministry of Commerce, 1956-57. (*The Minister of Commerce*).

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

BILLS PRESENTED

(1) Provincial Administration

Bill to provide for the establishment of the Eastern Region Provincial Assemblies and Provincial Administration for their functions and for matters connected therewith; presented by the Attorney-General, Mr M. O. Ajegbo; read the First time; to be read a Second time upon 17th April, 1959.

(2) Public Order

Bill to prohibit the carrying of weapons at public meetings and processions, the wearing of uniforms in connection with political objects and the maintenance by private persons of associations of military or similar character and for other matters relating to the maintenance of public order on the occasion of public processions and meetings and in public places; presented by the Attorney-General, Mr M. O. Ajegbo; read the First time; to be read a Second time upon 17th April, 1959.

(3) Funds and Accounts

Bill to provide for the establishment of certain Public Funds and Accounts and to regulate disbursements from such Funds and for other purposes connected with such Funds and Accounts or incidental thereto; presented by the Minister of Finance, Dr S. E. Imoke; read the First time; to be read a Second time upon 17th April, 1959.

ORDER OF THE DAY

Governor's Speech (Debate on the Address
(THIRD ALLOTTED DAY)

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question (31st March):

"That a Humble Address of Thanks be presented to His Excellency the Governor, for His Excellency's Most Gracious Speech."

Question again proposed.

Mr Speaker: Hon. Members will find on the Order Paper two amendments. I propose to adopt the procedure I am reliably informed is that of Westminster. That is, the amendments will come up on the last day of the debate on the Speech from the Throne. You will have today, Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, so that these amendments will come up on Thursday; but if the Government allows a further day, then they will come up on Friday, but suppose the Government does not, these amendments will come up on Thursday. The idea of this is very useful as it will give hon. Members the opportunity of debating fully the Speech from the Throne, so that they may wander about extensively in their constituencies and ascertain the wishes of their people. (*Hear! Hear!*) If we begin now, with the amendments, they will very much not allow Members to say their minds.

Mr S. G. Ikoku (Enyong Division): Mr Speaker, in rising to speak on the Motion of Thanks to His Excellency, I would like here to request you to be good enough to convey to His Excellency Sir Robert de Stapledon, the joy of the Opposition and, I believe, of this House, at his speedy recovery from the major operation he had. We are happy that he is back to us in the Region. In fact, many of us who saw him said that he looked much better than he was before the operation.

It is impossible, Sir, with the rather limited time allotted to us, to speak fully on the Speech from the Throne. I can point out that while His Excellency did kindly read his Speech, we have been called upon to debate it, and so I would like to speak about it.

[MR IKOKU]

First, Sir, I speak about the public service of the Region. I would like to associate the Opposition with a word of thanks and praise for our civil servants. We are aware of the fact that they are very much over-worked, and there is a considerable loss of much experienced civil servants through their retirement. It should be the effort of Government to recruit as rapidly as possible to fill these posts. In this connection, I think we have reached a stage where this Legislature should take a hand in reassuring the Expatriates who are still in the Region's Civil Service that we would like them to believe and agree with us that we are really sincere when we say that we would still like them to continue in the public service of this Region. Mere platitudes will not do. The various things we do will be very important in deciding whether they will stay or pack out. So, we are humbly suggesting that much as we must forge ahead with Nigerianisation there should not be any unfair play between the Expatriates and the Nigerian Civil Servants.

Secondly, Sir, we must do our best to create the right psychological atmosphere as without it, it is impossible for these Expatriates to continue in the service of the Region. All this nagging or what I might call the prostitution of Nigerianisation—every incompetent man who happens to be a Nigerian needs refuge under the term "Nigerianisation" in order to get rid of a much more experienced and efficient expatriate—will not help us. We would not like this type of thing to continue. Wherever we have a Nigerian who is really efficient and skilled he should take precedence but we do not want unskilled, and I repeat it, Sir, unskilled and inefficient Nigerians to hide under the cloak of Nigerianisation to get rid of our experienced Expatriate officers. (*Hear! Hear!*).

The Minister of Commerce (Mr J. U. Nwodo): We agree on that.

Mr Ikoku: On the question of Provincial Administration, Sir, I think after all that has been said in this House and after all the efforts which have now been made to set up this Administration, particularly with reference to the provisions in the 1959-60 Estimates, this is yet one of the things that the Premier,

the Government as a whole, should pause and think whether it is really worth-while to undertake this huge expenditure on this programme. We are told that the Provincial Assemblies are meant to reflect the wishes of the various provinces. We have hon. Members in this House who are supposed to do that same job.

In addition, Sir, as a result of the London Constitutional Conference decision the number of Members of this House is going to increase from 80 to 146. This reduces the area of coverage for each hon. Member. Again, we are told that these Provincial Assemblies merely deliberate and have no executive functions and whatever they recommend to Government is entirely at the mercy of Government and, of course, Government is responsible to this House. Then what is the real gain that we are deriving from these Provincial Assemblies?

Government Bench Supporters: To allay the fears of the minorities particularly those in the C.O.R. State.

Mr Ikoku: I want to draw your attention, Sir, to the cost of this Provincial Assembly scheme. When the White Paper was introduced in this House I spoke on this aspect of the Provincial Assembly project and I was given the reply that I was merely making wild calculations, that my costs were fantastic—they bore no relation to facts—but now the Estimates have been prepared and I will draw your attention to the following figures: Recurrent expenditure on the Provincial Assembly scheme setting aside Local Transport and Travelling is £59,080.

Again, Capital Expenditure—you will find this itemised on pages E 32, E 113, and E 115 of the 1959-60 Estimates—is £385,600.

Some hon. Members: Very small.

Mr Ikoku: Now this Region is being called upon to spend £385,600 capital expenditure on these provinces and the recurrent annual expenditure of just under £60,000 on a project which has no real significance. They can sit down in their Provincial Assemblies and talk

themselves hoarse, it does not make a single impression on Government.

An hon. Member: What of Ghana?

Mr Ikoku: I am glad that a Member has referred me to Ghana. If only I can refer him to Ghana it has been found that the Provincial Assemblies there are being wound up.

Now, Sir, I turn to the position of Chiefs in this Region. We are happy that the House of Chiefs is being set up and of course we are going to give all the necessary co-operation to see the House set up. But I want to observe, Sir, that we have now at last realised the importance of Chiefs in this Region. We are now going to give them legislative status but they have many other functions which they are performing, the most important of which is the maintenance of law and order in their own areas. In fact, we have a law whereby a Chief is to be held responsible for a major breach of public peace in his own area. He is also performing functions connected with the collection of taxes. These Chiefs, according to the White Paper of the Government, have now to become agents of the Government and I do not see any reason why these parading pickups should be known as Provincial Commissioners and why they should receive a salary of £2,400 a year while these Chiefs do not. The suggestion of the Opposition—and we say it with all seriousness—is that all our Chiefs should be provided for, either from Regional or Local Government funds or from both. Our Chiefs must be provided for.

Let me come to Customary courts. We notice that about half of these courts have been set up so far. We hope that the rate will be accelerated. The Chiefs, as we are aware, know our customs and traditions better than the young people and it is the tradition of our people that form the law administered. The present arrangement has this one result, and that is that those who really know our customs are being elbowed out of the customary courts and young people who, because they can run to Enugu, are taking the posts. A possible reason why these Chiefs are being elbowed out of the customary courts is that there is a provision that you must be literate before you can be a President. It is a good thing but is this the right time to insist on this policy. (*Interruptions*).

Mr Speaker, I would like to draw your attention to the conduct of the Government Bench which is unsatisfactory. It is not my duty to reply to rudeness, but I would like to say that if they really mean to be rude we can pay them in their own coins. But I would like to point out, however, that Parliamentary privilege does not allow them to be rude. It allows them to interrupt but not to be rude.

I now turn to our development or rather the economic aspects of it. As far as I can gather, Sir, there are two major points. One is the Development Programme and the other is the need for the attraction of loans or investments in this Region. I would like to say that the creation of the Development Programme is a very welcome one and in fact we had been waiting for a long time to see it, but I wonder if it is sufficient. Of course the Minister of Finance will have ample opportunity to prove to me that it is more than sufficient. But I should just like to give you a few figures.

The four-year Development Programme is to cost £16.6 million. This works out at capital development or a Development Programme of 11s 6d per head of population per annum. I thought our finances were very buoyant, and unusually buoyant, and that we could afford to spend more. Our finances are the best in the whole Federation but it is significant to note that the Western Region Five-year Development Programme at the cost of £32.7 million works out at 21s per head of population per annum. (*Interruptions*).

When I talk about these figures I would like those who do not take time to read their papers to keep quiet. What I am saying, Sir, is true and I challenge the Government Chief Whip to disprove these figures in this House. I am saying that our Four-year Development Programme works out at 11s 6d per head of population per annum and in the Western Region it works out at 21s per head of population per annum. It is interesting to note that some people say these figures are fair but I am quite sure they have never even seen the figures.

The next point, Sir, about this Development Programme is that it is still off-sighted. A good deal of the projects do not really go

[MR IKOKU]

where they might help the economic development of the Region. It is only £910,000 over four years which will go into real economic development. The rest will go merely to buildings, printing press, so on and so forth. So it is very off-sighted. We are going to spend £16.6 million on capital development but it is only £910,000 of that money, which is about 5 per cent, that is meant for economic development for the whole Region.

On this question of attraction of foreign capital, Sir, I would like to make it clear (we have said it before and we would like to emphasise it) that we cannot secure these loans in a vacuum. Certain things have happened in this Region and we must take certain concrete steps before we can convince these foreign investors to bring money into this Region and I would like to suggest to our Friends opposite that it is not enough to spread silent views about accommodating foreign capital. We must do definite things and I am suggesting these things to them.

The first is that we must create a political atmosphere in this Region which will reassure these foreign investors. Most of them, in view of our history, have to come from the Western world and we must do our best to create a political atmosphere in some way similar to what those people are used to before they will be prepared to spend their capital in this Region.

Secondly, the way we treat our Civil Servants and our Expatriate Civil Servants will be a very important index in the calculation of the foreign investor.

Thirdly, the way we treat the Expatriate businessmen already in the country or Region will be a very important index which will influence the calculation of the foreign investor.

I would like to make it clear that we are at a point in our development when the Government must first of all make a research into our problem before trying to provide anything. The fundamental error with the Government policy is that there is no scientific investigation into the economic problem of the Region. As a result, it is impossible for them to provide a correct solution. They cannot

solve the problem because they do not understand it. They should understand this problem in all its ramifications.

Several hon. Members: Give us the analysis !

Mr Ikoku: The question of unemployment has got to be settled. There is a lot of unemployment in this Region. The figure is so large that the Labour Department is completely at a loss to provide us with accurate figures. There is no village in this Region where there is no unemployment or underemployment. But the problem is there and every hon. Member here knows that that problem is a large one and it is very important that something be done immediately. This problem of unemployment will be considerably alleviated if we succeed in getting the Government Departments to expand public works in their areas by way of loan. It will be possible for every Local Government Council to provide work for every unemployed.

Mr Speaker: The hon. Member has five minutes to wind up.

Mr Ikoku: If the Local Government Councils can provide more work for people within the areas of their operation, it will be found that the total impact of unemployment will be reduced. It is time that the workers in the public corporations of this Region were given the same scale of salary as their counterparts in the Civil Service. It is time that the daily paid worker were given a substantial rise in his wages.

It is time, Sir, that the Workmen's Insurance became compulsory and incumbent on every employer of labour in this Region. Sometimes the workers sustain accidents that maim them for life and they do not get any compensation for it. It is time, Sir, that Government made it compulsory for employers to insure all workers in their employment.

It is about time the Government considered seriously raising the prices of palm produce.

In order to create equal opportunities for all—and this is very important—the Government should take steps to restore the U.P.E.; and not only restore the Universal Primary Education but should take steps to

set up University Evening Classes in big townships like Enugu, Port Harcourt and Calabar for the benefit of young Civil Servants who would like to continue their studies in their spare time.

Next, Sir, on the question of inviting foreign capital, I would like to make four recommendations to Government. The first is that they should invite the F.B.I. (Federation of British Industries) to tour this Region. If that organisation, Sir, could send us a panel of three or five of their trusted men to tour this Region and produce a report on the economic potentialities of this Region, it would be the greatest positive advertisement for the economy of this Region.

Several hon. Members: Why the F.B.I.?

Mr Ikoku: The answer is clear. The British are our guarantors and they are the people who are going to tell about us to other countries of the Western world. What do hon. Members think a German investor would feel of the Eastern Region if the British investor does not think well of us?

Furthermore, Sir, we must have Industrial Estate. The Speech from the Throne promises us one for Port Harcourt, but I do not see the reason why it should be confined to Port Harcourt alone. We have suitable places like Owerri and Calabar.

Next comes the question of Joint Projects, which should be jointly financed by both private investors and Corporations in the Eastern Region. We need these Joint Projects. That is, the Government of the Eastern Region, acting either directly or through the medium of public Corporations in this Region, could go into partnership with foreign concerns to establish light industries in this Region.

My next suggestion is going to cost us some money, but we have to do it. In order to reassure the foreign investors, we should be prepared to underwrite initial losses which would be incurred as a result of these Joint Enterprises. If we can make these conditions known to the foreign investors I think we will be in a very happy position.

In conclusion, Sir, I would like to say that it is a pity Standing Orders, or Mr Speaker

himself, is not prepared to give more time to develop our arguments, but my main thesis is that before the Government can promise a sound programme for economic rehabilitation of this Region, it must have a sound analysis of the economic problems that face us, and until this is done the programme is mere groping in the dark and it is time we stopped groping in the dark.

Mr C. A. Abangwu (Nsukka Division): Mr Speaker, I rise to support the Motion for a Humble Address of Thanks to His Excellency the Governor for His Excellency's Most Gracious Speech from the Throne.

It is a matter for gratification that the 1959-60 Speech from the Throne is the most comprehensive we have had here for many years and it is my earnest hope that both sides of the House will appreciate it as such. The document detailed out not only the activities of this Government in the past year but also its proposals for the ensuing financial year.

In addition, the Speech went further to detail Government's development plans up to 1962 which Members will remember is the end of the life of this hon. House. We should pay great tribute to the Government for their courage and foresight in putting up the grand plans envisaged in the Speech.

Mr Speaker, allow me also to pay tribute to His Excellency the Governor for the very able way in which he delivered the Speech. It was evidence of self-discipline and a worthy symbol of Her Majesty the Queen in this hon. House. I cannot pass this section of my Speech without saying that the entire people of the Region were anxious about the health of His Excellency the Governor some months ago but that we were greatly relieved when he returned to the Region from a United Kingdom hospital looking hale and hearty. No doubt, all will join me in wishing him a great lease of health for long among us in discharging his onerous duties.

I am personally gratified that Government proposes to reduce its 14 Ministries to ten in the interest both of economy and of efficiency as I was one of those who this time last year, both inside and outside of this House, put forward

[MR ABANGWU]

this suggestion to the annoyance of some Members. I still have no doubt that the integration of Ministries sought will make for greater efficiency in the Ministries in the discharge of public duties. I have also noted with due satisfaction that it is the intention of Government to follow the example of our sister country Ghana and appoint Provincial Commissioners from within this House with the status of Regional Ministers. Those whose lot it will be to fall redundant as a result of the integration of Ministries, will be absorbed as Provincial Commissioners.

When, therefore, some well-meaning Members of this hon. House make suggestions of this nature, let not interested parties impute improper motives. It is my belief that in all public dealings by accredited representatives of the people and other public-spirited men, the well-being of the public should be the foremost driving motive. (*Hear! Hear!*)

I welcome Government's plan to establish a Regional House of Chiefs in the very near future. I have no doubt that our future Members of the projected House of Chiefs would acquit themselves with dignity and pageantry and prove themselves equal to their counterparts in the other Regions of the Federation of Nigeria. I would, however, wish to see not just a weak, rubber-stamp type of a House of Chiefs religiously treading the path of the Government, but one in which supporters and opposers of Government will be amply represented (*Hear! Hear!*) and so enable that House to contribute usefully to the conduct of public affairs of this Region.

I think the present allocation of seats is fairly equitable and with minor alterations the present position should be suffered to be tried out; after this, let experience be our guide in composing the next House of Chiefs.

It is Government's proposal also to amend the Eastern House of Assembly Law, so as *inter alia* to increase its membership to 146, as agreed upon in the last London Constitutional Conference. In effecting this proposal a lot of consequential work falls to be done: the tedious task of dividing the Region into single member constituencies, the compiling

of a more reliable population census of the Region, and the adaptation of the Federal census register for regional purposes.

I would like to butt in here that in the White Paper allocating the present eighty-four seats to the Region, Nsukka Division did not get its fair share when we got only seven seats. (*Opposition Members: That's N.C.N.C. Government*). Now that extra sixty-two seats have been allocated to the Region, my Division should double its present quota at least; that is, that we should have at least ten seats in the new House.

I welcome Government's plan for Provincial Administration. As an innovation, let us all give it a fair trial. If it works well, we should strive to make it even more perfect; but if it does not, we shall have no hesitation in scrapping it whole and entire.

In respect of Enugu Province, consisting of Nsukka, Udi, and Awgu Divisions, it is the ardent wish of my people, indeed of the whole people of the U.N.A.U.F. area, that the headquarters of the Province should be at or near the Ninth-Mile Corner, which is the convenient centre for the three Divisions. We oppose making Enugu Township our headquarters because, among other things, it will be swallowed up in the maze of things in Enugu. Let the factors of economy taken into consideration in establishing the other eleven provincial headquarters be applied to our own province as well.

This Region is now self-governing. Many amenities are now allocated on Divisional basis: scholarships, road tarring, water supplies, etc. etc. I am urging the Government to do the same in respect of appointments into the Regional Public Service, particularly in Administration. Let special allocations be made for the more backward areas of the Region. Could you believe that in the whole of Nsukka Division, we have not a single indigenous Administrative Officer and have only three Education Officers in the whole upper rungs of the Public Service? I therefore urge that a special quota of Senior Civil Servants should be allocated to backward areas.

Naturally, I am in full support of Government in its University of Nigeria policy. We

from Nsukka Division have made land available and are urging the Government to speed up its programmes so that work may soon start on the site. (*Applause*). Mr Speaker, in the realm of Agriculture, I am more than pleased that Government has decided to establish farms for our economic crops: cocoa, palm trees and rubber. It is to be hoped that these farms shall be large-scale and spread over many parts of the Region to stem the horrible influx of thousands of young Easterners into the Fernando Po Islands where it is said the Spanish planters use them like near-slaves. The Eastern Region Development Corporation should be urged to undertake these large-scale state farms.

In the field of education, let us congratulate the Government for the steady progress so far made. Let us hope that the Universal Primary Education will be gradually extended year by year until full free primary education is restored in its entirety in five years from now (1963).

Government is to be congratulated for the tax reduction contained in the First and Fifth Schedules presented and passed in the current meeting in this House. There is no doubt that the present tax is heavy on the tax-payers. But we have so many things to do for our people in so short a time. Let us hope, however, that in no distant future Government will come out with substantial reductions in tax to all classes of income tax-payers. To offset this, this Government should press upon the Federal Government to increase its tax appreciably on many of the luxury imported goods: whisky, gin, beer, brandy, tobacco, shoes, woollen dress and materials, motor cars and motor spirits and such like things which tend to drain the money from this country.

In the field of health, we still lack doctors and hospitals. One Mission hospital for the whole of half a million people of Nsukka is grossly inadequate. I urge upon the Government to plan to build one cottage hospital for each Rural District Council area in the Region. The Region has been reasonably quoted during the past year. It is a credit both to the people of the Region and the Government. But there is one important point.

I refer to the unfortunate Odozi Obodo Society in Abakaliki Division. We are all familiar with this horrible society with its catalogue of murders and destruction. Hundreds of people from that Division are standing or have stood, murder trials.

Several hon. Members: Shame! Shame! to them.

Mr Abangwu: The entire village life in that Division has been disorganised and there are tales of sorrow and woe. What can we do for this devastated Division? It is not enough to institute these mass murder trials and hang those found guilty thereby. It is in my submission more fundamental than that. We must find the root cause of this evil and seek a beneficial remedy.

I call upon the Government to institute a high-powered Commission of Inquiry into the causes (remote and immediate) of the Odozi Obodo Society and its effect on the people of the Division and recommend means of averting its recurrence in future and the programme for the rehabilitation of the people there.

Mr Speaker, I will thank the Government for banning the Society, but this is not enough. I will go further to urge the Director of Public Prosecutions, Eastern Region, to put an end to all murder trials originating from the activities of the Society as I believe that most of the people involved were victims of involuntary forces of backwardness, of ignorance and of compulsion.

Several hon. Members: The people must be hanged.

Mr Abangwu: The rehabilitation of these people . . . (*Interruptions*).

Mr Speaker: The hon. Member is not expected to make such references.

Mr Abangwu: I am sorry, Sir, I hope it is not a ruling. Mr Speaker, I am entitled in this hon. House to table in advance a point which I think would be of benefit to the people no matter what department it refers to. It may be to the Local Government or other departments . . . (*Interruptions*).

[MR ABANGWU]

The rehabilitation of these people, more schools, hospitals, scholarships, churches and the good things of life, would do more to these unfortunate 600 thousand people than the gallows.

Finally, let me congratulate all those who had lent a hand in fashioning a Constitution for Nigeria which will usher in Independence in 1960.

Mr A. J. Ekpe (Opobo Division): Mr Speaker, Sir, in rising to contribute to the Motion of thanks for His Excellency's most Gracious Speech from the Throne, I wish to re-emphasise a matter which occupied such a prominent position in the agenda of the Constitutional Conference concluded last year in London—namely—the Fundamental Human Rights. Parliamentary democracy itself, about which so much has been said in this House, derives its strength and vigour from these fundamental human rights and for the refreshment of the memories of hon. Members I will give a short functional definition of democracy as it is generally formulated and understood today. It is a political regime in which all classes of the population without exception of colour, race or creed, enjoy at all times, not only guarantees of personal securities but also a series of civil rights the most important of which are association, assembly, expression, and information; so that the population can, with the greatest independence, take a maximum part in all important forms of political activity while the actual Government is carried on by genuine representatives and is subject, in the last resort, to the consent of the governed.

Sir, if we accept this view, which of course is widely held, and use it as a testing rod for our Government, we shall at once see, and clearly too, where it has fallen short of this standard concept. We shall see that this Government has used its newly won internal political emancipation to forge chains for the minorities of the Region by prevaricating on the issue of the loudly expressed desires of the minorities to be constituted into the Calabar-Ogoja-Rivers State. We shall see that this Government has used victimisation to muzzle and crush opposition to it and by a widespread bestowal of undeserved patronage encouraged

political sycophancy. Mr Obioha and his dependants have been made to suffer by withdrawing his licence buying agency, and Dr Egesi has been suffered by removing him from membership of one of the public Corporations. We shall see that by democratic processes this Government has either by chance or ignorantly overloaded its Premier with dangerously absolute executive and political weapons with which he is clearing obstacles and hurdles on his way to omnipotence.

Last year, when we were discussing the White Paper on which was foreshadowed the Provincial set-up, I did argue on the floor of this House that it is a tragedy to load one single man with so much power in the name of co-ordination so that he can use this power to crush his political opponents. The events of the past months have borne out these facts and later in my speech I shall illustrate some examples; but meanwhile, I shall now go to the various claims made and proposals contained in the Speech from the Throne.

The Speech itself is like a bald-headed gentleman who attempts to hide his baldness with a transparent nylon cap. It is easy even for a casual reader to see through labyrinths of inconsistencies and false claims. At page 1, paragraph 4 of the Speech, we are told that in the interest of economy the ministries are reorganised and reduced to 10, and yet in the Bill for a Law to provide for the Establishment of the Provincial Assemblies, a Provisional Commissioner is a Minister of State resident in the province. We have 14 Ministers and one Premier and we complained that they were too many, but now they are increasing that strength to 22. That is not economy at all. We had 15 Ministers formerly; now we are going to have 10 Ministers plus 12 Commissioners (each enjoying Ministerial status); that is, 22. An increase of seven Ministers is economy!

The functions of these proposed Provincial Assemblies are purely advisory; they have no executive powers at all. They are not empowered to spend a single penny for the development of their area. In what respect then will they benefit the people of this Region? Certainly, Provincial Assemblies are the medium through which the Premier will run and govern. (Interruption).

Mr Speaker: What has Mr Ekpe said?

The Minister of Commerce (Mr J. U. Nwodo): He said that the setting up of an Assembly is the medium through which the Premier will run. The language is not parliamentary.

Mr Ekpe: Provincial Administration is a sham. It is like the Brazen Image dreamt of by King Nebuchadnezzar. As was aptly described in the *Book of Daniel*, Chapter 2, verses 31-49, the Provincial set-up is like a Brazen Image whose great brightness and form were terrible. It had a head of fine gold and feet of potters clay. Has the Provincial Assembly any legislative or executive powers? No. Can it decide policy? No. Has it power to raise money for the needs of its areas? No. Can it spend any money whatsoever on the needs of its people? No. What is such a set-up worth other than a medium through which the poor are oppressed, the bold maimed and the stooge and the idle raised to the banquet table?

Congratulations for the Opobo Hospital but electric plant should be provided. There should also be a reduction of medical fees to afford poor men to benefit from the medical service.

With regard to the House of Chiefs, where recognised systems of Village Groups and Clan Headships exist, these should be strictly followed.

With respect to Town Planning, I am sorry to say that Uyo, Ikot Ekpene, Opobo, Abak and Eket are left out.

With respect to Development Programme, rural areas have been left out while C.O.R. areas have been poorly provided for. That announcement was viewed very seriously and with great concern by my people.

We felt that we have already had our own system and nobody is going to tamper with our system. We have our chiefs, we have our clan heads, and group heads. All these were there long, long ago. We did not create them but these people have no Chiefs.

I really want to say that I feel greatly honoured that the Amanyanabo of Opobo has been elected First-class Chief. That is as it should really be. It is honour to that ancient and historical city of Opobo but, again, Sir, there have been other chieftaincies in the division which have not been given due consideration. The Mbong Ikpa Isong of Ibibio and Annang areas and the chieftaincy of ancient historic Obolo in Opobo Division. All these chieftaincies should have been given due consideration in view of the ancient tradition obtaining in that area. I hope, Sir, that during the year the Government will give further consideration to the matter.

It is also regretted that the Speech from the Throne read out made no suggestions for Town Planning in Uyo, Ikot Ekpene, Abak, Eket, and Ogoja Provinces. It is only significant, Sir, that in a statement of policy as made through the Speech from the Throne, Government should have taken all the areas into consideration. All this talk about Provincial Assemblies and attempts to allay the fears of the minorities, to me, appears to be absolutely irrelevant. They have no significance. We should have a real Development Programme of the areas and not concentrate some development in some particular areas. How can such a Government allay the fears of the minorities? It is really very, very sad indeed.

Again, Sir, the Minister of Town Planning and his Colleagues in the Cabinet have not carried out development in our area, an area of over one and three-quarter million people. It is a pity indeed. In the Development Programme I find that not one brass farthing has been allocated to Opobo Division, and this goes to confirm what the N.C.N.C. Government has said that nothing will be done for Opobo.

Mr Nwodo: What about the hospital?

Mr Ekpe: And I will say that this is deliberate even though there is an hon. Member for Opobo who is in the Government Party. He has done nothing for his constituency. If I were him I would resign my post. It is all very fine to write down on the White Paper that Provincial Administration will look into

[MR EKPE]

the scholarship scheme and so on, but I want to say that that is impracticable. We agreed that scholarship must be based on Division; we knew that some areas are more developed than us; we knew that there are more qualified people than us. That is why if you look at the scholarship scheme you will be shocked that our Division has been overlooked.

I am happy to hear that a small Iceland will be set up in Opofo to experiment on the possibilities of a fishing industry. But why should this project be done on a small scale purely for experimental purposes? Why should not there be something on a big scale to encourage fishing industry in this area? I am shocked, Sir.

I notice that in the new Development Programme no provision has been made for the bulk of the rural areas. Let us not forget that these rural areas play a most important part in the economy of this country. Financial institutions such as co-operative societies should be encouraged in the rural areas because this is about the only means by which the local people can develop their resources. It is unfortunate to note that in the Development Programme very lean provision has been made for this. I would like to draw the attention of the appropriate Minister to this apparent oversight. I will go into details when we discuss the White Paper. Thank you, Sir.

Mr E. U. Eronini (Owerri Division): Mr Speaker, Sir, I am happy to be given an opportunity to make some observations on the classification of Chiefs. It is difficult to understand what are the criteria by which First-class Chiefs are selected. In some parts of Ibo land some Chiefs are what I may call "Juju priests". In the Rivers area there are some Amanyanabos that I seem to regard as the counterparts of Juju priests originally.

Chief Amachree rose.

Mr Speaker: Is the hon. Member rising on a point of order?

Chief S. J. Amachree (Degema Division): Mr Speaker, Sir, Standing Order 25 (5). The Amanyanabo is a king. It is an insult.

Mr Speaker: The reference by Chief Amachree, I think, does not hold here because that speaks about Members of the House.

Chief Amachree: Mr Speaker, it is on a point of information.

Mr Eronini: Mr Speaker, in paragraph 7, page 2 (Provincial Administration) of the Speech from the Throne, it is said that:—

"In conformity with the policy which was enunciated in a White Paper laid on the Table of this House as a Sessional Paper in November, 1957, it is intended as soon as legislation has been enacted, to devolve certain powers upon Provinces. Following consultation with interested parties, my Government has now decided to establish twelve Provinces in this Region, believing that this decision will enable those who live in geographically contiguous territory, and who have similar characteristics of language and culture, to associate themselves more closely in smaller units for ease of administration".

My point of argument, Sir, is that I cannot see how these twelve provinces are arrived at. Unless they are based under the formula of the twelve tribes of Israel whereby we are to be divided to have twelve provinces, in other words the twelve provinces of Israel are the Eastern Region. If it is by language, then I would like to ask: what of the Degema Division which has now been carved into two provinces when both have one language and that is the Ijaw language, and is of the Ijaw tribe? If it is by population, it has no bearing. If it is by transport, the fact about it, Sir, is that in the Rivers, now each Division will have a launch with which the Administrative Officers and even the Commissioner could travel; and Yenagoa and Degema are so near to each other by launch or car.

An hon. Member: By how many miles?

Mr Eronini: Let me tell the hon. Member that I know the place. One can travel from the hulk at Degema by car to Ahoada and then take up the Yenagoa-Ahoada road to Yenagoa. It is a question of hours. So there is no need to tell us of transport difficulties. Even one can go from Yenagoa to Degema either by car or by launch; and the people there can hold their meetings at Yenagoa at one time and at Degema at another time. At one time the District Officer at Degema was in charge of the whole of the Division then known as Degema Division with Brass as a sub-division.

I would like to say, Sir, that if one refers to the White Paper on the twelve Provinces, Bende Province is 713,000, Abakaliki 834,000; and Enugu Province (which is the only province large enough) is one million and seven thousand. Onitsha Province has 761,000; Annang Province 521,000; Uyo Province (the only large Province in Calabar) has 858,000. The next is Port Harcourt with 512,000; the Annang Province with 521,000 is not bigger than Owerri Division. Yenagoa has 127,000 and is not as big as Mbaise in Owerri Division. Degema Province has a population of 118,000 and is not as big as Mbaitoli in Owerri Division. Orlu Division with a population of 356,000 is more than four of the provinces they are now building on. Okigwi with a population of 443,000 is more than four of the provinces which they are building on. Owerri which is 516,000 is more than six of the provinces.

The attempts to divide the non-Ibo from the Ibo block cannot materialise. The fact is that Okigwi and Orlu put together is 800,000 and is more than eight of the provinces. Owerri alone is more than six provinces and there is agitation now in Owerri—Mbaise is seeking to be a separate Division. The reason is that we are suffering because of our thick population.

Mr Speaker, I would like to read the functions of the Commissioners. When one refers to the functions of the Commissioners one will see that these Divisions which they have brought together will suffer immensely. The functions of the Provincial Assemblies are to deliberate and advise the Government; to make recommendations to the Government through the Provincial Commissioners on the priority of the allocation of funds for development purposes and for existing services in the country, to ensure that fundamental human rights as embodied in the Nigeria Constitution are protected and safeguarded in the area of the provinces by making recommendations to the Government through the Provincial Commissioners. Otherwise, such human rights are perpetually in danger. In areas where the population is great, the human rights are interfered with or left unestablished; (by population, Orlu should have its own Commissioner, Okigwi should have its own Commissioner, and Owerri should as well have its own Commissioner); to approach members of the Provincial Scholarship Board to make recommendations to the appropriate Ministries

responsible for awarding Government scholarships allocated to the Provinces. That is the crux of the whole matter, and both Owerri and Okigwi Divisions for that matter, have been complaining that they are not getting their fair share of the scholarships. It has been known already that they are not having their fair share. Now it is proposed to merge them together; when a place like Degema is given two scholarships, Owerri, Orlu and Okigwi are given two also. And we will come to this House and say that things must be done on Provincial basis and then we keep quiet in order to satisfy others. We do not want to do that.

On the distribution of First-class Chiefs, Degema Province with its present allocation is only 118,000 and Yenagoa is 127,000 and both put together are not up to Orlu Division. There is Amanyanabo of Kalabari which has never been in existence for a century. It is not the question of war. In Okrika, there has never been an Amanyanabo for a long time.

An hon. Member: How do you know?

Mr Eronini: I am saying what I know. Now, there will be the Amanyanabo of Bonny, one First-class Chief representing that Province, and Okrika, the largest town there will have an Amanyanabo or First-class Chief.

I turn to Brass, or what is known today as Yenagoa. There will be the Amanyanabo of Nembe, but there is a quarrel whether it will be Nembe or something else, and then there will also be the Amanyanabo of Yenagoa. Then come to what will be known as Owerri Province. There is only the Obi of Oguta, that is one First-class Chief, whether for Owerri, Orlu or Okigwi, I do not know. This will give us trouble, plenty of it! We need a Provincial Assembly each for Okigwi, Orlu and Owerri.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I saw in the Order Paper a Motion to build a Bulk Oil Plant at Oguta. It is interesting to observe that I have always on the floor of this House spoken at length of the condition of oil which when left at Oguta for months before getting to Abonnema deteriorates. It has given ample chance to help unscrupulous buyers to purchase their oil at Oguta because before their Grade I oil reaches Abonnema it is declared not an SPO, but an ordinary technical oil. Why is the oil going up to Abonnema deteriorating? The reason is

[MR ERONINI]

that our oil when bought and is not taken to bulk oil plant to extract water and impurity, very quickly deteriorates.

If there is a bulk oil plant at Oguta, most of the oil from Owerri, Oguta, Orlu and Okigwi will go up to Oguta and one immediate advantage of this is the saving of the increased railway freight. The poor farmer in Okigwi instead of getting £50, which is the price, gets only £40 now. If one buys oil at Okigwi for £40 and takes it to Afikpo Road Railway Station to grade, and in addition pays £4 railway freight to Port Harcourt, before the oil gets to Port Harcourt, there is wastage to be calculated on the price per ton.

An hon. Member: Is that all? We want to know how they sell it.

Mr Eronini: I would like, Sir, to refer to page 9 of the Speech from the Throne; paragraph 38 reads:—

“The operations of the Eastern Regional Marketing Board for the calendar year 1958 revealed a gross trading surplus of £1,600,000. As a result of this favourable trading position the Board was able to meet heavy commitments into which it had entered in previous years . . .”.

I stop here for the moment and explain what I mean.

The Marketing Board, Sir, is an agent of the farmers and the producers. Our people have it as a parable that “an agent never makes a profit unless he is dishonest with his master”. The master can only pay the agent what the master bargains with the agent. The fact is that the Marketing Board sells to the world market and makes deductions for freight, commission and so on, and the balance becomes the fit price for the producer. If the Marketing Board pays more per ton to the producer, it will also make more profit plus export duty which will accrue to the Region because of more oil to be sold to the Board. In the present circumstances, all our oils are finding their way to the Western and Northern Regions.

Mr Speaker: The hon. Member has five minutes more to go.

Mr Eronini: So I feel, Sir, that most of the oils from Nsukka in particular find their way to the Northern Region. The oils from Nnewi and other nearby places in Onitsha Province find their way to Asaba in the Western Region, just along the Ossomari River and the other side of the River Niger. In the Western Region, they fetch very good prices, while the Eastern Region is losing both in export duty and in the quantity of oil it is supposed to have.

I am praying the Eastern Government to take this into consideration and pay a uniform producer's price all over the Region, no matter from what area the oil comes. It should also be responsible for the transport cost from the place of production to the Bulk Oil Plants. At the moment some areas receive much more for one ton of oil. As a result, producers go where they will have more money. In Nsukka the difference in price of oil is about £10 per ton, and if the Nsukka man takes his oil to the Northern Region he will get a good price there. If he is not given the full Eastern Region producer's price there is nothing to stop him from taking his oil to the Northern Region where the price is higher.

I am glad, Sir, that the Chairman of the Marketing Board, for the fact that he is now the Chairman of the E.R.D.C., has made £½ million available to that Corporation and has now allowed £100,000 every year to the same Corporation. I was only there to draw overdrafts from all the Banks. (*Laughter*). And there was a time, Sir, when even the Government allowed that some of the investments should be withdrawn and I refused to do it because I was going to lose £30 on every £100 withdrawn.

An hon. Member: Mr Ojukwu, Chairman of everything!

Mr Eronini: Mr Speaker, Sir, I think at one time I asked the Minister of Commerce a question on this. It is essential the Government must find a way in which the standard of living of the people of this Region could be raised. It is interesting to know that in as near as Ghana, U.A.C. quits Ghana cocoa trade. A big company as U.A.C. has felt it appropriate at this time to quit the cocoa trade for the indigenous natives of Ghana. Mr Speaker, Sir, with your permission, I will read a section of the

report contained in the *Daily Times* of 28th March, 1959 as follows:—

“The giant United Africa Company, Limited, Ghana, announced here last night that it had withdrawn from cocoa buying as licensed buying agents in Ghana. A Press statement said that the company had taken the decision because the return on capital involved in working as licensed buying agents has ceased to be satisfactory from the company's point of view and also because the company feels Ghanaian buying organisations have made sufficient progress to be able to handle the additional tonnage that will result from withdrawal”.

An hon. Member: That is not correct.

Mr Eronini: It is a thing you do not know. (*Laughter*). What has happened, Sir, is that here in the Eastern Region there are over twenty-four African licensed buying agents and they are in a position to handle the palm produce of this Region.

Sitting suspended at 10.45 a.m.

Sitting resumed at 11.15 a.m.

Mr Eronini: Mr Speaker, the little point I want to emphasise is that we are now getting to political emancipation and we must achieve economic emancipation as well. My reason for asking for a bulk oil plant to be built at Oguta is because the exporting firms are using their huge wealth to buy the oil there and storing same for a long period before it is transported to Abonnema. Ninety-nine per cent of the farmers are the people of this Region and must be helped to raise their standard of living.

Another point, Sir, is about roads. I see that although Awka-Orlu-Owerri road is being tarred, it seems to me that the tarring is inferior compared with other tarring jobs I have seen elsewhere, especially when compared with the Aba-Port Harcourt road.

Another point, Sir, is the Joint Hospital we are now handing over to agents and the Secondary Schools we are now allowing foreign agents to handle. We want the Minister of Health and the Minister of Education to make it a point of duty that there must

be a time limit, after which the position should be reviewed of joint agencies.

Mr Speaker: Will the hon. Member please wind up.

Mr Eronini: As I was saying, there must be a time to review the position. I think that time is coming when our natives will not get their ways and when our doctors and nurses will not be taken by these agents, with the result that our doctors and nurses will not be admitted. I earnestly ask that the position be reviewed.

Mr I. U. Imeh (Abak Division): Mr Speaker, I rise to support the Motion on an Address of Thanks for His Excellency's most Gracious Speech from the Throne. I must say, Mr Speaker, that Government has done a very good work for the past twelve months for the people of this Region. (*Applause*).

Right away, as I go along, I will make references to certain items, like the Provincial Administration. I am quite sure I will speak again on this question when the Bill comes up. But may I take this opportunity to record my people's appreciation of the Government's gesture in granting Annang provincial status.

I am well aware that this Government respects the views of the majority and I am quite sure that this Government will build its headquarters at Abak, among several other reasons, Abak being the most central in the Annang area. We have the Annangs in Opobo Division and they are coming to Abak; so also Annangs from Aba and from Ikot Etok-Urom and Ikot Onono; they shall all come to join us.

I should also like to say a little about the Public Service. They have done a very good work in general.

Mr Speaker, I would like to say a word or two to the Minister of Agriculture. Progress made by this Department is too slow. The Department is full of unnecessary experiments and it is time that these experiments were brought to a stop and I urge the Government to give loans to farmers for experimental purposes on what they have been shown for years.

[MR IMEH]

In addition to what I have said about the Agricultural Department, I do not know what the Fisheries Department is doing. In fact, they are doing nothing. They should concentrate and give loans to farmers so that they may be able to develop their fish ponds. I would not appreciate it if they continued with these experiments. Rather than that I would prefer that the Department be closed down.

May I say a word or two on the question of Marketing Boards? Before doing so I would like to put on record my own personal appreciation of the Produce Inspection Service. They have done very good work in the past years and the new introduction of testing of palm oil at B.O.P.s is excellent. Now that the responsibility of testing oil has been placed on Licensed Buying Agents, I would call upon the Government to maintain this policy. It is noted, Sir, that there was no price increase given to farmers. (*Interruptions*).

Mr Speaker: I am finding it difficult to hear the hon. Member's speech. Would you, hon. Members, please try to lessen your interruptions otherwise not many of you will have the chance to speak. I suggest you pause to give sufficient time to the man who is going to speak.

Mr Imeh: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I hope hon. Members will listen attentively to the points raised by Members.

I note in the Speech from the Throne that a profit of £1.6 million has been made in 1958 but it is shocking, Sir, that when the price for 1959-60 palm oil was announced there was a decrease instead of an increase. I should have expected, Sir, that out of this £1.6 million at least a slice could have been given to the farmers themselves.

Certain people are only called upon by the Marketing Board to be agents; they are paid a certain commission as the last speaker said, so that that has nothing to do with the raising of the standard of living of the farmers themselves as the increase is the farmers' money. I should have thought that the farmers should be well looked after. But it has come to my notice that the world-marketing price ranges from £78 to £89 per ton of Special Palm Oil.

If that much, Sir, is got by the Marketing Board there is no reason why the price of produce to all the farmers should not be standardised. I appeal through you, Mr Speaker, that the price for all the farmers should be standardised so that it does not matter what a Licensed Buying Agent is paid as commission, that will be dependent on his distance from the nearest Bulk Oil Plant, so that if a Licensed Buying Agent chooses to operate his business at a distance of forty miles to the B.O.P. the Marketing Board will pay commission for that. If he chooses to stay at 100 miles distance from the B.O.P. he will be paid the differential according to distance.

I am calling upon the Minister of Production to look into this matter of price of produce being standardised so that when a man at Nsukka is having, say, £60 per ton for S.P.O. a man at Abakaliki should have £60 per ton for S.P.O. The commission paid to Licensed Buying Agents should be determined by the Marketing Board themselves depending upon the distance to the B.O.P. Why I make this point is because the farmers must pay their taxes and pay quickly too. They must raise their standard of living. They must pay the school fees for their children. That is why I make this point.

When I look at the Speech from the Throne as regards commerce, I should have loved to know how much of the one million tons of oil produced by the Shell-B.P. amounted in pounds, shillings and pence. But the figure was just given and left like that. We do not know what these people are doing—how much royalties have been paid. We do not know and we should have loved to know all these things. We should not be left in the deep sea that one million tons of oil was produced. In fact it is meaningless to us. I should have loved to know how much has gone into the pocket of the Eastern Government.

I am sorry to remark, Mr Speaker, that the Department of Commerce is the poorest. Such a Department should be improved. Thank God, Sir, that most of these departments have been merged and I hope to see improvements.

May I say a word or two on education? I quite appreciate the difficulty encountered

by the Minister of Education when he launched the U.P.E. Scheme in 1957. I supported its modification. I would, however, urge the Government to withhold some of its building projects and expand the fee-free classes to Standard two in 1960. I will go very closely into that. That is the year of Independence. We want to see something done in the way of education so that we parents will face that year with smiling faces. We must minimise some of our building projects and manage with what we have in order to be in a position to reduce some of the fees paid in the Senior Primary schools.

Mr Speaker, may I make a few remarks on the last Standard Six results. I looked with great concern on the delay of the results of the Standard Six examinations in some of the schools and it is not known why some of the schools had their first results at the same time as the supplementary results. There was one particular school in my area (A.M.E. Zion Ikono) which only got their first results on the 16th of March, 1959. This is very disturbing. It left the Headmaster restless, parents, pupils and the whole community in my area in an embarrassing position. I appreciate there might have been some reasons for holding up these results, but the Headmaster should have been informed of these reasons. I therefore call upon the hon. Minister of Education to look closely into this state of things to ensure that such delay is not repeated in future.

As regards the conversion of five Government schools into secondary schools, I regret to note that up till now nothing has been done to implement this plan. I hope the Minister of Education will also look into this and see that this is done without any further delay, so that our Government School at Ikot Ibritam in Abak may be converted.

May I add, Sir, that I have noted with great concern the great increase in school fees in secondary schools. The hon. Minister of Education should make a thorough survey of school fees paid in all secondary schools and thereupon take steps to ensure that standardised fees are paid in all secondary schools. After all, teachers in secondary schools are paid by Government through one source. Such being the case, there must be a uniform fee in all the secondary schools. I appeal to the hon. Minister of Education to take appropriate

steps to introduce a standardised school fee in all secondary and teacher training institutions in the Region.

I suggest very humbly, Mr Speaker, that the Minister of Education should take a keen interest in this and look into it and standardise the fees in all these Secondary Schools and Teacher Training Colleges. May I say here that in 1957 when I sent a chap to a T.T.C. the fee then was just £24 per annum but it was shocking that the following year—and that is 1958—the fee mounted to £36. I do not know how these increases arise so that I call upon the Government to look into it.

It is not my intention, Mr Speaker, to dwell on the question of finance, since I may be privileged to speak on the Budget Speech which was presented to this House by the Minister of Finance, but I must point out one thing, that I sing my praises to the Government for implementing its decisions and keeping its promise to nationalise the African Continental Bank. This I may say is one of the happiest news of the year.

With regard to health, the Minister of Health deserves my praise and my people appreciate his granting them two rural health centres, although some Divisions might have got up to three or four; but we are very grateful, Mr Speaker, to the Minister of Health for granting us two and we look forward to the immediate future when two more will be granted to the remaining two Rural District Council Areas.

Mr E. O. Eyo: Are they all N.C.N.C. ?

Mr Imeh: Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to say that the Government Bench should follow up its policy of providing at least one hospital in a Rural District Council Area. I think it is Government policy now to provide at least one hospital in a Rural District Council Area, so that I would like Government to pursue that policy. In concluding my remarks on the Ministry of Health, I would say that it is the best of intention for Government to allow school children to have free medical services. I say that this should be extended to Mission hospitals.

Eastern House of Assembly Debates

195

[*Moment of interruption*

3 APRIL 1959

Adjournment

196

And it being 11.45 a.m. Mr Speaker interrupted the business and the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed on Monday, 6th April, 1959.

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved: That this House do now adjourn
(*The Minister of Commerce, Mr J. U. Nwodo*).

Adjourned accordingly at thirteen minutes to twelve o'clock noon.

EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Monday, 6th April, 1959

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

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ORDER OF THE DAY

Governor's Speech (Debate on the Address)

(FOURTH ALLOTTED DAY)

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question (31st March):

"That a Humble Address of Thanks be presented to His Excellency the Governor, for His Excellency's Most Gracious Speech."

Question again proposed.

Mr I. U. Imeh (Abak Division): Mr Speaker, before the debate was adjourned on Friday, I was speaking on the Medical Department and the point I was referring to was free medical treatment for school children in Government hospitals. I notice that in many Divisions there are no Government hospitals; instead we have what are generally known as Mission hospitals. I wish to call on the Government to extend this facility to children who attend the Mission hospitals in areas where there are no Government hospitals.

On behalf of Voluntary Agencies, Mr Speaker, I am making three appeals. My first appeal is to increase grants towards Nursing Sisters in Voluntary Agency hospitals. It is not encouraging to see that most of our African Nursing Sisters do not like to work in Voluntary Agency hospitals. They prefer to work in Government hospitals because of the salary that is paid there. Most of the European Nursing Sisters in Voluntary Agency hospitals receive salaries ranging from £300 to £500 per annum. Yet these Nursing Sisters have the same qualifications as Nursing Sisters in Government hospitals. African Nursing Sisters, therefore, do not like to be on the staff of Voluntary Agency hospitals because of the wide gap existing between the salaries of Government Nursing Sisters and Voluntary Agency Nursing Sisters. I wish Government will look into this.

My second appeal, Sir, is on Capital Grants. I feel that Government should provide the Mission Hospitals with Capital Grants for accommodation for its Nursing Sisters. I have noticed that most private hospitals and Mission hospitals charge exorbitant fees. They do this just in order to make sufficient money to build quarters for the Nursing Sisters and the Doctors, whereas if Government stepped in and gave them capital grants, I am quite sure, Mr Speaker, that they would charge lower fees as is done in Government hospitals.

My third appeal is on the question of paying the Staff Nurse or Nurses. I have noticed that Government does not like to continue to pay increased salaries to Nurses who have been promoted to Grade I Nurse or Staff Nurse grade as it is called. This is not very encouraging; after all, the nurses in the Voluntary Agency hospitals do exactly the same work as nurses in Government hospitals. I would appeal to the Minister of Health to make the conditions of service there attractive to the nurses so that our young men and women may join the Voluntary Agency Hospitals.

May I make a few remarks on the Ministry of Internal Affairs? It is noted with great pleasure here that under the new arrangement, Community Development is under the portfolio of the Minister of Internal Affairs. I would say that Abak is highly interested in Community Development and in paragraph 70 of His Excellency's Speech, it is noted that eight Government Bailey bridges were launched in 1958. We in Abak Division would like to be considered for Bailey bridges if the Government at present has not got sufficient money to build permanent bridges across the three important District Council Areas. If you happen to go to Abak Division, Mr Speaker, you will note that a river divides the Division into two parts and you cannot therefore go to the northern or western section of the Division without crossing water or river. You must cross the river before you get to the other side of the Division. So, two bridges have been provided at Ibagwa and Ikot Okoro. I am appealing to the Government to make funds available for the launching of Bailey bridges at Northern Ukanafun, Northern Afaha and Obong which have not been included in the four-year Development Plan.

[MR IMEH]

May I say that the Judicial Department has been doing a splendid work throughout the whole year (*Applause*). It is also a pleasure to note that the laws of the Region stand in need of revision.

Mr Speaker: The hon. Member has only five minutes more.

Mr Imeh: So, I will call upon the Government to look into the amendment of the Criminal Code so that Magistrates and Judges may be given more powers to deal severely with highway robbery which is now very, very rampant in the former Calabar Province, particularly in Uyo Division. The other day, a police constable happened to go to the Piccadilly Circus just to get a gallon of kerosene and his bicycle was stolen. He struggled to get back the bicycle from them and six strong men came out and stabbed him. The boy is now lying in the hospital. This menace is rather too much in that area and if the Magistrates and Judges are given more powers to deal with them severely, I think it will give them a real step to stop the crime. This kind of incident generally is called "Amauke" in the area, and in the Ibo land, I think it is called "Abanidiegwu" (*Laughter*). If they meet you on the way you are asked to surrender your life or you surrender your property. Not quite a month ago, a gang of them went to a village Utu Etim Ekpo with their dane guns and double barrels and they robbed an ex-constable who is a pensioner of his money and property and left him stark naked.

So I am making the point that the Criminal Code should be amended to give Judges and Magistrates more powers to deal very severely with this menace. It is high time, Sir, these offenders be court-martialled.

May I say a word or two about Local Government. Sir, I have got to congratulate the Ministry and the Minister of Local Government. He should go a little further. The Local Government services have been ruined by most of our sons of the soil (*Hear! Hear!*) When the Local Government servants are to be transferred, they will arrange to send a delegation to the Ministry and the next thing is that the Secretary will decide and call upon the Council for vague resolution by the Council

and then present this before the Ministry so that his service might be retained. I call upon the Minister that in such cases he should transfer that particular fellow at all cost, because he has something behind. Why does he go to the Ministry and ask for protection? Sometimes the Minister does not know at all. So, I call upon the Minister to continue his transfer of these people without waiting to hear the resolution of the Councils. I would say, if possible, all of them should be transferred from Annang Province and allow our Ibo brothers to come and work (*Applause*).

One point I would like to mention to the Minister of Local Government is on the increase of block grants. Already, in most of the Councils they have got to the ceiling of rates so that I call upon the Ministry of Local Government to increase Block Grants so that they might be able to meet their needs. Most of these Councils have many projects but they have not got the money to finance them. If the block grant is increased, I think they will be able to meet their commitments.

I will say a word or two about rural water supplies. Our people are very grateful to the hon. Minister of Works for providing wells all over the Division and we are very happy that the Headquarters of our Division is to be provided with pipe-borne water.

Mr J. A. Agba (Ogoja Division): Mr Speaker, Sir, I am very thankful for being called upon to speak. I will begin my speech by saying that the whole of the Governor's Speech, as far as I am concerned, leaves much to be desired. I am standing to say that the Government is very much lacking in distributive justice. I say this because the four-year Development Plan is almost running to its end and so also is the five-year Development Plan, but if you look through the Speech from the Throne, you will find that the Government has been concentrating its industrial projects in one section of the Eastern Region of Nigeria. I had rather thought that the Government would take into consideration the different Provinces constituting the Region and distribute its amenities or its experimenting industries to all the areas equally with a view to encouraging all sections in the Region. But it is very regrettable that on looking through the

Paper you will find that in the whole four-year Plan no mention has been made of Ogoja Province.

Mr M. N. Onwuma (Aba Division): But there is no more Ogoja Province.

Mr Agba: Similarly, in the whole five-year Plan, no mention has been made of Ogoja Province, not even a part of it. I am really ashamed to see that the Government Chief Whip, a man occupying a very important position in the Government, who is representing Ogoja in this hon. House, has been called upon to move the motion "That a Humble Address of Thanks be presented to His Excellency the Governor, for His Excellency's Most Gracious Speech". Why should the men from Ogoja Province join in this vote of thanks when that Province has not got anything from the Government? It ought to have come from somebody else and not from the Government Chief Whip. The fact that in all Government Development Plans Ogoja Province is almost always forgotten goes to show how discriminatory the Government is. These are the very same people who call Ogoja the forgotten or the backward Province.

Mr M. E. Ogon (Ikom Division): That is not true.

Mr Agba: So, Sir, in contributing to the debate on the Speech from the Throne I have got a lot to say about Ogoja Province.

An hon. Member: Say them now and let us hear.

Mr Agba: Mr Speaker, Sir, I was saying that I would say much on the Speech from the Throne as far as it concerns Ogoja Province but in doing so, I must do justice to the rest of the Region.

I wish to talk about the Ministry of Local Government which somebody has just spoken on because it is very fresh in my mind. This particular Ministry, important as it is, I am sorry to say without any intention to annoy anybody, is not efficient. Perhaps if that Ministry had been handled by a more capable person it should have been more beneficial both to the Government and to the people. Time and again we come into this House and speak about the rapacious practices going on in the Local Government Councils. Secretaries monopolise nearly every function in the

Councils—giving out contracts which really should have got the approval of the Minister, cutting down the amount into bits so that they will be in a position to carry out the contract without the approval of the Minister. They also assume powers which the Constitution does not allow them.

When the so-called U.P.E. schools have been established, teachers who are appointed into them have to pay certain sums of money in order to be appointed into these schools. I must admit that it is completely impossible for a human being in the Ministry of Local Government to see into all these things; but my point is that when reports are brought into this House, it is the business of the man concerned to take effective steps to see that something is done, particularly when an area is mentioned. He should probe into the troubles in that area. I do not think that any man of integrity will come into this hon. House and accuse somebody falsely who has not got the same opportunity to come here and defend himself. Therefore, I am saying that where an abuse exists, it is only reasonable that the Ministry should take steps to check that abuse instead of the person concerned sitting here at Enugu and appointing someone to probe into the troubles.

Now, I have just mentioned the question of employing teachers into the U.P.E. schools and demanding some sort of money. I want to mention one specific place where this sort of practice is rampant. As far as I am concerned, I will really be grateful if the Minister will look into it. I am talking of Ogoja and Opobo. It may be surprising that a man from one Division knows what is happening in another Division. I am appealing to the Minister concerned to do something. It is left to him to decide what to do.

Another aspect of the abuse is that Secretaries of the Councils organise certain members of the Council against other members, or against the Chairman of the Council. I think this has been reported in the House some time ago, and I am really surprised that the Minister could not take a step into these things. Why should a Secretary become a politician instead of a Secretary of the Council? Some of them are more politicians than politicians themselves.

Several hon. Members: Man is a political animal.

Mr Agba: I have had a secretary of a Council coming into a group of people to say that he had organised a certain number of councillors to pass a vote of no confidence in one or another councillor who had been duly and legally elected by his own people into that Council. The very fact that the Secretary decided to come out to say such a thing shows that something is fishy in that Council.

Along with this, I would like to talk about Customary Courts, and my warning note is to tell the Attorney-General that certain Chiefs have bribed in order to get into the Customary Courts. Chiefs to go into these Courts must be selected with care and all those found to have given bribes must be rejected.

The Attorney-General (Mr M. O. Ajegbo): You don't know politics. (*Laughter*).

Mr Agba: I very much welcome the establishment of Customary Courts, but the selection of Chiefs into the Customary Courts have been a source of anxiety in several places. I still mention that a lot of evil practices of all kinds have existed before the introduction of the Bill into this House, and now that the implementation is coming on, some members within different Customary Courts are against the way Customary Court members are selected. I say that some Chiefs had already paid bribes to certain people in order to get into certain Customary Courts. I would really be very happy if such Chiefs be weeded out as the only way of checking the practice in the Region which is so rampant at the moment.

What I say here of Customary Courts also applies to the question of Chieftaincy. There is no doubt whatsoever that quite a lot of Chiefs who anticipate going into the House of Chiefs, perhaps due to events, have very much been cheated by some people who thought they could make their own fortune by going to these ignorant Chiefs and demanding so much money, promising to make them Chiefs even though they have no power to do so. I am asking here, Sir, that the Minister concerned, when the time for selection comes, should get some advice from experts in many areas to find out those who have been grossly guilty of giving bribes in order to go into the House of Chiefs and will do well to reject them.

In line with this question of Chiefs, I think, is the question of recognition. Government is solely responsible for this recognition. The Chiefs have also begun to put bribery and corruption into practice. Quite a lot of them have been guilty and in recognising our Chiefs—while I agree with somebody who spoke here in the House some time ago that all Chiefs should be paid—I must also emphasise the fact that those who have begun the normal ruling with bribery and corruption have also lost the power of ruling justly. I cannot understand how a man who gets into a position by means of bribery and corruption would rule justly and clearly. He would merely encourage the practice and the people will continue to grow in it by leaps and bounds. Chiefs are really going to be very important in the Region particularly if the Government gives them subsidy, even in a very little way. If they are given subsidies there is no doubt that they will have a lot to say in the Region and in the control of the people of the Region.

I also feel that even in a very little thing, Chiefs should be above reproach as the Members of the House—although some of them are not.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I should like also to make some points about the Ministry of Education. In talking about this Ministry, I must say that my heart undergoes a quick palpitation as soon as I mentioned this Ministry for the simple reason that in my own area, quite a lot of the U.P.E. schools have become abandoned.

Some of the schools that have been built, I am sorry to say, are no longer in use, and I think I may justifiably suggest to the Government to sell these schools to some well-to-do men instead of allowing them to get dilapidated. However, I must say that our people have really been cheated indirectly. For instance, there are people who did not understand the implications of the U.P.E. Scheme. Prior to the building of the U.P.E. schools, boys in Standards V and VI were only paying just a few shillings, but immediately these schools were built, school fees went up and the boys in Standards 5 and 6 pay £6, boys in Standards 3 and 4 pay about £4 and boys in Standards 1 and 2 £2.

An hon. Member: Standard I?

Mr Agba: It is only this year that Standard I boys do not pay school fees.

To me, it seems that the Government is out to trade with the zinc with which the primary schools were roofed. We do not want any business with these corrugated iron sheets which are unfortunately indirectly being sold for £180 or so in Standards 5, 6, etc. The result of this trading is that quite a lot of these roofs are no longer in use.

Again, teachers are constantly suffering, particularly C/D teachers. Mr Speaker, Sir, I saw one figure here about vacancies in the Upper Segment—I think about 117 vacancies in Scale A. If so many vacancies exist in the Upper Segment, the number of vacancies in the Lower Segment must be very great, added to this figure. It means that those who are already employed lose their employment because there is no money to pay them. (*Interruptions*). You will remember, Mr Speaker, that some of these people who make a lot of noise in the House are not educated themselves. They talk of confusion.

Worse still, Sir, the school grants have been cut down. One would have imagined that with the increase in school fees the grants to schools would be increased. An hon. Member said that the reason for increasing taxes was because of the U.P.E. But you have high school fees being paid by school children, the grants paid to schools cut; and yet you have very high tax which is paid by the people of this Region. I do not know what we are out for.

I would like the Government, the Ministry of Education in particular, to sit down along with others and try to look into this problem—the greatest problem in the whole Region—the problem of education.

It is quite good to pay tax and we must all pay our tax so that our Region may be developed. As far as Education is concerned, with our heading for independence in 1960, it is the most important thing among the social services of the Region. (*Hear ! Hear !*) I cannot understand really what the position will look like to run our Government under the influence of Europeans. Are we going to run our Government with illiterate or semi-literate people such as we have here? I do not think that would do.

The Governor's Speech from the Throne very much emphasised the question of experts with ability to work, and the Leader of the

Opposition stressed that experts who are competent and willing to work must be retained. We cannot run an efficient Government with semi-literate or illiterate people.

Several hon. Members: This is true.

Mr Agba: Are we going to do this without good education? I am inclined to think that this semi-type of education would not do. The Eastern Region is respectable and I would like to belong to a respectable Government. Therefore, it will not do to allow illiterates or semi-literates to run our Government in this Region.

The hon. Premier has all sorts of semi-literates to advise and to do his work for him and, therefore, he is seeing about the University of Nigeria himself irrespective of the fact that we have the Ministry of Education. I am particularly appealing to this Ministry to look carefully into this question of education. I do not think there is anything more vital now than the question of education. All our taxes, all our local contributions, all our efforts, I think, boil down to this very education.

Lastly, I wish to say just a few words about the Ministry of Information. In doing so, I will draw the attention of the Minister of Information to the address of welcome presented to the Eastern Regional Ministers when they visited Obudu some time ago. He will note that the Obudu District Council complained that they were not being given considerable attention. I would very much love it, even though the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation and the *Eastern Outlook* broadcast news and publish newspapers respectively, whenever news comes from Obudu it should be broadcast and at least some priority should be given to the news coming from the backward areas like Ogoja. There, Sir, you will find that the N.B.C. does not broadcast our news. Very many people are complaining about not having their dances or songs relayed in the radio, in spite of the fact that certain members of the staff of the N.B.C. have been to the place to record news, songs and dances.

We would like this Ministry to be more active. The Minister of Information makes a lot of noise wherever he goes by publishing his speech. We would like the same thing to be done to our people.

Mr Speaker, I thank you.

The Minister of Information (Mr B. C. Okwu): Mr Speaker, I rise to support the Motion for a Humble Address of Thanks to His Excellency the Governor for His Most Gracious Speech from the Throne. I wish to associate myself with the delight expressed by the previous speakers for His Excellency's speedy recovery from his recent illness. Sir Robert, I must say, is a pleasant man and an esteemed Governor, whose broad and ready smiles we all very much missed during the period of his illness in the United Kingdom.

Mr Speaker, the present Session is a momentous one because it will be the last before the advent of the Independence Session. In my view, the times call for sober reflection on the events of the past years through which we trudged and a complete reappraisal of our problems and their solutions, as we march confidently forward from here on the last lap to the promised land of national freedom on 1st October, 1960. Partisan politics apart, the general well-being and progress of the eight million people are a common bond that binds us and a sacred responsibility of both sides of this hon. House. It is, however, unfortunate that my hon. Friends opposite cannot appreciate this cardinal principle nor be guided by it in their approach to the business of this meeting and their behaviour outside the House.

Before dealing with the salient points in the Speech and some of the criticisms already made on its contents and the policy of the Government generally, I wish to state with great emphasis, Mr Speaker, that we on this side of the House . . .

Mr M. U. Etuk (Uyo Division): Which side of the House ?

Mr Okwu: The Government side, please. We are proud of our achievements within the past five years the N.C.N.C. has been in power in this Region.

You may wish me to state the grounds for our pride. Honest critics from the Opposition Bench will admit readily that in the nature of things in this Region and the peculiar susceptibilities of our people, any government with less democratic and less dynamic leadership than the present one would have foundered long ago. Easterners are essentially republican,

very critical and deeply attached to ultra-democracy. The form of dictatorship that has been flourishing in the Western Region cannot survive here for twenty-four hours.

Our Action Group opponents have again and again accused us of being unstable and planless. True, Mr Speaker, we have had a spate of serious political crises two of which culminated in the dissolutions of the Eastern House of Assembly. In considering these political crises one must bear in mind the peculiar nature of the East to which I have referred and the overwhelming magnitude of the forces, both subtle and tangible, ranged against this Government *vis a vis* the Eastern Region since the introduction of elective representative government some seven years ago. It is significant, however, that with the exception of the unfortunate and inspired U.P.E. crisis, there was no bloodshed involved in any of them, and in the end the Government party, the N.C.N.C., had come out victorious.

On assuming power after bowling out the U.N.I.P. regime in 1954, the N.C.N.C. found the Region in a state of chaos and confusion. The previous revenue allocation system of Sir Louis Chick which was very disadvantageous to the Region was so evolved because there were insufficient data available to Sir Louis to guide him in giving the Eastern Region a more equitable share of the national revenue, because the then U.N.I.P. Ministers were all engaged in their constituencies canvassing for votes. In spite of these and many more which for want of ample time I will not go into now, I submit, Mr Speaker, that in every field of governmental endeavours, our achievements have been monumental indeed. Through all the crises we fought for, and won decisively, democratic principles.

Imbued with self-confidence and faith in the masses of the Region, undeterred by false alarms of financial bankruptcy sounded annually by a pessimistic and mischievous Opposition, we have now more than restored the finance and economy of the Region to a state of equilibrium and bouyancy. There is not a single nook or corner in this Region where the impact of our revolutionary educational, health, road and community development programmes have not been felt. Every Division has now at least a secondary school, a teacher training college,

a hospital. Elementary school facility has been brought right to the door and within the reach of every child of school-going age. Our University scheme is no longer a contemplated affair but at an advanced stage of implementation. Cocoa, cashew, rice and other economic crops now flourish in the Region on a large and steadily increasing scale. New industries have been established and more will be established in the very immediate future by foreign business bodies—all on their own in some cases and in partnership with the Government in others.

Mr Speaker, I have a word on fundamental human rights. I consider that the most outstanding achievement of this Government is its respect for the sanctity and dignity of the individual. The fundamental human rights now being provided in the new Constitution are not as vast as the liberties, rights and freedoms which the citizens of this Region have been enjoying since the N.C.N.C. came to power in the Region. These liberties, rights and freedoms which the average Easterner has come to regard as the normal way of living, are to his counterpart in other parts of Nigeria privileges not for the masses but for the few on top and the privileged class. Bearing in mind the terrible things which obtain elsewhere in Nigeria, I can safely claim that it is a great privilege for any one to live in the East.

Mr Speaker, I will now proceed to pin-point a few of the more outstanding democratic conditions of life which, although we have come to take for granted in this Region, are not available in other Regions of Nigeria:

(1) On coming into power this Government abolished flogging and deportation in the Region's statute book. This Government has never at any time deposed or exiled any natural ruler.

(2) There has not been any case of serious clash between two rival political parties which resulted in the loss of any life. There is effective co-existence between various political groups or parties in the Region.

(3) This Government was the first in Nigeria to introduce universal adult suffrage and accord official recognition to the Opposition in our Legislature.

(4) There is no N.A. or Local Government police system which elsewhere in Nigeria is often used to intimidate, suppress or oppress political opponents. For the

maintenance of law and order, this Government relies completely on the Federal Police over which it does not exercise any control.

(5) Here, political meetings can be held by anybody anywhere. Permission to hold public meetings is granted or withheld by the Federal Police. Neither the Regional nor Local Government bodies interfere in the matter.

(6) We pursue the policy of speedy Nigerianisation and not Easternisation of the public services of the Region. As a matter of fact, the door to our civil service is wide open to any African with the necessary qualifications. Already there are many non-Easterners and non-Nigerian Africans who hold key posts in our civil service. They will ever be welcome in our midst.

(7) Ours is the only Regional Government that has demonstrated the oneness of Nigeria in our policy and actions. Non-Easterners have equal opportunities with Easterners in this Region for education, to acquire land and own property, to obtain employment in the civil service or statutory corporations, to register as contractors, tender and receive award of contracts. We have not at any time employed our tax or rating system in a discriminatory manner against non-Easterners or political opponents in order to undermine them economically and thus force them out of the Region or business within the Region.

At no time have we used the customary courts or the local courts or any other courts as a political weapon to silence the Opposition. Whereas the opposition parties elsewhere live and operate under constant fear of the party in power, in the Eastern Region on the other hand, the Government and the people are being terrorised by the Opposition.

I now turn, Mr Speaker, to the criticisms made by the Leader of the Opposition and front-line Opposition speakers. A careful study of all the speeches so far made by my Friends opposite since the House reassembled will reveal a consistent sameness of pattern that leads to the inescapable conclusion that the main desire of the Opposition at this meeting is to transform every business of the House into an Opposition manifesto for the forthcoming Federal elections. You will have noticed, no doubt, the familiar theme—"cut

[MR OKWU]

down or abolish all taxes; provide work for everybody; pay all workers on superscale salary grades; restore the U.P.E.; pay all the Chiefs in the Region; etc. According to them the money to accomplish these feats should not come from the people but by applying the correct magic incantation of Ali Baba, which will show the Government the entrance to the hidden treasury. This approach is a very mean and cowardly one and is bound to fail.

The Leader of the Opposition paid glowing tributes to our expatriate civil servants. On behalf of this side of the House I want to associate myself fully with the sentiments expressed by him. I will, however, go further to say that our Nigerian officers are equally deserving of praise for they have contributed no less in making possible our present degree of progress. Still on this issue, may I point out a serious error or omission which is made when we praise, and that is to omit the masses of the workers, the clerks and technicians of all grades. These are the men who make the wheels of the governmental machinery to go round.

I will, however, join issue with the Leader of the Opposition when he went out of his way to dub Nigerian officers as incompetent servants who hide under the cloak of Nigerianisation. Incompetence, where it exists, can apply to any officer, be he patriate or expatriate. I wish to assure the House that it is the ardent hope and the genuine wish of this Government that our expatriate civil servants will continue to remain and serve the Region. Everything humanly possible has been done and is being done to induce our overseas officers to remain in our service. There are some officers who have elected to go in spite of all we have done and can do. These are welcome to go.

Mr Speaker, in view of the uncharitable insinuations by the Leader of the Opposition it is necessary to re-state without equivocation, that this Government is irrevocably committed to a policy of speedy Nigerianisation. This policy is not inconsistent with our wish to keep our overseas officers in our service.

It is also necessary to point out to our intellectuals that efficiency and intelligence are not the exclusive distinguishing marks of

university graduates. There are some Nigerians in the Junior service or executive grades, both young and old, with native or home-spun ability, intelligence, zeal for work and transparent honesty who though without the orthodox Oxford or Yale University degrees have to all intents and purposes graduated in the job. (*Hear! Hear!*) Whether the Opposition like these men or not the Government will continue to encourage and advance them.

The main purpose of the Provincial Administration is to devolve power; to bring the Government closer to our people and thus give them a more ample opportunity to participate in managing their own affairs. It is a sound investment from which we expect rich dividends. The proposal has the backing of the masses of the people. Hon. Ikoku's submissions against this popular system of administration can be dismissed with costs against the Opposition Bench.

The Leader of the Opposition wants all our Chiefs to be paid. He went further to suggest that all our Chiefs should earn more than the Provincial Commissioners. This point of view does not surprise me, when one bears in mind that for the past two years Members of the Opposition have heavily invested into the creation of thousands of Chiefs as the mainstay of their political existence. We know that political Chiefs and natural rulers as Chiefs are not one and the same thing. Mr Speaker, Chief Morphy, for instance, is a perfect specimen of what I mean by a political Chief, and Chief Agbasiere on the other hand an example of a natural ruler. (*Hear! Hear!*)

Chief I. I. Morphy (Ogoja Division): On a point of Order, Standing Order 25 (7)—Improper Motive.

Mr Speaker: There is no improper motive in this.

Mr Okwu: It would have been helpful for the Leader of the Opposition to tell the House how many Chiefs there are in the Region, the length of time each has been in office, the manner and date of his election.

The criticism of the Leader of the Opposition on Government's economic programme contains elements of economic jugglery. My hon. Colleague, the Minister of Finance, will take good care of them when he replies, but I cannot resist the temptation of drawing attention to the fact that his comparisons of our programme with that of the Western Region have been rendered innocuous by the fact that the Western programme was highly inflated with a view to impressing the uninformed and to catch votes at the next election. In terms of actual development it has nothing superior to our programme. Hon. Ikoku, an economist of repute, knows the facts but would not say so, rather he would take to economic jugglery for political ends. In the Western Region, the Marketing Board made a total of £20,750,000 available to the West Regional Government in order to carry out its five-year Development Plan. If this happened in the East the A.G.-D.P.N.C. alliance would have embarked on waves upon waves of cablegrams to London and series of press conferences. When it comes to governmental initiative and sound fiscal policy, to improve the independent finances of the Region, this Government is admittedly ahead of other Regional Governments. In terms of *per capita* earnings of the people, the West is richer than the East. The credit is not due to the economic wizardry of the Action Group but to the fact that for years now the world market behaviour has been very favourable to cocoa, the mainstay of the economy of the Western Region, while the fate of the palm oil and kernel, our chief product, has been on the steady downward trend. Now, if oil is found in commercial quantity in this Region the impact on our regional economy will be colossal.

It is certainly very interesting to note that lately, Mr S. G. Ikoku has become one of the most outstanding and outspoken champions of foreign capital. I can only hope that at long last he has found his level. On this issue, the stand of this Government is crystal clear. For the benefit of those who are in doubt, the National President of the N.C.N.C. and Premier of the Eastern Region, has on several occasions, at home and abroad, invited foreign capital investors to come and invest in the Region. Guarantees have been given and favourable conditions and co-operation promised. To the credit of foreign investors, there has been some response though perhaps

not to the extent the Government would have wished. It is gratifying to note, however, that now the tempo of the response is on the increase.

On a broader view, it must be appreciated that foreign capital investors, in America and Europe, are for genuine reasons hesitant to invest in the emerging nations of Africa. Experiences in other parts of the world seem to condition their attitude. Some have boldly come forward, taking our leaders at their word and appreciating that every business venture involves some elements of risk.

Nevertheless, Mr Speaker, may I take you back to the views expressed by the Leader of the Opposition which in my humble opinion are sinister and treasonable. You will observe this treacherous edge in the speeches so far made by the Leader of the Opposition, the Opposition Chief Whip and the former U.N.I.P. Opposition Chief Whip, hon. A. J. Ekpe. The Leader of the Opposition implied in his speech that at present favourable political climate does not exist in the Region to attract foreign capital in spite of what he called "pious protestations by the Government", that the way we treat our expatriate civil servants and foreign business bodies in the Region increase the reluctance of foreign investors investing in the Region. What a sweeping dangerous generalisation to make! One would have loved hon. Ikoku to be specific. Playing politics with a vital issue of this kind is an ill wind which does no good to anyone. It is necessary for the Opposition to know that we are not unaware of the facts—

- (a) that the Action Group has for some-time now been financing a colossal campaign in Nigeria and abroad to keep foreign investors from investing in the Region;
- (b) that enemies of the Region have painted and are painting false pictures against us with a view to undermining our economic progress; and
- (c) that some Federal Government institutions and agencies have been used consciously and unconsciously to obstruct *bona fide* foreign investors who wanted to invest in the Region. Howbeit, there is hope. We are getting used to this form of subversion.

[MR OKWU]

Before us lies the broad and glorious vista of a victorious future and the backing of the father time.

In creating our political atmosphere, the interests of foreign investors will always be borne in mind but we will not—repeat not—subjugate our national political initiative to foreign capital nor barter our national interest and freedom with foreign investment. Asia, the Middle East, South America, South Africa, North Africa, Central Africa, all have their political peculiarities as we have ours; yet foreign capital still flow to these areas. What is good for the goose is also good for the gander. This is amply demonstrated by the millions of pounds which the Shell D'Arcy has sunk and is sinking into oil exploration in the Eastern Region without first of all insisting that N.C.N.C. politics should yield place to Awo Brigade type of politics in the Region.

Unemployment or under-employment is, I admit, a real problem in this Region as it is in all the Regions of Nigeria. In fact, it is an international problem that has hit the world—in Britain and America it is more acute than here. The world population is increasing. The advancement in science and technology is substituting automaton for human labour—thus aggravating the situation. The Government is tackling the problem realistically. If the Opposition have any suggestions to make they are welcome to do so and Government will certainly examine them.

There is no sense, however, in the Opposition asking the Government to abolish all taxes and in one and the same breath asking the same Government to build a heaven on earth in the Region and pay each and every one of the eight million Easterners superscale salaries without indicating where the money is to come from. No Government anywhere can be run on Ali Baba magic formula of open sesame to a hidden treasury. The simple truth is that the speed and magnitude of the Region's development and provision of social amenities will always be conditioned by the capacity and willingness of our people to pay taxes to finance them.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, I have the joy to announce that the Government, after due consideration, has now made provision to

convert the *Outlook* into a daily newspaper as requested by the House at the last Session. I want to assure the House that when the scheme is implemented Members will have cause to congratulate themselves on the wisdom and timeliness of their request. Regional Broadcasting and Television are also under active consideration by the Government. The Ministry of Information has now been integrated with the Premier's Office as a Division and has been given more funds to expand its activities which will include mobile film unit. Members can therefore look forward to a year of militant, accurate and effective information and publicity about the activities of the Government and the Region. No more can we afford to leave this Government and the Region a helpless victim in the throes of foul propaganda and organised blackmail by hostile press and other information media here and outside the Region.

Sir, I beg to support. (*Applause*).

Rev. O., Efiang C.B.E. (Calabar Division):
Mr Speaker, Sir, I desire to contribute to the debate on His Excellency's Speech from the Throne, and would like to make some constructive observations on the operation of taxation in this Region. The people are actually smarting and groaning under an oppressive system of taxation. The rates are equally crushing. The people are just too poor and undeveloped to bear these heavy taxes. Properly speaking, taxation to them is a foreign custom. It is useless, for an answer to our ills, to compare the wealth of this Region with that of the other Regions, Ghana, Libya, etc. Let us seriously probe the issue.

It took Britain centuries to develop, industrialise and prosper the people before the imposition of heavy taxation. The people of this Region as beginners fear even to undertake industries for Government will not scruple to impose crushing taxation on them and so unwittingly kill the industries even in their pioneer and embryonic stage. It will interest you to note that this year the Chancellor of Exchequer proposes to impose a Tax-Cut of £300,000,000 as a tax relief for the people.

With your permission, may I quote? It is from the *Daily Telegraph*, a British paper.